



# **Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy and Improvement Programme Derbyshire 2013 - 2015**

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## **Executive Summary**

When children come into care the Local Authority becomes the 'Corporate Parent'. Children in care generally experience poor outcomes compared to their peers not in the community: a disproportionate number become unemployed; on benefits; teenage parents; in receipt of mental health services or involved with the criminal justice system and too few go on to university or satisfying careers. Effective reform and improvement is essential; supporting children in care and care leavers to meet their potential requires every adult involved in offering support to a child in care committing to this moral responsibility. This requires a renewed emphasis and a change in culture across Derbyshire.

Recent national guidance, such as the 2013 Care Enquiry 'Making not Breaking; Building Relationships', identify the importance of relationships, and over the last few years Derbyshire has been deploying social pedagogical approaches in its children's homes and supporting children and young people in care to develop resilience. Social Pedagogy is an approach to caring for children which combines education and care, emphasising that bringing up children is the shared responsibility of parents and society.

Derbyshire was also successful in its bid to become a 'Creative Council' with its Uni-fi initiative seeking to fundamentally shift the relationship between the Council and the young people it cares for. Uni-fi is all about raising aspirations with children in care at an early stage by focusing on their ambitions, and increasing the expectations we have as Corporate Parents for these children and young people.

The aim of this improvement programme is to embark on a journey to excellence for children in care and care leavers in Derbyshire, building on some outstanding developments currently underway. It is about transforming the lives of our children through a combination of high quality professional practice and new innovative ways of working which make a difference. Practice improvement and service development is informed by the views and participation of children in care and care leavers. Our ambition is to be excellent parents for children and young people in care and care leavers, and this document sets out how we plan to achieve this.

The strategic objectives of the programme are to deliver the following:

- Better outcomes for children and young people in care, and care leavers.
- Improved performance by excellent services.
- Cost effective, sustainable provision.

To support the delivery of these strategic objectives, new governance arrangements have been established. They entail revised structures for the delivery and improvement of children in care services and outcomes, with the voice of children and young people as a cross-cutting underpinning for all aspects of the structure. The strategy is delivered through these new structures, with the

CAYA department's Senior Management Team (SMT) serving as the Programme Board, and with the Strategic Director of Children and Younger Adults (CAYA) acting as the programme sponsor.

The successful implementation of the strategy will achieve the following benefits:

- Improved health and well-being.
- Greater resilience.
- Improved placement stability, safety and quality.
- Better attainment at school for children and young people.
- Young people leaving care on an educational and/or work route that meets their ambitions.
- Positive feedback from young people.
- The best use of available resources.

Via a co-ordinated action planning and programme management approach, the strategy delivery groups will deliver the changes necessary to deliver the ambitions set out in the blueprint in Section 2.1. This will include a clear reporting and monitoring structure, defined standards, information and quality expectations and communications and stakeholder engagement plan.

The health and well-being group leads on ensuring that Children in Care are as healthy as any child in Derbyshire; that children are healthier when they leave care than when they entered care and children and young people in care are healthy in body and mind and live in healthy places.

Child protection, safety and placement stability is addressed by increasingly robust quality assurance approaches, the placement Sufficiency Strategy and a range of actions related to safeguarding.

The education and attainment group seeks to ensure that all children in care are encouraged and supported to do their best at school, from early years through to further and higher education; through maintaining a strong focus on attainment and progress, providing targeted support, delivering high quality training to teachers, raising aspiration and reducing both absence and exclusions.

The economic well-being and independence work stream focusses on leaving care; by increasing suitable accommodation, supporting well-being, providing support and access to work experience and opportunities, developing young people's financial skills and ensuring care leavers can access key information.

The Uni-fi initiative continues to test and evaluate promising innovations for children in care, including a financial endowment to support young people's own plans for their life, creation of a workforce of social pedagogy practitioners, and use of insightful research to strengthen our understanding of the lived experience of children in care and this being applied within service development and planning.

All of the above is overseen at the most strategic level in Derbyshire, to ensure that the council delivers on its ambition to be a great Corporate Parent, so that each child in our care is able to be the best that they can be.

## PART ONE – STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES – what and how?

### 1.1 Introduction, Context and Vision

***“Children in care should be cared about, not just cared for”<sup>1</sup>***

Most children and young people in Derbyshire enjoy happy and successful lives living within their own families. If, however, families experience particular problems or stress, they can call upon a wide variety of additional support, offered by a range of agencies, to help keep the family living and working together. Through local partnerships, such as Multi-Agency Teams (MATs), preventative approaches and early intervention strategies are deployed to prevent family breakdown and support parenting. Derbyshire is committed to providing the right support to improve outcomes for children and young people throughout the ‘child’s journey’.

For some children and young people though, this might not be enough to ensure their safety and well-being so, either through agreement with their parents, or through court proceedings, these children might come to be cared for by the Local Authority. This decision will usually be made, or reviewed by, the District Edge of Care Resource Panel. Sometimes, with support, children can be quickly returned home, or to family members or friends. Also, again often with support, children or young people can leave care (prior to independence) after a longer period and return home, or to family members or friends.

When children come into care, the Local Authority becomes what is known as a ‘Corporate Parent’ for such children and is charged in law with promoting their safety and well-being.

Children in care generally experience poor outcomes compared to their peers not in the community: a disproportionate number become unemployed; on benefits; teenage parents; in receipt of mental health services or involved with the criminal justice system and too few go on to university or satisfying careers. There is evidence that outcomes can be improved by ensuring that children in care live as locally as possible in safe environments, are not moved around unnecessarily and receive good quality care from both those caring for them directly and others who can support them to meet their potential.

Effective reform and improvement is essential; supporting children in care and care leavers to meet their potential requires every single adult involved in offering support to a child in care (whether they work for the Local Authority, act as carers for the Authority, or work for any one of our many partners) taking individual

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<sup>1</sup> Care Matters: Time for Change, Government White Paper, DfES, June 2007 Page 6.



responsibility in committing to the important goal of caring about that child as well as for other Derbyshire children living at home and show determination and tenacity in their actions to support children in care reach their full potential. This requires a renewed emphasis and a change in culture across Derbyshire. It is not just about legislation; it is a moral responsibility.

## **Context – National**

The previous Government published 'Care Matters: Time for Change.'<sup>2</sup>, having a specific focus on children in care. This document has continued to be referred to as one which is recent and sets out a desirable direction for most improvements that should be made for children in care.

'Care Matters' sets out a range of intentions to improve both outcomes for children and young people in care and the levels of skill and competence of those staff who act as Corporate Parents, and of those staff and carers directly supporting children.

In April 2013 The Care Inquiry published 'Making not Breaking; Building Relationships' for our most vulnerable children. It concluded that 'permanence' for children means 'security, stability, love and a strong sense of identity and belonging' and reinforced that the quality of relationships with people who care for and about children is fundamental.

## **Context - Derbyshire**

Derbyshire aims to support its children and young people in care by working methods that promote resilience. Resilience, as referred to here, is about having the ability to 'bounce back' or, as described in Care Matters (page 18. 1.19) it is about 'an individual's capacity to adapt successfully to change and to stressful events in healthy and constructive ways'. Research on resilience is usually framed with reference to risk, vulnerability and protective factors. It is the complex interplay of these factors that determine outcomes for children.

Derbyshire is using Social Pedagogical principles, primarily in residential homes to date though this is being extended, to underpin practice which supports the development of resilience and emotional well-being with children and young people in care.

Derbyshire was successful in its bid to become a 'Creative Council' with its Uni-fi initiative. The programme, which seeks to transform outcomes for children in care and fundamentally change the relationship between the Corporate Parent and its children, has been identified as one of the most innovative approaches to solving some of Local Government's most intractable problems. Uni-fi is testing a range of

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<sup>2</sup> Care Matters: Time for Change, Government White Paper ,DfES, June 2007

innovations including a financial endowment, peer mentoring and creating a workforce (including carers) of social pedagogy practitioners, supported by a new qualification developed in partnership with Derby University. The first cohort of students starts in Autumn 2013.

Social pedagogy also means that all adults supporting children in care should trust each other, be able to express not only their concerns about children, but recognise these children's needs, strengths and aspirations. This applies to all children in care; those living with foster parents, those in residential homes, and those children for whom the long-term plan is adoption.

*Throughout this document the term 'Children in Care' has been used to include all children being looked after by the Local Authority, including those subject to Care Orders under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989, and those looked after on a voluntary basis under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. This is because whilst "looked after" continues to be in primary legislation and some guidance, it is not generally a term that Derbyshire children in care have liked; hence the predominant use of 'Children in Care' in this document. Derbyshire Children in Care are being consulted on this again during 2013.*

## **1.2 Our Vision**

**Our ambition is to be excellent parents for children and young people in care and care leavers. In Derbyshire, we take the role of Corporate Parent very seriously and wish to see every child in care have the very best experience and chances in life, as any good parent would expect.**

## **1.3 Strategic Objectives**

The strategic objectives are to deliver the following:

- Better outcomes for children and young people in care, and care leavers.
- Improved performance by excellent services.
- Cost effective, sustainable provision.

Improving outcomes is at the heart of this strategy. We intend to transform the lives of our children through a combination of high quality professional practice and new innovative ways of working which make a difference. Our ambition is to be excellent parents for children and young people in care and care leavers. Both the current picture with regard to outcomes and our ambitious plans for improvement are described in Part 2.

We want all children in care to:

- Enjoy good physical and emotional health.

- Feel safe.
- Have fun.
- Do well at school, college or work.
- Stay out of trouble.
- Contribute to their communities.
- Achieve well as adults.

We also want children and young people to be involved in decisions about their care and the development of services which affect them, and to make sure these services are informed by the experiences of young people in care.

