

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA**



**Tuesday 17 December 2019**

**at 4.00 pm**

**in the Council Chamber,  
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

**MEMBERS:** CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Hamilton, Harrison, Lauderdale, Little, Moore, Smith, Ward.

Co-opted Members: Jo Heaton, C of E Diocese and Joanne Wilson, RC Diocese representatives.

School Heads Representatives: Mark Tilling (Secondary), David Turner (Primary), Zoe Westley (Special).

Six Young Peoples Representatives

Observer: Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

- 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 (*previously circulated and published*).

**4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

No items



**5. KEY DECISIONS**

- 5.1 Dedicated Schools Grant – School Budget Shares 2020/21 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

**6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

- 6.1 Short Breaks Services Statement – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

**7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- 7.1 Fostering Service Interim Report 1 July 2019 – 30 September 2019 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.2 Full Ofsted Inspection of Exmoor Grove Children's Home – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.3 Full Ofsted Inspection of St David's Walk Children's Home – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.4 Full Ofsted Inspection of Stockton Road Children's Home August 2019 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

**FOR INFORMATION**

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 28 January 2019 at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 December 2019



**Report of:** Director for Children's & Joint Commissioning Services

**Subject:** DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT –  
SCHOOL BUDGET SHARES 2020/21

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## 1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 This report is for key decisions – test (i) and (ii) applies.

1.2 The forward plan reference is CJCS 089/19.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide details of the 2020/21 schools block funding allocation and to propose school budget shares for 2020/21. The schools block funding forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) published indicative National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations for 2020/21 in October 2019. These allocations were based on the October 2018 school census and will be updated to reflect the October 2019 census during December 2019.

3.2 Members will recall that for 2019/20 the Committee agreed with the School Forum proposal to adopt the “hard” formula and mirror the NFF. This approach is also supported by the School Forum for 2020/21.

3.3 In adopting the “hard” formula, local authorities are still required to consider how they set their individual school budgets (ISBs) for 2020/21. Any transfers to and from the schools block from other DSG blocks must be considered. Also, a local approach to setting a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) and Cap must be agreed and implemented.

- 3.4 Consultation on setting individual school budgets (ISBs) took place with Schools' Forum during October and November 2019. Schools' Forum were asked to vote on their preferred budget for 2020/21 at their meeting on 26 November 2019.
- 3.5 Members are asked to note that the budget proposals contained in this report are based on the planning assumption of a successful outcome for the disapplication request submitted to the Secretary of State for the transfer of **£0.550m** from the schools block to the high needs block for 2020/21. Similar disapplication requests have been approved in the previous two years.

#### 4. 2020/21 INDICATIVE SCHOOLS BLOCK FUNDING

- 4.1 The following table shows the Hartlepool indicative schools block allocation for 2020/21 based on October 2018 census numbers. Growth funding for 2020/21 has not yet been announced. The 2020/21 indicative allocation of £65.287m compares to equivalent funding of £63.597m in 2019/20.

Schools Block	Pupil Numbers (Oct 2018)	2020/21 Indicative Funding (£m)
Primary	8,066	35.449
Secondary	5,305	29.253
Premises		0.585
<b>Indicative Schools Block 2020/21</b>		<b>65.287</b>
<b>Percentage increase in funding</b>		<b>+2.66%</b>

- 4.2 Core formula factors have increased by 4% in 2020/21, with the exception of free school meals which has increased by 1.84%. The 1.84% for free school meals is limited to inflation as this funding factor is intended to reflect actual costs.
- 4.3 Within the indicative schools block NFF for 2020/21, each school is provided with at least a 1.84% per pupil increase compared to their 2019/20 baseline. Government has also introduced a new compulsory funding factor for a minimum per pupil amount of £3,750 for primary schools and £5,000 for secondary schools in 2020/21. Two primary schools within Hartlepool benefit from the minimum per pupil guarantee. Hartlepool secondary schools are not affected in 2020/21 as they exceed the £5,000 minimum.
- 4.4 Before any block transfers, the minimum funding guarantee for Hartlepool amounts to £0.510m. This amount reflects the 2020/21 level of ESFA protection against the hard formula. If government were to implement the NFF fully, schools block funding for Hartlepool would reduce by this £0.510m. This is sometimes referred to as the "cliff edge". There remains uncertainty as to when the government will withdraw protection. Owing to the increase of 4% against core formula factors, the level of protection has reduced significantly from previous years (£1.851m equivalent in 2019/20).

- 4.5 Hartlepool schools have received mobility funding for the first time in 2020/21 under a new basis of calculation. Total mobility funding within the Hartlepool formula amounts to £38,000.

## 5. PROPOSED BLOCK TRANSFERS

- 5.1 The Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) of the DSG funds local authorities for the statutory duties and other commitments they hold for maintained and academy schools.
- 5.2 CSSB funding of £0.828m for 2020/21 (£0.918m in 2019/20) has been confirmed based on October 2018 census numbers. Funding will be updated for October 2019 census volumes in December 2019. The historic cost element of the CSSB (approximately 50% of the block) has been reduced by 20% in 2020/21 as part of government's strategy to gradually remove funding for historic items that are expected to reduce in cost over time.
- 5.3 Although a number of historic items for Hartlepool no longer require CSSB funding, there are two historic items remaining that will not reduce or come to an end in the short to medium term. These relate to the school contribution to licences and the pension costs associated with the former Brierton school closure. As the government's 20% reduction will eventually result in a financial pressure, an enquiry has been submitted to ESFA to seek an exemption. As yet, no response has been received. The position will be monitored by both local authority officers and Schools' Forum.
- 5.4 Schools' Forum is required to agree each element of spending against the CSSB on an annual basis. At their meeting on 13 September 2019, Schools' Forum agreed to fund the elements amounting to £0.551m shown in the table below and for the balance of CSSB funding (£0.277m) to be transferred to the schools block for 2020/21.

<b>Historic Commitments</b>		<b>£m</b>
Licenses		0.067
Termination of Employment costs		0.031
Total		<b>0.098</b>
<b>Ongoing Responsibilities</b>		<b>£m</b>
Retained Education Services		0.216
Admissions		0.132
Copyright licenses		0.069
Servicing Schools Forum		0.036
Total		<b>0.453</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>0.551</b>

- 5.5 At their meeting on 19 November 2019, Children's Services Committee approved a disapplication request to the Secretary of State for a transfer of £0.550m from the school's block to the high needs block. The indicative school budgets presented in this report assume a successful outcome to the disapplication request, which was the case in the previous two years.

## 6. INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL BUDGETS

6.1 Schools' Forum considered two budget options based on the proposed block transfers outlined at section 5 of this report. The budget options are:

1. Apply a minimum funding guarantee of 1.36% increase per pupil compared to 2019/20 budgets, with no school being capped;
2. Apply a minimum funding guarantee of 1.84% (the maximum allowed) increase per pupil compared to 2019/20 budgets, along with a cap of 3.72%.

6.2 Schools' Forum voted at their meeting on 26 November 2019 and agreed that their preferred budget model was option 2 above. The votes were recorded as 13 (thirteen) in favour; 0 (zero) against; 0 (zero) abstentions.

6.3 The table below summarises the proposed individual school budgets for 2020/21. Individual school budgets for 2020/21 would mirror the NFF, less proposed block transfers:

School Budget Shares 2020/21	Proposed Budget £m
Indicative Schools Block funding (ESFA)	65.287
Transfer-in from CSSB	0.277
Transfer-out to HNB	(0.550)
<b>School Budget Shares Proposed 2020/21</b>	<b>65.014</b>
School Budget Share Increase from 2019/20 (£m)	1.669
School Budget Share Increase from 2019/20 (%)	2.6%

## 7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

7.1 If individual school budgets are not approved, the local authority may not meet its statutory requirement to notify the ESFA of individual school budgets by 21 January 2020. In addition, individual schools will not be able to plan their budgets.

## 8. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 As outlined in this report, although protection of £0.510m of schools funding is confirmed for 2020/21, there is uncertainty regarding this protection if the government imposes the hard formula from 2021/22 or beyond.

## 9. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The local authority is required to consult all schools on annual changes to their formula, along with any proposed block transfers.

## **10. CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 All schools have been consulted on individual budget share options for 2020/21 via Schools' Forum.

## **11. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no specific child and family poverty considerations.

## **12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no specific equality and diversity considerations.

## **13. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

- 13.1 There are no specific considerations.

## **14. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 14.1 There are no asset management considerations.

## **15. CONCLUSIONS**

- 15.1 The government funding arrangements for Schools Block in 2020/21 include a guaranteed 1.84% increase for each school in comparison to their 2019/20 baseline. For Hartlepool schools, this 1.84% provides protection of £0.510m.
- 15.2 Government have increased NFF factors by 4% in 2020/21 and the free school meals factor by 1.84%.
- 15.3 Two Hartlepool primary schools will benefit from the new compulsory factor for minimum per pupil of £3,750 in 2020/21.
- 15.4 Following consultation, Schools' Forum recommended block transfers of £0.277m from the CSSB and a £0.550m to the high needs block.
- 15.5 Following agreement from this Committee on 19 November 2019, the local authority has submitted a disapplication request to the Secretary of State to transfer £0.550m from the schools block to the high needs block.
- 15.6 Final individual school budgets are subject to the Secretary of State's decision on transfer of funding from the schools block to the high needs block, notification of

growth funding (£0.157m in 2019/20), along with adjustments relating to October 2019 census volumes and National Non-Domestic Rates.