We will deliver these strategic objectives through a number of programmes of work described in the following sections:

- Involvement and Participation of Children in Care and Care Leavers.
- Strengthened Corporate Parenting.
- Improvement Programme.

The strategy is also supported by the completion of specific service plans and is written with reference to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.  
([www.derbyshire.gov.uk/jsna](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/jsna)).

#### **1.4 Involvement and Participation of Children in Care and Care Leavers**

##### Pledge

Every year Derbyshire County Council makes a set of promises to all children in care. The promises for 2013, which will be revisited for 2014, are as follows:

- A named person from Horizons/Children Adolescent Mental Health Services [CAMHS] who children and young people can talk to directly will contact you within four weeks of asking.
- We will talk to you more about your future rather than reviewing the past in reviews and when we talk to you face to face.
- We will make it easier for disabled children to stay where they are when they become adults.
- We will always treat disabled children as people first.
- We will make your reviews quicker and easier when things are going well.
- We will offer you a 1 to 1 meeting with a Reviewing Officer before your review.
- We will look at Rewards/Incentives linked to discount off buying a car/car insurance as a part of Uni-Fi.
- We will make sure that after care workers give a clear picture of what they can and can't do for a care leaver and increase the control they have over funding what young people need.
- We will make ALL Departments within the Council aware of their role as Corporate Parents.

Children and young people in care in Derbyshire are encouraged to be involved in decisions about their lives, from individual plans for their future, through to active engagement in the planning and delivery of services provided for them by Derbyshire County Council and the Derbyshire Children and Young People's Trust.

This participation is supported by a number of activities and offers, including:

- The ***Independent Advocacy Service***, which assists children in having their say in their reviews and plans about their future, and in any complaints they want to make.
- The ***Children's Rights Service*** which co-ordinates a range of activities for children and young people in care including ***Caring Voice: Derbyshire's Children in Care Council***, which formulated Derbyshire's pledge to children in care on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Committee and regularly reviews and updates this.
- Young people are supported as trainers, delivering the award winning **Total Respect** programme to staff along with other core training. This training was recently (2012/13) delivered nationally to Ofsted inspectors.
- They were involved in the recruitment process for key members of staff such as in May 2013, the selection of Derbyshire's new Virtual School Head, a new post which leads on ensuring that children in care receive the very best education, wherever they live.

Additional ways of involving young people include opportunities for them to write and design publicity materials, leaflets, posters, an annual song writing event called **Burning Sounds**, the chance to meet and work with top authors at the **Big Book Bash**, and celebration events for older and younger children.

The participation of children and young people has been central to the Uni-fi initiative. Children in Year 7 have been a focus and thus the views of younger children have been sought, and used, in development activity.

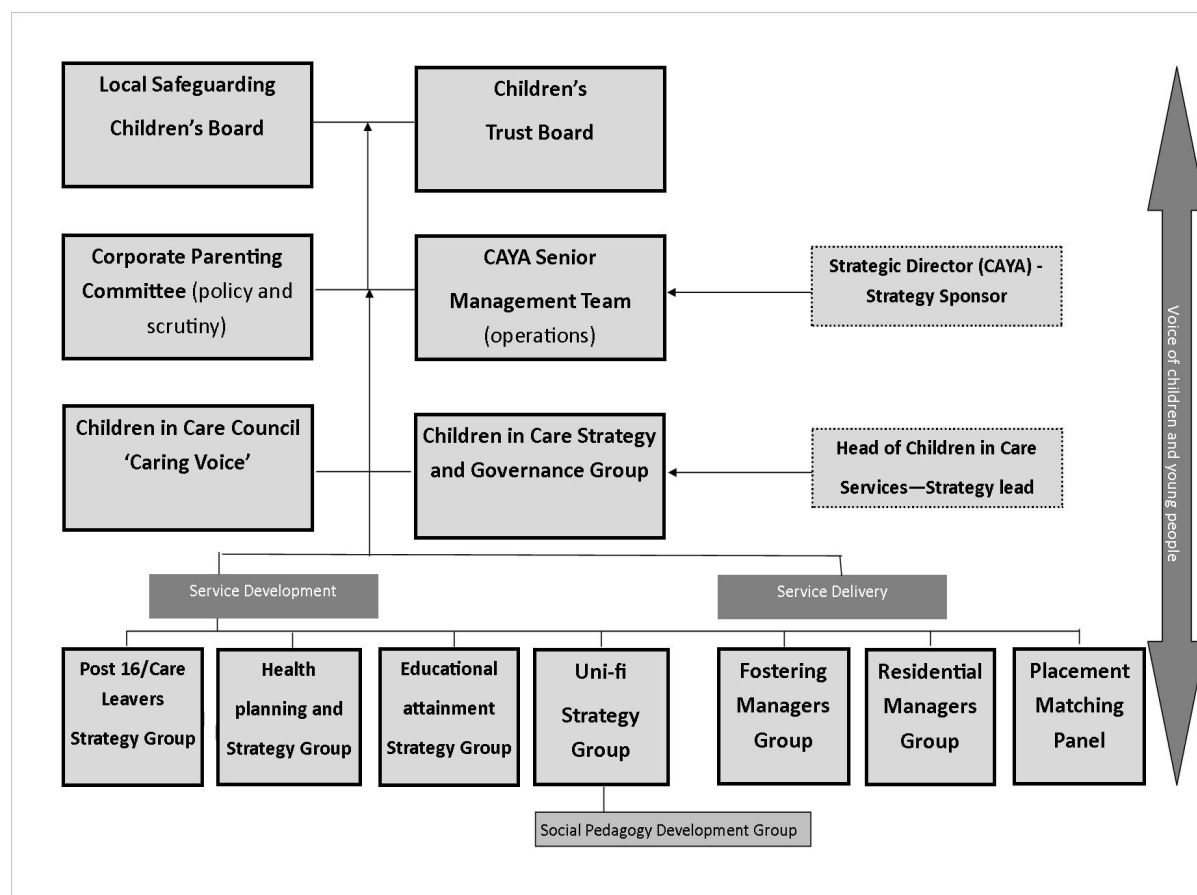
Specific consultation with care leavers was undertaken during the summer of 2013 regarding the Care Leaver Charter. This included producing a DVD which was shown to the Corporate Parenting Committee and will be used in training. Their work on what the themes mean for them is being used to inform future service developments.

At all levels we seek to make the views and feelings of children an integral part of the planning process, challenging preconceived ideas of what is best for them, offering new and innovative ways of setting and monitoring priorities for service design and in maintaining control over their own lives, now and in the future.

## 1.5 Corporate Parenting Arrangements and Governance

In September 2012 we established revised structures for the delivery and improvement of children in care services and outcomes. The strategy is delivered through these new structures, with CAYA SMT acting as the Programme Board, and with the Strategic Director of Children and Younger Adults acting as the programme sponsor.

### Children in Care Strategy Governance Structure



The Corporate Parenting Committee provides a scrutiny role, and analyses performance and policy in relation to Children in Care Strategy. Terms of Reference for these, and the other functions within the governance arrangements are attached in the Appendices.

The Corporate Parenting Committee recognises that all elected Members of a Local Authority have a critical role in both setting the strategic direction of a council's services and in determining policy priorities for the local community. As such they have it in their power to affect the lives of the children in their community for the better. This duty and power has the greatest significance for children in their care given that the council as a whole has the responsibility of acting as Corporate Parents.

**Work to strengthen ‘Corporate Parenting’ as a means of improving outcomes for children in care includes:**

- Encouraging Elected Members and all staff and carers working with children in care to attend “Total Respect” and “Children’s Rights” training delivered by young people.
- Building a meaningful sense of Corporate Parenting, demonstrated by concrete actions, across the Council. One example planned is to invite Chief Officers to attend Corporate Parenting Committee to explain their actions to support Corporate Parenting.
- Ensuring scrutiny and governance of service plans, outcomes and impact.

**Quality assurance is an integral aspect of governance, thus supporting the achievement of our vision. A number of approaches are used including:**

- Challenge days; these are unannounced inspections which are then followed up through progress checking visits by the Strategic Director.
- Performance clinics, supported by clear expectations.
- Visits to children’s homes and direct contact with children in care and care leavers by senior managers.
- Robust challenge by Quality Assurance Managers and Independent Reviewing Officers.
- File audits; not just to meet departmental standards but also enabling children who are, or have been in our care, to be able to access accurate records.

## **1.6 Service Overview**

A full picture of data and information held about Derbyshire’s Children and Young People in Care is accessible via the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which can be accessed here [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/jsna](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/jsna).

Specific information regarding placement sufficiency, the Sufficiency Strategy, can be accessed here.

[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social\\_health/services\\_for\\_children/children\\_we\\_look\\_after](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social_health/services_for_children/children_we_look_after)

### **Key data**

- The number of children in care has risen from 498 at the end of March 2007 to 700 at the end of March 2012, which is a 40.6% increase. Although provisional data for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 shows a fall to 664, and September to 630, the overall trend is still upward from March 2007.
- The increase in numbers of children in care has not been unique to Derbyshire. Both nationally and within Derbyshire’s statistical neighbour group of Local Authorities, increases in the number of children in care per 10k population aged less than 18 have been seen. However, it should be noted that, at 31<sup>st</sup>

March 2012, Derbyshire remained significantly below both the statistical neighbour and England averages.

- The children in care population is predominantly White British (91.5% as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012), a reflection of the overall Derbyshire population. This places particular importance on the role of placement matching for children from other ethnic backgrounds and the emphasis on individualised approaches to meeting cultural needs.
- 91% of children in care experienced fewer than three changes of home over the past year.
- The long-term stability of children in care for more than two and a half years has been above the national average over the past two years.
- There has been a significant increase in the numbers of children adopted, but too many have been within external placements, so we want to increase choice within Derbyshire.
- Whilst the majority of the nine non-disability children's homes in Derbyshire have been rated by Ofsted as 'Good' or better, occasionally one of our homes has been judged as inadequate for short periods. A programme of remedial action is in place to raise the standards.
- There is an issue over the build quality of some homes and a review of the capital programme is underway alongside the Sufficiency Strategy.
- An inspection of both the Fostering and Adoption Services by Ofsted in 2012, rated them overall as 'Good'. The Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection in 2011 also made a judgement of 'Good'.
- There has been a positive increase in the school attendance of children in care over the past year, particularly in Year 11.
- No Derbyshire children in care were permanently excluded from school in 2011/12 and as at June 2013 none in 2013-14, compared to one permanent exclusion in 2010/2011.
- In 2012 the educational attainment of children in care declined at Key Stage 4 level in 2012 with a reduction in the percentage achieving 5 GCSEs at A-C and 5 GCSEs with English and Maths to 6.1%. 2012/13 attainment information is being verified at the time this report is written. Provisional KS4 data for 212/13 shows a significant improvement with just under 17% of pupils achieving 5 A\* to C GCSEs with English and Maths.
- The 2012 achievement of children in care at SATS Key Stages 2 and 3 has improved greatly over the last two years with big increases in the percentages achieving Level 4+ in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 and level 5+ in English and Maths at Key Stage 3.
- The percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training on their nineteenth birthday has fallen from 81.6% in 2011/12 to 74.1% in 2012/13. The national rate in 2011/12 was 58.0% when Derbyshire at 81.6% were ranked as the highest performing Authority in both our statistical neighbour and regional groups (56.1% and 63% respectively).

- The number of children or young people in care receiving a final warning or conviction has decreased during 2012/13; however, reducing offending by children in care further remains a priority. We have a multi-agency 'Protocol Regarding Offending by Children in Care' to further this aim.

### Budget Information 2012-3

#### 2012/13 Outturn Information

	<b>Budget £</b>	<b>12-13 Spend £</b>	<b>(Under)/ overspend £</b>
Fostering allowance (incl. contract care)	6,914,372	6,564,811	-349,561
Special Guardianship Order & Residential Order allowances	1,357,880	1,732,484	374,604
DCC non-disability residential	4,687,832	4,845,364	157,532
DCC disability residential (incl. short break)	2,217,613	1,982,897	-234,716
Agency residential (incl. disability)	3,408,412	3,504,376	95,964
Further Education & Higher Education support grants	-33,750	115,915	149,665
Children In Care Education Services	617,815	585,336	-32,479
Named Nurses	136,269	126,709	-9,560
Agency fostering (Independent Foster Agencies)	3,485,801	4,567,186	1,081,385
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,792,244</b>	<b>24,025,078</b>	<b>1,232,834</b>
Non-disability cost per occupied bed range			£2,000 to £2,970
Average full year placement cost			£112,840
Disability residential unit cost	Short breaks average cost per night		£450
	Peak residential full year placement cost		£150,000

This data enables some analysis and understanding of costs related to children in care and care leavers; additional factors include other salary costs, occupancy levels, projects such as foster carer computers and noting that the majority of disability residential provision is short break.



## **1.7 Delivery Priorities**

The successful implementation of the strategy will achieve:

- Improved health and well-being.
- Greater resilience.
- Improved placement stability, safety and quality.
- Better attainment at school for children and young people.
- Young people leaving care on an educational and/or work route that meets their ambitions.
- Positive feedback from young people.

Additionally, effective planning and practice will enable best use of available resources.

The Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan will be comprised of plans from each of the component sub-groups of the Children in Care Strategic Governance Group, identifying which of the targets and outcomes they are accountable for, and what actions, changes and outputs they will deliver in order to realise these.

Each plan will use a standard format and wherever possible will be informed by feedback from children and young people.

Additionally, service plans such as the Fostering Service Plan specify their priorities and actions to meeting outcomes through improved service delivery.

All plans are dynamic and subject to monitoring, review and update; consequently they do not form part of this document but are held by CAYA business services and the relevant chair or senior manager.

## PART TWO – Where are we now and where do we aim to be?

### 2.1 Overall blueprint

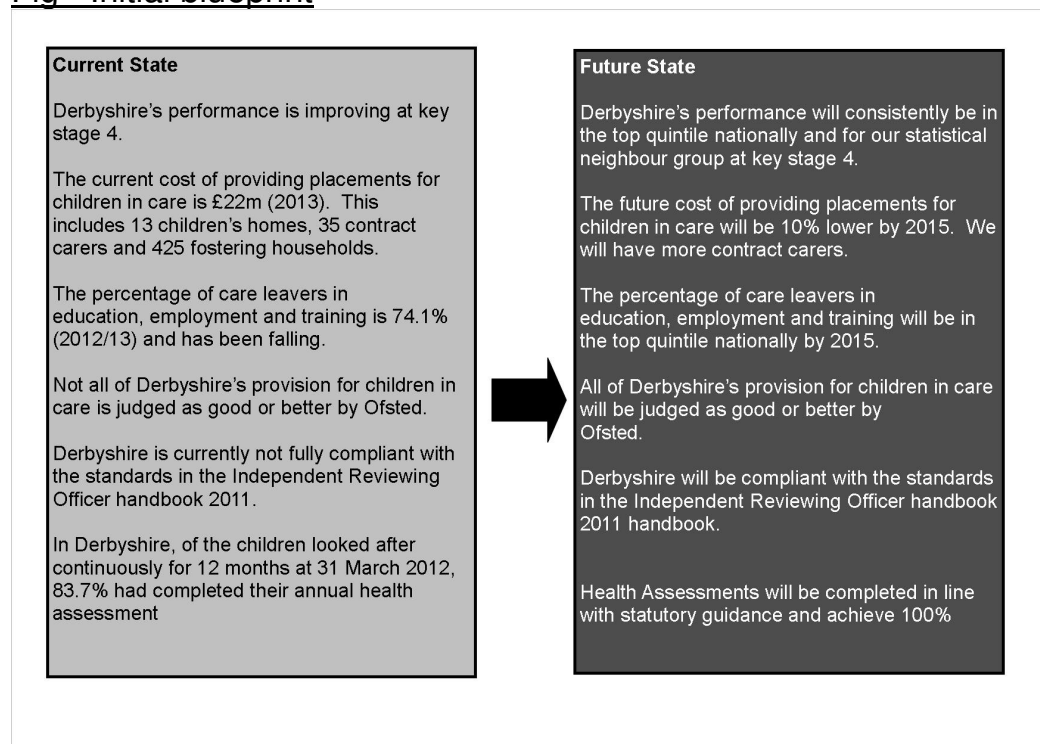
The blueprint considers the current position and describes the future services, outcomes and impact Derbyshire aims to achieve, therefore delivering on the strategic objectives for children in care and care leavers.

In essence, the blueprint defines – what does excellent Corporate Parenting look like – and how can you tell?

Both the overarching blueprint, and component elements relating to specific services and needs, will be subject to regular revision through:

- Analysis of performance and priorities.
- Participation of children, young people in care and care leavers in defining – ‘What does excellent look like?’
- Participation of key staff and stakeholders in defining the same question.
- Evaluation of work led by the Uni-fi initiative.
- Celebrating success and learning from best practice, nationally and internationally.

Fig - Initial blueprint



## **2.2 Health and Well-being – A Healthy Derbyshire**

### **2.2.1 Objectives**

- Children in Care are as healthy as any child in Derbyshire.
- Children are healthier when they leave care than when they entered care.
- Children and young people in care are healthy in body and mind and live in healthy places.

### **Actions and developments are detailed in the health action plan and include:**

- Promotion of healthy lifestyles via good communication to all care providers – foster carers, residential carers and others.
- Ensuring that there is an annual assessment of the emotional well-being of children in care to meet statutory requirement under the 2009 Statutory Guidance on promoting the Health and Well-being of children in care, via a tool such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, with clear pathways to a range of interventions that support Carers, Social Workers and a link to specialist CAMHS as necessary.
- CAMHS Services being easily accessible by children in care with a specific need.
- Supporting young people in care regarding their sexual health, with access to specialist guidance and help where necessary.
- Ensuring early identification and access for substance misuse treatment services. Older children in care should be screened to identify their use of substances and any needs for services arising from this. There should be a pathway to the Substance Misuse Worker dedicated to children in care which includes onward referral to specialist services as necessary.
- Involving birth families in initial health assessments, where it is safe to do so. This will help in achieving appropriate early information sharing and assist in the smoother return home where that is the planned outcome for the child.
- Work to ensure that a child's cultural and religious needs are met, respected and promoted.
- Ensure that the health and wellbeing needs for children in care are reflected in Derbyshire's procedures especially for children who are placed in such 'out of county' placements as secure accommodation and complex care placements.

### **2.2.2 Where are we now and where do we want to be?**

The following key health outcomes relate to children in care in Derbyshire and who have been in care for at least 12 months, though other health interventions such as initial health assessments clearly involve the full group of children in care.

Fuller performance information in Appendix 8 includes:

- Statutory Initial and Review Health Assessments
- Immunisations
- Optical and Dental checks

#### **a) Emotional Health and Resilience**

As described in the introduction, improving emotional health and resilience is multi-faceted and integral to our strategy.

Work to achieve this includes:

- Services provided by our commissioned Horizons service, directly with children and young people and also with their carers and staff.
- Interventions by educational psychologists, including in children's homes.
- Initiatives within the Uni-fi project.

Measurement of this is focused on the completion of an individual Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for each child or young person in care by their carer; the results of which are averaged to produce a score for Derbyshire as a whole.