## 16. RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- a) Note the contents of this report;
- b) Note the agreement by Schools' Forum to centrally retain funding of £0.551m, with the residual £0.277m being transferred to the schools block as detailed in paragraph 5.4;
- c) Note the decision taken by this Committee on 19 November 2019 to apply for Secretary of State approval to the transfer of £0.550m from the schools block to the high needs block;
- d) Agree the budget option to be used for 2020/21 as outlined in paragraph 6.1 of this report and noting the preferred budget option from Schools' Forum of applying an MFG of 1.84% and cap of 3.72% in 2020/21;
- e) Approve the individual school budget share for 2020/21 as summarised in the table at paragraph 6.3 of this report.

## 17. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

17.1 It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to consult and agree individual school budget allocations so that figures can be confirmed to ESFA by the deadline of 21 January 2020.

## 18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 Committee report of 19 November 2019 – High Needs Block Budget Requirement 2020/21.

## 19. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy ☒

Chief Solicitor ☒



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

17<sup>th</sup> December 2019



**Report of:** Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

**Subject:** SHORT BREAKS SERVICES STATEMENT

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## 1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Non key

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 For members to approve the Short Breaks Services Statement.

2.2 To inform members of the short break services that have been delivered over the last year.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Paragraph 6 of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 requires local authorities to provide a short break service designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children. This duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. The regulations require each local authority to produce a short breaks services statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for those services, and how the range of short breaks is designed to meet local needs of families with disabled children. It is a requirement that the Statement be reviewed on an annual basis.

3.2 Short Breaks provide disabled children and young people with the opportunity to spend time away from their parents, relaxing and having fun with their friends. They provide families with a break from their caring responsibilities.

#### 4. SHORT BREAKS SERVICE STATEMENT

- 4.1 In Hartlepool the review of the Statement was undertaken by the Parent Led Forum 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future and officers within the local authority's Children & Joint Commissioning & Adult and Community Based Services Departments. The lead officer responsible for preparing the statement is Tracy Liveras (Short Break Lead). The reviewed Statement was subject to wider consultation during January 2019. The draft of the reviewed statement was circulated to the members of the Parent Led Forum, specialist providers of services to share with their members, officers within the local authority, health and voluntary and community sector organisations. All comments received have been incorporated into the final version.
- 4.2 The revised Short Breaks Services Statement is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3 The statement forms the foundation for the delivery of short breaks services for disabled children and their families. It will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis ensuring that any provision is reflective of local need. Parents, disabled children and young people will continue to be involved in the process and the Parent Led Forum (1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future) will continue to be the driving force behind the shaping of short break services.
- 4.4 The Short Breaks Services Statement needs to be published and made available to the general public. Once approved, the Statement will be published on the local authority's website and the Local Offer of Services web page. The Statement will also be made available in paper format.

#### 5. SHORT BREAK PROVISION

- 5.1 The council provide a number of opportunities for short breaks for children with disabilities and their families. Hartlepool Borough Council's Sport and Physical Activity Team have been working in partnership with the Short Breaks Intervention Programme to deliver weekly sessions in Hartlepool. These sessions run on a Thursday (Funability) and a Saturday (Short breaks) aiming to break down barriers and engage more people with additional needs to participate in physical activity and sports including, football, basketball, multi-skills and more. The evaluation of the 2018/19 period is attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 5.2 Over the past three years, Hartlepool Borough Council has contracted with Families First (North East) to provide Extended Activities, Short Breaks and Specialist Loan Equipment for those children and families with Children with additional needs. Some of the provision has been delivered in partnership with Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group. The evaluation for this contract is attached as **Appendix 3**.
- 5.3 Exmoor Grove is a children's home in Hartlepool that offers short break care to children with additional needs and disabilities in the form of day visits, overnight stays and events and activities. Exmoor Grove is regulated by

Ofsted and has been consistently been judged as an outstanding provision for the past four years. Reports in relation to Exmoor Grove are presented to committee regularly.

## **6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial considerations within this report however the Short Breaks Service Statement will be used to inform decision making when reviewing and commissioning services.