In 2011/12 Derbyshire's average score was 15.9 which was significantly above national (13.8) and regional (14.9) figures. Derbyshire's percentage of children in care for whom an SDQ was submitted (77) was higher than the national percentage (70) and regional percentage (67) which may be statistically significant. The number of children in care in Derbyshire is also lower and therefore likely to have higher average needs than a larger cohort. In 2012/13 Derbyshire's average score was 14.9.

The findings of the SDQ assessment are analysed and services provided in a coordinated way to meet any unmet need. We will ensure CAMHS provide targeted support to children in care where needs in this area are having an adverse effect on their mental health and well-being.

#### **b) Health Assessment**

Derbyshire reviewed its approach to assessments over 2012/13 and now uses the BAAF form, improved consent form for those with parental responsibility and expects the attendance of the Social Worker at the initial health assessment to ensure all information about the child's health needs is shared as necessary.

In Derbyshire, of the children looked after continuously for 12 months at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, 83.7% had completed their annual health assessment. This marks a 0.1% improvement on the previous year's figure but a decline of 11.6% since 2007-08.

In 2011/12, the rate in Derbyshire was lower than, but not significantly different to the England average (86.3%). Within its statistical neighbour group, Derbyshire had the eighth lowest proportion of children in care completing their annual health assessment. This is contrary to the position in 2007/08 when Derbyshire had the strongest performance of all Local Authorities in the group.

Derbyshire Children in Care Health Team has been reconfigured to ensure a countywide approach to the health care of children in care. It is felt that this new approach will significantly improve the number of completed review assessments. It is recognised that the number of older teenagers coming into care has increased and will continue to be a challenge in terms of engaging them with health assessments which may have an adverse impact on completed health assessment figures.

### **c) Substance Misuse**

Our data tells us that on average 30 children in care who have been in care for 12 months or more have been identified as having a substance misuse problem at any one point in time in Derbyshire.

Derbyshire percentage of children in care who have been identified as having a substance misuse problem was 7.0% in 2012/13. In 2011/12 it was 9.2% which was higher than the national percentage (4.1%), Regional percentage (4.2%) and Statistical Neighbour Comparator Group percentage (3.9%).

At Derbyshire operational district level in 2012/13 South Derbyshire and South Dales (13.5%) has significantly higher percentage of children in care who have been identified as having a substance misuse problem and North East Derbyshire and Bolsover (3.0%) has a significantly lower percentage when compared to the County as a whole (7.0%).

In 2011/12 of those children in care identified as having a substance misuse problem 55.5% received an intervention compared to 54.7% nationally and 61.5% regionally.

Tackling this issue is a priority in the work plan for improving health outcomes.

### **d) Public Health**

We are keen to maximise the opportunities provided by Public Health coming within the Local Authority to strengthen our services and improve outcomes across all the Public Health domains. Regarding obesity; an audit process has been introduced to establish a baseline. Public Health has supported a pilot this year specifically aimed at obese young people and their carers, with a view to developing healthy lifestyles commensurate with weight loss. Within settings, healthy eating, swimming and exercise are promoted and training is underway for

the Named Nurses for Children in Care and care providers. Smoking cessation staff provide advice and guidance. Support to pregnant care leavers has been included in the work plan for 2013.

**e) Health Information for Children in Care and Care Leavers**

This has been identified as a gap by Caring Voice. After a young person has left care they need to be able to find out key information such as have they had chicken pox or what immunisations they have had. The Designated Nurse for Children in Care has consulted with young people about what information they want and how, and this is being rolled out from September 2013.

**f) Cross Border Arrangements for Statutory Health Assessments**

North Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group has implemented the Responsible Commissioner Who Pays? Guidance (2007); this has been set up as a single point of contact within Derbyshire to ensure that there is effective provision and monitoring of Review Health Assessments for Derbyshire Children living in other Local Authority areas.

**g) Disabled Children and Young People**

The special needs of individual children and young people are recognised and specialist services provided as required. Derbyshire is committed to ensuring that all children and young people have the opportunity to meet their full potential.

<b>2.3 A Safer Derbyshire - Child Protection, Safety and Placement Stability</b>
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**2.3.1 Objectives**

Derbyshire is determined to improve the safety of all children and young people. Safety is fundamental to improved outcomes and better lives. If children are not safe, they cannot be happy, healthy, achieve or reach their full potential. All children in care are to be protected from harm, through good quality planning and care.

Children in care are a vulnerable group who need increased support throughout their time in care and beyond. Securing better placement stability and increased choice is one of the ways Derbyshire will act to ensure children stay safe. In stable placements children can feel safe and are able to learn those social and life skills which will enable them to look after themselves in adulthood. Young people are discouraged from leaving their final placement until they are ready to manage on their own, with ongoing support as required. Our main goal is to secure placement stability through increased placement choice.

**Actions and developments are detailed in relevant service plans and include:**

- Involvement of Elected Members in visiting and monitoring children's homes, work is underway as part of the review of Quality Assurance to consider whether this is best done as part of the Regulation 33 visit (these are monitoring visits undertaken under the Children's Homes Regulation 2001 by independent managers) or other methods.
- Implementation of national guidance on strengthening the role of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) in regard to maintaining placements, and securing compliance with review processes.
- Seek to maintain regular visits by Social Workers beyond the statutory minimum where children or young people in care are placed out of the County.
- Further embedding protocols and best practice to safeguard those children or young people at risk of becoming 'runaways' (children missing from care), and those young people at risk of sexual exploitation.
- Reduce the criminalisation of children in care by: promoting the use of restorative justice approaches in residential care; maintaining the protocol with the Police which applies the 'reasonable parent' test to minor offending by children in care so as to reduce formal reprimands; inform staff and foster carers on how legal processes work within the youth crime arena; diversion from crime activities.
- Building on safer recruitment practice by improving our systems of auditing for 'refresh' checks for staff and reviewing the way we recruit adopters and foster carers.
- Promotion of anti-bullying awareness and good practice in all placement types.
- Reviewing and improving the assessments undertaken in children's homes, especially the short term home, using a model which is based on resilience theory and applies learning from other Local Authorities and exchange visits with Swedish colleagues.

### **2.3.2 Where are we now and where do we want to be?**

The following key data relates to children in care in Derbyshire and who have been in care for at least 12 months.

Fuller performance information in Appendix 8 includes:

#### **a) Placement Stability**

The placement Sufficiency Strategy sets out Derbyshire's plan to ensure that there are sufficient options available which are close to the family home.

In summary, in Derbyshire we have always sought to maximise the opportunities for children in care to experience a family-like structure, primarily through living with relatives and friends or through fostering and adoption, with a view to

promoting permanence. Increasingly permanence is achieved through Residence and Special Guardianship Orders. We also recognise that for some children and young people residential care is the preferred option and we have invested in refurbishment of existing settings to support this choice.

During 2012/13 Derbyshire's percentage of children in care who have had three moves or more during the last 12 months was 9.6%. In 2011/12 the percentage was 7.9%, which was lower than the national percentage (11.0%) and Derbyshire was ranked third highest out of eleven Authorities within our statistical neighbour comparator.

In 2012/13 Derbyshire's percentage of children in care who have been in care for two years or more and have been with their current placement for two and a half years or more was 65.0%. In 2011/12 the percentage was 69.5%, which was slightly above the national percentage (68.0%) and the statistical neighbour average (67.9%). Derbyshire was ranked fifth highest out of eleven Authorities within our statistical neighbour comparator group.

#### **b) Oversight by, and involvement of Independent Reviewing Officers [IROs]**

The IRO Team was increased in 2013 in response to the growth in numbers of children in care and the IRO Handbook 2011. In April 2013, an audit was undertaken of IRO practice against the basic requirements and best practice described in the IRO Handbook. This found that although Derbyshire is meeting most of the basic requirements, such as 'Where a looked after child is also a parent of a looked after child the two should have separate IROs'; and many of the best practice features; there are a number of actions needed to ensure full compliance. Regarding basic requirements, this includes always ensuring the IRO speaks to the Social Worker at least 15 days before the review (rather than just reading case records) and for best practice, the IRO having sight of all the legal papers being submitted in care proceedings by the Local Authority. These actions have been raised with relevant managers and escalation pathway established for any related concerns. The IRO service is part of the current Quality Assurance review.

#### **c) Missing**

Whilst the overall trend for children in care going missing is down, given the extreme vulnerability of these young people, the Missing for Care protocol is being reviewed and re-launched to ensure, for instance, return interviews and compliance with statutory guidance. The co-ordination and oversight of missing children and young people was moved in 2013 to the Police Central Referral Unit to ensure a co-ordinated and effective approach.



The year-end figures below are cumulative to 31.03.12 and 31.03.13 and show a sustained downward trend.

	2011/12	2012/13	+/-
Number children reported missing	524	459	-12%
Number missing episodes	1226	1008	-18%
Number children missing from home	416	386	-4%
Number missing from home episodes	843	789	-7%
Number children missing from children's homes	108	73	-32%
Number missing from children's home episodes	383	219	-43%
Number children missing from DCC children's homes	52	34	-35%
Episodes missing from DCC children's homes	200	107	-46%
Number children missing from Other Local Authorities [OLA] children's homes	57	39	-32%
Episodes missing from OLA children's homes	183	112	-39%
Episodes missing from DCC foster care (est.)	130	Na	
Episode missing from OLA foster care (est.)	30	Na	

#### d) Child Sexual Exploitation

Staff across children's services have received briefings regarding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and so, for instance, residential staff are alert to young people having unexplained money or mobile phones and acting accordingly. Whilst safeguarding procedures are followed regarding individual children and young people, the High Risk Management Group is the forum where concerns regarding a number of young people can be tackled. Planning is underway for joint work with Safe and Sound, a Derby based but nationally renowned voluntary organisation specialising in this issue; the work will include training, strategy development and auditing the quality and effectiveness of practice with young people.

**e) Bullying**

We are committed to tackling bullying and ensuring that children in care are safe and develop self-esteem. Bullying is defined as an aggressive, intentional act or behaviour, that is carried out by a group or individual usually repeatedly and over time against another individual or group. Each children's home has a nominated staff member who co-ordinates and takes the lead on anti-bullying within the home. The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator attends regular anti-bullying meetings and links with the LA lead on bullying.

Each children's' home works towards The STOP Anti-Bullying Award, administered by the Local Authority. Given the evidence nationally of the impact of cyber-bullying, our anti-bullying approach includes specific information and advice for young people and staff on this issue.

**f) Final Warnings, Reprimands, Convictions and other Police activity**

There are on average 273 children and young people in care who are aged 10 or over and have been in care for 12 months or more each year in Derbyshire.

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care who have received a final warning, reprimand or conviction was 8.6% in 2012/13. In 2011/12 the rate was 12.4% which was higher than the national percentage (6.9%) and our statistical neighbour group (7.4%).

At Derbyshire operational district level in 2012/13 Amber Valley (13.2%), High Peak and North Dales (11.3%) and South Derbyshire and South Dales (12.0%) had higher percentage of children in care receiving final warnings, reprimands or convictions and North East Derbyshire and Bolsover (4.3%) and Chesterfield (6.8%) had a lower percentage when compared to the County as a whole (8.6%).

In recognition of this problem, a ring-fenced post was agreed in the Youth Offending Service (YOS) in 2012 and this has already impacted positively on reducing offending and supporting a multi-agency co-ordinated approach which is consistent across the County.

The LASPO [Legal Aid and Punishment of Offenders] Act 2012 changed the statutory responsibility for young people on remand so that a young person can acquire LAC status. The provisions of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Amendments Regulations) 2013 apply. There is a protocol between the Youth Offending Service [YOS] and Social Care on how such young people are supported. Immediate information is shared with relevant managers with the Derbyshire YOS undertaking the first statutory visit within five days. The placement is treated as an unplanned/emergency placement.

Additionally, at the time of writing, work is underway with operational Social Care, YOS and the Police to look at procedures and provision for those young people arrested and who should not be kept in the cells overnight at the Police station.

#### **g) Cross border placements**

Children in care can be especially vulnerable when they are placed out of area, both Derbyshire children placed elsewhere and children from other Local Authorities placed in Derbyshire. Derbyshire is part of the East Midlands protocol.

For the former group, we have ensured a robust approach to notifying receiving authorities that this is embedded in our electronic client systems.

For the latter group, Derbyshire aim to achieve best practice which includes:

- Linking with private residential providers.
- Taking a robust approach to requests for Exemptions to Usual Fostering Limits approval.
- Sharing data with the Police.
- Co-ordinated responses to those who are missing.

When making placements out of area or with the independent sector, we are committed to ensuring our children are placed in homes rated at least 'Good'. If a home's judgement changes, the suitability of the placement is reviewed and where necessary, the frequency of visits increased.

The size of Derbyshire can also mean risks when children are placed within the county but a distance from home which is recognised in care planning.

## **2.4 Education and Attainment**

### **2.4.1. Objectives**

All children in care are to be encouraged to do their very best at school by staff and carers who take a real interest in the children's aspirations and achievements in education, as well as their concerns or difficulties. Staff and carers should have close relationships with schools and undertake to work in partnership with them and avoid any disruptions to schooling. Derbyshire recognises the key role of educational attainment as children in improving overall outcomes and well-being for care leavers.

**Actions and developments are co-ordinated in the Education Strategic Group and include:**

- Supporting initiatives such as Physical Literacy and Every Child a Talker to ensure children come to school ready to learn.
- Securing Reception and Key Stage 1 interventions to improve outcomes in reading and writing.
- Securing Year 6 and Year 11 interventions and preparation for exams/tests.
- Maintaining a strong focus on the education of young people at Key Stage 4 and trialling the use of financial incentives to promote their achievement.
- Ensuring the most appropriate support at the earliest point and providing targeted support for children and young people in care based on careful monitoring and tracking of progress and well-being.
- Developing effective data systems to track, monitor and share information about the education of children in care.
- Working closely with schools to maximise effective use of Pupil Premium.
- Maintaining and developing an effective Personal Education Plan (PEP) system which leads to more meaningful involvement of young people and improved quality of PEPs.
- Delivering training to designated teachers in Derbyshire schools and to foster carers, residential workers and social work staff.
- Arranging and encouraging participation in university visits and events to develop the aspirations of young people.
- Minimising the number of children in care who need to change schools in Year 11.
- Ensuring good quality full-time alternative educational arrangements are in place for young people who are not attending school.
- Positive action to promote good school attendance with children, young people and their carers.
- Work is underway to improve the careers advice and guidance provided, from Year 7 and is in the 16+ action plan.

#### **2.4.2 Where are we now and where do we want to be?**

Our key objective of supporting children and young people to be 'the best they can be' requires a range of approaches: cultural and aspirational; tracking and acting on performance measures and data and celebrating and sharing success and best practice. A new full-time Virtual Head has recently been appointed and commenced in post September 2013.

The following key data relates to children in care in Derbyshire and who have been in care for at least 12 months. This information and analysis will comprise the scheduled Virtual School reporting arrangements due to commence Autumn 2013.

Fuller performance information in Appendix 8 includes:

- Attainment at Key Stage 1
- Attainment at Key Stage 2

- Attainment at Key Stage 3
- Attainment at Key Stage 4
- PEP completion

#### **a) Raising Aspirations**

This is embedded throughout Derbyshire's Children in Care Strategy and Improvement Programme and includes:

- Uni-fi led work with Year 7s ( now Year 8s), testing out a range of approaches including building on how this cohort's success at Key Stage 2 can be maintained through to Key Stage 4 and beyond. This includes early access to inspirational experiences and activities.
- Achievement awards and Big Book Bash.
- Work done by the Care Leaver Employment Project (CLEP) with Derby University to enable young people in care to learn more about university and hear from Care Leavers who have successfully graduated.
- Mentors. There are a number of mentoring schemes which are currently subject to review.
- Students attend university open days.

#### **b) Absence from School**

During 2011/12, the overall absence rate for children in Derbyshire who had been looked after continuously for 12 months or more was in line with the National average at 4.7%. This was slightly above the statistical neighbour average which was 4.4%. Derbyshire ranked 7<sup>th</sup> (out of 11) in the statistical neighbour group for this measure. It should be noted that performance in primary phase is better than mainstream peer group.

Tighter scrutiny of this has been implemented using the new Governance approach.

#### **c) Permanent and Fixed Term Exclusions**

Derbyshire children in care receiving a permanent exclusion has reduced significantly from 3.11% of total permanent exclusions during academic year 2007/08 to 0% of total permanent exclusions during academic year 2011/12. As at June 2013 there had been no permanent exclusions of Derbyshire children in care during the academic year 2012/13.

The number of children in care receiving a fixed term exclusion was 3.2% of all exclusions in 2011/12. The majority of fixed term exclusions are for disruptive behaviour and verbal abuse.

Our aspiration is for children and young people, and educational settings, to receive the necessary advice, guidance and support which mean that children in

care are not excluded from school. Additionally, if they are excluded, a speedy and effective multi-disciplinary response results in them quickly receiving a meaningful education.

**d) Those receiving less than 25 hours education**

This small number of young people is closely monitored with the objective of senior managers securing their return to full-time education as quickly as possible.

**e) Early Years**

Derbyshire recognises the importance of ensuring that all children in care access their free entitlement to early education and that all have a Personal Education Plan. Advice and guidance has been circulated to foster carers. There are a number of initiatives such as Physical Literacy training for foster carers and Every Child a Talker to ensure children come to school ready to learn.

**f) Children who move school placement in Key Stage 4**

Placement stability is essential to supporting educational attainment. The Children in Care Education Service are a member of the Placement Matching Panel and so contribute to decision-making. Senior management agreement has to be gained before a young person in Key Stage 4 moves care placement where this necessitates a change in school.

**g) Further and Higher Education**

In 2012 Derbyshire agreed a new policy to define our support for young people to follow apprenticeships and to attend Further and Higher education.

<b>2.5 Economic Wellbeing and Independence</b>
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**2.5.1 Objectives**

Leaving care is a critical time for many young people and they should be provided with, or signposted to, safe and appropriate accommodation and supported by a range of agencies, with access to an identified trusted adult. Although the focus is on Care Leavers, the Strategic Group includes children in care aged 16+ in recognition that planning for adult life is generally well underway by 16. Recent work (Summer and Autumn 2013) undertaken by care leavers about the Care Leaver Charter has provided essential information on what is important for care leavers in Derbyshire and is influencing service planning and prioritisation.

Some of what they said included:

- Respect me for who I am - Understand me for who I am and accept me.

- Tell me ALL my options - Help me to gain the skills I need – organisational/budget/college work/cooking.
- Help me with a plan - Make time for me to listen to my news.
- I want support even when I'm doing well - I want the same person seeing me through everything.
- A place to live is not necessarily a home.

**Actions and developments are co-ordinated in the 16+ and Care leaver Strategic Group and include:**

- Ensuring care leavers are safe and feel safe, and that they feel positive about themselves.
- Increase the availability of suitable accommodation for care leavers across all districts of Derbyshire, both with or without support, including emergency accommodation.
- Improvement of the pathway planning process to address all young people's needs before they reach their sixteenth birthday, and then continue into adult life.
- Compliance with the Transition Pathway including consideration of legal intervention where required.
- Ensuring that care leavers receive the necessary support which includes the availability of a trusted adult.
- An increase in the number of external work experience and apprenticeship opportunities available to care leavers.
- Promotion of access to County Council based work experience, apprenticeships and permanent employment for young people in care and young people leaving care.
- Development of a project to develop young people's skills in financial management including allowances, welfare benefits and investments.
- Promotion of income maximisation for care leavers through employment, welfare rights and other financial advice.
- That care leavers health needs are identified and met, and that they have access to and understand their health records.

**2.5.2 Where are we now and where do we want to be?**

Performance information in Appendix 8 includes:

- The percentage of care leavers who were in care at age 16 who are in employment, education or training at age 19.
- The percentage of care leavers who were in care at age 16 who were living in suitable accommodation at age 19.
- The percentage of care leavers who were in care at age 16 who were in custody at age 19.

## **a) Financial Capability**

Derbyshire recognise the importance of supporting children and young people in care to develop financial capability and are implementing a range of approaches to support this, led by the views of young people. The relevant action plan is overseen by the 16+ and Care Leaver Group and is part of the Financial Inclusion Strategy for Derbyshire more widely in both its Financial Capability Action Plan and Savings Action Plan.

## **b) Accommodation**

As stressed by young people themselves, safe and appropriate accommodation is essential for the physical and emotional well-being of care leavers; this could mean remaining with their existing carers via the Staying Put Policy or remaining in their children's home after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday so they can be supported to enter and remain in employment, education or training. The Staying Put policy supports carers to continue to offer a home for young people away at university so they can come home in holidays.

Accommodation is regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable provision for young people. It would generally include short-term accommodation designed to move young people on to stable long-term accommodation, but would exclude emergency accommodation used in a crisis. Care leavers are a key group at risk of social exclusion and ensuring care leavers are in suitable accommodation is intended to help minimise the risk of care leavers living in unsuitable housing or becoming homeless.

Over 2012/13 Derbyshire re-commissioned its supported accommodation services and new contracts commence from April 2014.

There were 135 young people who left Derbyshire's care in 2012/13 aged 16 and over, with the majority of these leaving care on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Derbyshire's percentage of Care Leavers at age 19 who are living in suitable accommodation was 94.8% in 2012/13, which was an increase from 93.9% in 2011/12. In 2011/12 Derbyshire was higher than the percentages seen nationally (88.0%), regionally (85.0%) and within our statistical neighbour comparator group (87.5%). During 2011/12 Derbyshire was ranked as the highest performing Authority within our statistical neighbour and regional groups.

At Derbyshire operational district level in 2011/12 High Peak & North Dales (100%), North East Derbyshire (100%), Amber Valley (100%) and South Derbyshire and South Dales (100%) had significantly higher percentages of care leavers age 19 living in suitable accommodation and Erewash (85.7%) and Bolsover (50.0%) had a significantly lower percentage when compared to the County as a whole (93.9%).



### **c) Employment, Education and Training**

Derbyshire's percentage of Care Leavers at age 19 that are in education, employment or training had fallen in 2012/13 to 74.1% compared to 81.6% in 2011/12.

Aiming for 100% of our care leavers being in appropriate employment, education and training (EET) is our ambition with the minimum expectation being that EET numbers for care leavers are at least equal to that of the broader population.

Derbyshire's Care Leaver Employment Project (CLEP) has received national recognition for the effectiveness and impact of their work. This small team focuses on identifying external apprenticeships for care leavers and supporting young people to complete them successfully. For some this has resulted in full-time employment. The CLEP team are flexible in providing tailored support and mentoring which enables young people to overcome additional hurdles which may be related to gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.

CLEP work closely with the commissioned Care Leaver Service in supporting and enabling young people in care and care leavers to access a range of work placements and experience and apprenticeships.

Derbyshire County Council provides a growing number of apprenticeships, and this is organised via an external partner. There is an increasing level of close working between this scheme and the Care Leaver Services to ensure that young people in care and care leavers receive a greater opportunity to access these placements.

As part of our renewed commitment to robust Corporate Parenting in practice, Chief Officers across the Council have encouraged their services to offer work related opportunities for young people in care and care leavers. To date this has included interview skills by Community Safety, work experience in Public Relations and work placements in Technical Services.

As mentioned above under education, Derbyshire has recently reviewed the Funding Policy for Further and Higher Education. A key objective is to encourage and support children in care and care leavers to maximise their educational and related life opportunities.

At Derbyshire operational district level in 2011/12 both North East Derbyshire (100%) and South Derbyshire and South Dales (100%) had significantly higher percentages of care leavers age 19 in education, employment or training and Amber Valley (71.4%) had a lower percentage when compared to the County as a whole (81.6%).

From July 2013, young people who are in care or care leavers 16 – 18 NEETs and EET and lapsed are scrutinised as a unique priority group in the weekly NEET monitoring report considered by the NEET task force meeting.

The current review of Careers Guidance provision is consulting a range of stakeholders to determine the most effective way of providing targeted information, advice and guidance to young people in care and care leavers.

#### **d) Health**

The Care Leaver Service supports care leavers to ensure their health needs are met, including advice on drug and alcohol use. As mentioned above, the Designated Nurse for Children in Care has consulted with young people about what information they want and how, and this will be rolled out by September 2013.

Care leavers can receive additional support if they become parents through CAF and Family Nurse Partnership for expectant mothers and fathers.

For those care leavers with significant disabilities, the transition protocol is followed to ensure early notification and careful planning with Adult Care.

#### **e) Staying in Contact**

Staying in contact with care leavers, by a trusted adult, is mainly achieved by the Care Leavers Service. Other approaches, dependent on the situation of the young person include: mentors; supporting foster carers to maintain contact (for instance providing a home for university holidays); maintaining links with residential care staff and keeping in touch via careers staff.

### **2.6 Workforce Development**

Workforce development plans are described in the CAYA workforce development strategy ( [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/working\\_for\\_us/workforce\\_development](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/working_for_us/workforce_development)). Key development activities include:

- Social pedagogy.
- Training for foster carers and contract carers about education.
- Total Respect.
- Person-centred approaches.
- Health issues.

## **PART THREE – Action Planning for Change**

### **3.1 Governance**

As described above, the Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategic Plan is and will be delivered by the Service Development Groups identified above. Each completes a specific service plan using a consistent template, identifying which of the targets and outcomes they are accountable for, and what actions, changes and outputs they will deliver in order to realise these.

### **3.2 Monitoring**

The Chair of each strategy group will be required to produce a highlight report for each meeting of the over-arching Strategy and Governance Group, identifying progress against the agreed plan, risks and issues, change requests, and compliance with expected standards. These will be submitted no fewer than five working days prior to the Governance Group meeting.

The Programme plan will identify key points at which decisions will be escalated either to Cabinet, or the Corporate Parenting Committee or both.

The Head of Children in Care Provision will identify interdependencies between component strategy groups, and align actions where there is the opportunity to add value or reduce duplication.

### **3.3 Standards**

Each Strategy group will ensure that:

- Children and young people, their carers and other key stakeholders, participate in the shaping and monitoring of the strategy.
- Progress against actions identified in the Plan is adhered to.

The Head of Children in Care Provision will hold the Programme Risk Register, using the agreed register document, attached in Appendix 7.

Strategy Group Chairs will identify risks from their programme areas, and communicate these via the highlight reports.

The Head of Children in Care Provision will also retain an issues log, using the agreed log document, and will escalate issues as required to the Strategic Director, SMT or Elected Members as required.

### **3.4 Information Management**

Each Strategy Group Chair will identify the information requirements for their project, including data already collected and plans for new information collection, and the methods planned for collecting and analysing the information.

For data requirements, these will be submitted as a single request to the information team, along with a schedule for the information to be received, to the data teams.

### **3.5 Quality Management**

Quarterly reports will be submitted to SMT as the Programme Board, as part of the department's performance management process. SMT will be expected to identify quality issues within the programme and its component strategy groups.

A representative from the Children in Care Council attends the Strategy and Governance Group, and reports will be submitted quarterly to the Council, who can provide challenges and ask questions where there are quality issues.

The Corporate Parenting Committee will receive regular reports, and will assess the quality of the approaches being used, and the progress made.

Where issues with poor quality are identified, the Strategy and Governance Group will agree appropriate action.

### **3.6 Communications and Stakeholder Engagement**

The following stakeholders will play a role in the development and implementation of the Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategy and improvement programme and its component work streams:

- Children and young people in care, and care leavers.
- Carers, including foster and contract carers and residential workers.
- Birth families, where appropriate.
- Staff working with children in care, including Social Workers, Personal Advisors, health staff, Children in Care Education Services, Leaving Care Services, Youth Workers, Youth Offending Services, Independent Reviewing Officers, Service Managers and others.
- Derbyshire County Council Elected Members.
- Derbyshire County Council strategic management.
- The Children's Trust, and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the partner organisations that comprise the Trust.
- Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Other Local Authorities.

- Schools, colleges and providers of training and learning.
- The wider Derbyshire County Council workforce.
- Employers, potential employers and other providers of support and services for young people.
- NESTA and the LGA as leaders of the Creative Councils Programme in support of Uni-fi.

Communications within the strategy and programme will be focused on engagement; the development of a two way dialogue to achieve improved services and outcomes.

The following methods are and will be used to engage stakeholders:

- Information and discussion points on websites and via social media.
- Regular meetings with Caring Voice and engagement with children and young people as identified appropriate by the Children in Care Council.
- Written communications, such as leaflets, cards and booklets.
- Open invitation events.
- Focus groups and design sessions/workshops.
- Individual discussions/consultations.
- Survey tools.
- Presentations.
- Written and verbal updates, such as briefing notes for managers.
- Formal reports including highlight reports, to Corporate Parenting Committees, Corporate Management Team, Strategy Groups, Boards etc.
- Development days/sessions for particular stakeholder groups.

## Appendix 1

### **Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee Terms of Reference**

The Corporate Parenting Committee will provide clear strategic direction and accountability for services designed for the following groups:

- Young people in residential care.
- Children and young people in foster care.
- Children placed for adoption.
- Young people who are care leavers.
- Disabled children and young people who receive short break services.

The Committee will be charged with ensuring that the County Council discharges its responsibilities as a Corporate Parent appropriately and that it and its partners have the highest possible commitment to improving outcomes for children in care.

In particular it will:

- Develop and agree a “Corporate Parenting Pledge” that will set out the County Council’s commitment and set a regular cycle of review.
- Receive regular reports on the level and quality of services, (including complaints) provided to the children in care population in Derbyshire including care leavers.
- Ensure, with health partners, that health outcomes continue to improve and that all children in care have access to an appropriate range of medical, dental and mental health services.
- Continue the programme of visits, both planned, and unplanned, to children’s homes, and receive appropriate associated reports.
- Receive reports on educational attainment and school attendance of children in care.
- Promote access to Council based work experience, apprenticeships and permanent employment for young people in care and young people leaving care.
- Promote the achievement and acknowledge the aspirations of children and young people by continuing to support events of celebration.
- Commission reports as necessary to ensure that Members of the Authority have the information that will enable them to fulfil their role as Corporate Parents.
- Take into account the equal opportunities and the diverse needs of children in the care of the Council.
- Participate in meetings with external inspectors where appropriate.

- Report to Cabinet and other appropriate bodies on the work of the Committee at regular intervals.
- Contribute to the Council's current and future business and service plans and to monitor service delivery and effectiveness against the plans.

### **Membership**

The Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee will consist of **three** Cabinet Members with voting rights; and **five** Support Members. It will meet once every two months.

n.b. These are to be reviewed following discussion at Corporate Parenting Committee September 2013.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Children in Care Strategy and Governance Group (CCSGG)**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **Aim of Group**

The Children in Care Strategy and Governance Group (CCSGG) will develop the strategy for children in care which will include the priorities for children in care services, strategic objectives and the approaches and methods to be used.

##### **Core Membership**

Deputy Strategic Director (Chair)  
Head of Children in Care Provision  
Caring Voice representative/s  
Assistant Director, Commissioning and Performance  
Assistant Director, Schools and Learning  
Virtual Head Teacher  
Barnardos  
Programme Manager  
Manager, IRO Service  
District Manager  
Children's Rights Officer

##### **Wider Membership**

The group will invite colleagues from children's and adults' health, education and social care services and partner agencies, and colleagues from the voluntary and community sectors, to attend meetings and/or to review documents as and when their expertise is required.

The group may also create 'task and finish' groups, with members drawn from key service providers, children and young people, to take forward work on particular issues.

##### **Scope of Group**

The group focusses upon children in care and care leavers aged 0-25, but also considers factors relevant to children on the edge of care and the journey taken by children in care.



## **Terms of Reference**

The group develops the strategy for children in care which will include the priorities for children in care services, strategic objectives and the approaches and methods to be used.

It will achieve this by:

- Ensuring safe care for children in care and care leavers including overview of safeguarding practice.
- Reviewing and updating Derbyshire's Sufficiency Strategy.
- Overall co-ordination including preparation for the new Ofsted inspection framework.
- Considering the Derbyshire Offer for children in care and care leavers.
- Agreeing reports to Corporate Parenting Committee.
- Considering new policies and procedures.
- Developing and overseeing a performance management framework and having oversight of budgets relating to children in care services.
- Overseeing and co-ordinating the plans which will deliver the strategy, which will be managed and delivered via the service development and service delivery groups.
- Having oversight of performance indicators and measures and other work undertaken by the service groups.
- Serving as an escalation route, where local options have been fully explored, to identify and tackling obstacles preventing children in care and care leavers achieving their aspirations and potential.
- Identifying priority areas for service reviews/service improvement (in respect of services delivered in-house or externally commissioned), and agree how and when work should be taken forward.
- Identifying wider plans or developments nationally, or within Derbyshire, which could affect children in care and care leavers and take appropriate action.
- Discussing and commenting on proposed Local Authority and Health commissioning strategies and plans for services to children in care and care leavers to promote a joined-up approach which achieves value for money and avoids duplication.
- Ensuring that clear, appropriate pathways are in place for children in care and care leavers to access services and support across the County, with specific eligibility criteria and referral arrangements.
- Identify potential gaps in current services for children in care and care leavers and any actions needed to address them.

The group will incorporate oversight of activity undertaken as part of Uni-fi.

## **Reporting**

The group will make recommendations to the Corporate Parenting Committee and/or Children and Younger Adults Department Senior Management Team as appropriate.

The Children's Rights Officer/Head of Children in Care Provision, will offer the Children in Care Council regular feedback and reports about the work of the CCSGG and will enable members to feed in views and/or to engage in specific pieces of work.

## **Meetings**

Meetings will be held at the same frequency as Corporate Parenting Committee in the intervening months. They will be administered by the PA for the Strategic Deputy Director.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Improving Health Outcomes for Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers**

#### **Terms of Reference**

1. To set the strategic direction and priorities for the work of all who are engaged in improving health outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers, this includes all Derbyshire Children in Care wherever they are living, in order to deliver the following ambitions:-
  - Children in Care are as healthy as any child in Derbyshire.
  - Children are healthier when they leave care than when they entered care.
  - Children and young people in care are healthy in body and mind and live in healthy places.
2. To develop and promote plans to improve health outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers.
3. To demonstrate the impact of services on improving outcomes by collection and analysis of data, benchmarking and robust and transparent monitoring of key indicators.
4. Ensure that the experience and voice of children and young people are heard and influence service provision.
5. To commission work from others to address identified issues.
6. To monitor and promote the effective use of resources.
7. To ensure that children have access to high quality and effective services by addressing any service gaps or deficiencies through effective performance management and commissioning processes.

#### **Reporting**

To report to the Children in Care Strategy and Governance Group.

#### **Responsibility of Members**

1. Disseminate reports and ensure implementation within your service/agency.
2. Take responsibility for two way communication between staff and managers and this group.

## **Core Membership**

Consultant/Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Children in Care –  
Derbyshire County (Chair)  
Service Improvement Manager  
Children's Rights Officer  
Independent Reviewing Officer  
Public Health Senior representative  
District Manager  
Management Information Team representative  
Senior Practitioner, Disabled Children's Services  
Community Paediatrician

If people are unable to attend they should ensure that an appropriate representative attends.

## **Frequency**

Every 2 months.

## **Review**

These terms of reference will be reviewed in May 2014, unless directed otherwise by the Children in Care Strategy and Governance Group.

## Appendix 4

### **Corporate Strategy Group: Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People in Care aged 16+ and Care Leavers**

#### **Terms of Reference**

1. To set the operational and strategic direction and priorities for the work of all who are engaged in improve the lives and life chances for children and young people in care aged 16+ and care leavers with aspiration of ensuring that these young people achieve at least as well as their peers.
2. To monitor the County Council and partners' performance in improving outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers and to benchmark Derbyshire's performance against other authorities. Specifically to include:
  - Oversight and challenge of NEET data.
  - Oversight and challenge of other performance indicators: % of young people aged 19 who are/were in suitable accommodation and/or higher education; % who remain looked after until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday etc.
  - Other key factors such as pregnancy levels and health summaries for Care leavers.
  - Ensuring that the experience and voice of young people is heard and influences service provision.
3. To celebrate the successes of young people and raise aspirations.
4. To explore best practice examples and investigate how they can shape future developments.
5. To identify clear policy and practice guidance for all agencies involved in supporting young people in care aged 16+ and care leavers including training.
6. To commission work from others to address identified issues.
7. To co-ordinate the contribution of in-house and commissioned teams and services, through the scrutiny and monitoring of service plans and summary data reports. Specifically to include:
  - Barnardos
  - Care Leavers Employment Project
  - Housing Providers

8. To monitor and promote the effective use of resources and budgets by co-ordination.
9. To serve as an advisory body to tackle obstacles and find solutions where provision for individual young people in care 16+ and care leavers cannot be resolved by operational services.
10. To link, where necessary, with the Transition Programme Board, to address transition to adult life for those disabled young people who are care leavers.

## **Reporting**

To report to the Children in Care Strategy and Governance Group and, where required, Departments' Senior Management Teams, elected Members and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

## **Responsibility of Members**

1. Champion the needs and interests of care leavers in their organisations and services.
2. Disseminate reports and ensure implementation within your service/agency.
3. Take responsibility for two way communication between staff and managers and this group.

## **Core Membership**

Head of Children in Care Provision (Chair)  
Young person and/or Children's Rights/Advocate  
Barnardo's  
CLEP  
14-19 Manager  
District Manager – Specialist and Safeguarding  
Virtual Head Teacher  
Service Improvement Manager  
Targeted Services – Head of Services for Teenagers and/or Locality Manager  
Head of Youth Offending Service  
Adult Care – Senior Manager  
Independent Reviewing Officer  
Health provider/s

## **Frequency**

Every 2 months.

Standard agenda which includes:

Young Persons views

Education and IAG

Employment

Housing

Targeted Services

YOS/Offending

Health

Adult Services

Plus items for more detailed discussion

## **Appendix 5**

### **Derbyshire Educational Achievement Group**

#### **Terms of Reference**

To set the strategic direction and priorities for the work of all who are engaged in raising the educational achievement of children and young people in care aged 0 - 18 and Care Leavers in education up to the age of 25.

To be informed by the views of young people in care and care leavers

To monitor the County Council's performance in raising the educational achievement of children and young people in care and to benchmark Derbyshire's performance against other authorities

To commission work from others to address identified issues.

To act as a governing body for the virtual school.

To report to the Children in Care Strategy and Governance Group and the Corporate Parenting Committee.

To secure, co-ordinate and monitor the contribution of other teams and services to improving educational achievement.

To monitor the effective use of resources and budgets.

April 2013



## **Appendix 6**

### **Uni-fi Core Team**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **Context**

Derbyshire County Council was successfully selected to be part of the National Creative Councils Programme led by NESTA. Being part of this programme has ensured funding and external support for Derbyshire County Council to pilot, prototype and trial new ways of working within CAYA. We aim to develop and improve the services we offer for the children who are in our care – in consultation with those young people and the staff and foster carers that currently take care of them.

The 'Uni-fi' initiative wants to fundamentally shift the relationship between the council and the young people in its care. We are aiming to raise the educational aspirations and attainment of children in care, to close the gap between the achievement of children in care and their peers, increase the numbers that go to university and build resilience to help them achieve a happy adult life. There will be benefits not only for the young people themselves but also for society as a whole- children in care are over-represented in crime and unemployment figures, and are more likely to have poor mental health and become teenage parents. The Uni-fi initiative aims to break the cycle of low expectations for this group.

Two years on and the Uni-fi initiative has almost completed the Creative Councils journey which is due to end in October this year (2013) but the initiative has further DCC funding till 2015.

##### **Aims and function of the Core Team**

To shape and deliver the Uni-fi initiative alongside the Uni-fi programme and Project Managers. The team develops the strands of work that have emerged from the successful bid to be part of Creative Councils plus further the influence of Uni-fi as priorities emerge.

##### **Current Priorities:**

- Social Pedagogy - implementing a framework of training for potentially all of CAYA so that social pedagogy becomes the fundamental practise for all those working with young people.
- Mentoring – exploring the impact of different forms of mentoring and the success of this as an intervention in improving the life chances for young people
- Portfolio –exploring an on-line 'product' that could act as a 'memory box' or 'scrapbook' logging the young person's achievements alongside their

records, so that they remain in the control of the young person and are available throughout their lives.

- Endowment – a flexible personalised budget that can be used to motivate and support a young person's learning in collaboration with their carers and social worker. This could potentially replace the current standard funds that are reported to be difficult to access or come at the wrong time in a young person's development

## **Core Membership**

The Uni-fi Team is a unique mixed group of operational and managerial staff representing a range of services and functions:

Strategic Director of Children's services (Chair)  
Transformation Manager  
Uni-fi Project Manager (Vice-Chair)  
Fostering Social Worker  
Training Manager  
Children's Rights Officer  
Arts Education Consultant  
Educational Psychologist  
Accountant  
Young People's Social Worker  
Virtual Head Teacher  
Mentoring Co-ordinator  
Others invited to attend e.g. Head of Children in Care Provision

## **Governance**

The group will be accountable to CAYA Transformation Programme and Children in Care Governance Group and will report quarterly or more frequently as appropriate.

## **Meeting arrangements**

The meetings are chaired by the Strategic Director of Children's Services (Vice-Chair Uni-fi Project Manager) and take place bi-monthly.

## **Review of Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

**Appendix 7****Additional information****1. Plans for sub-groups – Education, Health, 16 + and Uni-Fi****2. Service Plans – Fostering, Residential, Adoption, CICES**

Plans and membership lists of Strategy groups are held by CAYA Business Services and relevant chairs and senior managers and monitored and reviewed to ensure up to date and appropriate.

**3. Link to JSNA [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/jsna](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/jsna)****4. Care Leavers Charter**

Report and DVD – presented to Corporate Parenting Committee 10/9/13

**5. Sufficiency Strategy – approved by Corporate Parenting Committee 10/9/13**

[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social\\_health/services\\_for\\_children/children\\_we\\_look\\_after](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social_health/services_for_children/children_we_look_after)

**6. Programme management template - Risk register**

Date	Description of risk	Raised by	Probability	Impact	Proximity	Action	Status

## Performance Data

### Health

#### **Development Assessments of Pre-school Children in Care**

There are, on average, 76 children in care aged 5 years or under at any one time in Derbyshire who have been in care for 12 months or more. The 2012/13 percentage whose development assessments were up to date is 92.9%, which is a slight decrease from the previous year (95.5%).

During 2011/12 Derbyshire (95.5%) was higher than the national percentage (80.2%) and, regional percentage (87.8%). The upward trend since 2004/2005 is in line with the trend seen nationally, regionally and within the statistical neighbour group.

#### **Health Assessment**

In Derbyshire, of the children looked after continuously for 12 months at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, 76.5% had completed their annual health assessment, which was a decrease on the previous year. In 2011/12 83.7% had completed their annual health assessment.

In 2011/12, the rate in Derbyshire was lower than, but not significantly different to the England average (86.3%). Within its statistical neighbour group, Derbyshire had the eighth lowest proportion of children in care completing their annual health assessment. This is contrary to the position in 2007/08 when Derbyshire had the strongest performance of all local authorities in the group.

#### **Immunisations**

In 2012/13 Derbyshire percentage of children in care whose immunisations were up to date was 87.1% which was an increase on 2011/12 where the percentage was 64.4%.

During 2011/12 Derbyshire percentage was lower than the national (83.1%) and statistical neighbour group percentage (85.6%). This was a fall since 2010/2011 (86.5%) compared to a slight upward trend seen nationally and within our statistical neighbour group, however Derbyshire has been consistently higher than the national, regional and statistical neighbour comparator group percentages since 2004/2005.

At Derbyshire operational district level Bolsover's percentage (100%) and South Derbyshire and South Dales (100%) was significantly higher when compared to the County as a whole (64.4%).

## **Dental Checks**

Derbyshire's percentage of Children in Care who have had their teeth checked by a Dentist (86.4%) was higher than the national percentage (82.4%) and statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (76.7%) during 2011/12. Derbyshire was ranked second amongst our statistical neighbours during this period.

In 2012/13 76.0% of Derbyshire's Children in Care had their teeth checked by a dentist.

## **Education**

### **Attainment at Key Stage 1**

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 2 or higher in Key Stage 1 Reading (75%) was higher than the national percentage (67%), regional percentage (68%) and statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (68%) for 2011/2012. The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (14%) has closed significantly since 2010/2011 (26%) and is lower than the national attainment gap (20%) during 2011/2012.

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 2 or higher in Key Stage 1 Writing (67%) was higher than the national percentage (57%), regional percentage (57%) and statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (56%) for 2011/2012. The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (20%) has closed since 2010/2011 (22%) and is lower than the national attainment gap (30%) during 2011/2012.

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 2 or higher in Key Stage 1 Mathematics (75%) was higher than the national percentage (71%) and regional percentage (68%) and is the same as the statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (75%) for 2011/2012. The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (18%) has closed significantly since 2010/2011 (30%) and is lower than the national attainment gap (22%) during 2011/2012.

### **Attainment at Key Stage 2**

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 4 or higher in Key Stage 2 English (68.2%) was higher than the national percentage (60%), statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (60.2%) and the regional percentage (59%) for 2011/2012. The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (19.4%) has closed significantly since 2010/2011 (34.3%) and is lower than the national attainment gap (26%) during 2011/2012.

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 4 or higher in Key Stage 2 Mathematics (59.1%) is higher than the national percentage (56%), regional percentage (55%) and statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (57.3%) for 2011/2012. The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (28.1%) has increased slightly since 2010/2011 (27.6%) and is in line with the national attainment gap (28%) during 2011/2012.

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 4 or higher in Key Stage 2 Science (54.5%) in 2011-2-12 was lower than 2010/2011 (61.1%). The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (34.6%) has widened significantly since 2010/2011 (26.8%).

### **Attainment at Key Stage 3**

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 5 or higher in Key Stage 3 English (55.6%) in 2011/2012 is higher than 2010/2011 (37.5%). The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (31.9%) has narrowed significantly from 2010/2011 (47.2%).

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 5 or higher in Key Stage 3 Mathematics (51.9%) in 2011/2012 is higher than 2010/2011 (40.6%). The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (32.9%) has narrowed from 2010/2011 (43.6%).

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining Level 5 or higher in Key Stage 3 Science (62.9%) in 2011/2012 is higher than 2010/2011 (34.4%). The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (23.3%) has narrowed from 2010/2011 (49.8%)

### **Attainment at Key Stage 4 (GCSE)**

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining any qualification (87.5%) was slightly higher in 2011/2012 than 2010/2011 (86.7%). The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (11.5%) has improved slightly from 2010/2011 (12.3%).

Derbyshire percentage of children in care attaining 5 or more A\*-G GCSEs (54.2%) was higher than 2010/2011 (52%). The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (41.8%) has improved from 2010/2011 (44%).

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining five or more A\*-C GCSEs (24.1%) was lower than the national percentage (28.7%), statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (38.8%) and the regional percentage (34.9%) for

2011/2012. The attainment gap for children in care in Derbyshire compared to all Derbyshire children (56.6%) has widened from 2010/2011 (54%) and was higher than the national attainment gap (54.3%).

Derbyshire's percentage of children in care attaining five or more A\*-C GCSEs including English & mathematics (6.1%) has fallen since 2010/2011 (13.2%) and is lower than the national percentage (12.4%), statistical neighbour comparator group percentage (19%) and the regional percentage (12.3%) for 2011/2012.

Each year the predicted attainment from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 is calculated by the Fischer Foundation Trust. Using Model B which takes into account prior attainment, gender, month of birth and school context

**2012- 2013 attainment information is being verified at the time this report is written.** Provisional Key Stage 4 data shows a significant improvement with just under 17% of young people in care achieving 5 or more A\*-C grades (including English and Maths). This is a significant improvement on the previous year, and it is noted that boys had performed particularly well. 27% had achieved 5 or more A\*-C grades, which had been a slight decrease, but 70% had achieved 5 or more A\*-G, which had been an increase on the previous year. 58% of young people not in care had achieved 5 or more A\*-C grades (including English and Maths).