## **7. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no risk implications within this report.

## **8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Annual review of the Short Break Services Statement ensures Hartlepool Borough Council is compliant with the Children Act 1989 and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011.

## **9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 The Short Break Service supports children with disabilities.

## **10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 10.1 The Short Break Service supports children with disabilities.

## **11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no staffing considerations.

## **12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no asset management implications.

## **13. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1 For members to approve the Short Breaks Services Statement (**Appendix 1**)
- 13.2 For members to note the short break services that have been delivered over the last year (**Appendix 2 and 3**).

**14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14.1 The annual review and publication of the Short Breaks Services Statement is a requirement of the local authority to produce as part of the duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011.

**15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 15.1 None

**16. CONTACT OFFICER**

- 16.1 Tracy Liveras,  
Short Break & Parent Participation Officer,  
Civic Centre,  
Email: [tracy.liveras@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.liveras@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chief Solicitor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## SHORT BREAK SERVICE STATEMENT



September 2019 – March 2021



## Contents

Introduction

What is a short break?

Why do we need a Short Break Service Statement and what is it for?

How has the Statement been prepared and who was involved?

Who is responsible?

What have we achieved in the last 12 months?

Short Break Support

How do we know short breaks are meeting needs of children and young people?

How does the council support transition into adult services

Where can families get more information about short breaks

What do we want to achieve in the next 18 months

What do parents/carers do if they want to register a complaint or compliment?

How can people access the statement?

## Introduction

Welcome to Hartlepool's Short Breaks Statement. The aim of this statement is to provide parents and carers with information about:

- How we develop short break services to meet the needs of disabled children and young people aged 0 – 18 years in Hartlepool and their parents/carers
- Who is eligible to receive short breaks
- The range of short breaks available in Hartlepool and how to access them

## Hartlepool's Vision

*'Our vision is that we are committed to ensuring that all disabled children and young people and their families in Hartlepool should have equal access to a range of flexible services that support their ambition to live ordinary lives, enjoy a happy and fulfilling childhood and grow up to achieve their full potential.'*

## Better Outcomes for Families of Disabled Children

The delivery of the short break priorities are designed to improve the outcomes for disabled children and their families. As part of our service delivery the outcomes below are designed to make a difference for families of disabled children.

- Short Breaks aim to support parents and carers in their caring role and reduce levels of stress and anxiety due to the demands of caring
- They will aim to support disabled children and young people to access activities whereby they can make friends, have fun and support the development of their social, communication and independence skills
- When disabled young people are leaving school and making the transition to adulthood that they will be supported and are able to express their wishes and make appropriate choices
- Short Breaks will provide opportunities to enable families to spend time, relax together and for parents and their children to get to know other families and to build up a network of support and develop friendships

## What is a Short Break?

A short break is an opportunity for children and young people to spend time away from their parents and carers, to take part in enjoyable activities and meet up with friends while being appropriately supported. It provides a break for parents and carers from their caring responsibilities; giving the parents a chance to relax, recharge their batteries, complete everyday task and spend time with other family members.

A short break could be a couple of hours each week to an overnight stay in a residential setting or with a carer. The offer currently includes:

- Holiday Play schemes
- Out of School Clubs
- Extended Activities Provision
- Sport & Physical Activities
- Overnight Stays, including local residential or foster care provision
- Page | 3 Social groups
- Parent led Activities
- Specialist Toy Loan Service (including Stay & Play)
- Family based short break activities

## Why do we need a Short Breaks Service Statement and what is it for?

The Local Authority must follow 'The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011' and 'Disabled Children Regulations 2011'. This means that all local authorities must:

- Prepare a statement that explains the range of Short Break Services it will provide
- Make information available and accessible
- Have a clear criteria for eligibility for Short Break Services
- Say how the services will meet the needs of families

## How has this statement been prepared and who was involved?

Hartlepool Borough Council has worked with Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum – 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future to develop this statement.



1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future is the Parent Participation Forum who work closely with the council to represent views and opinions of parents and carers across Hartlepool. They support the ongoing development and reshaping of services to support families.

### **Who is responsible?**

The lead officer with responsibility for ensuring the statement has been prepared is the Short Break and Parent Participation Officer. Overall responsibility for the statement sits with the Director of Children and Joint Commissioning Services.

### **What have we achieved in the last 12 months?**

During the last 12 months Hartlepool Borough Council have commissioned a number of services that have been identified within the Short Break Activity Annual Survey and through discussion and consultation with families via the Parent Carer Forum. The council has also taken on board the feedback and evaluations from commissioned services that have been accessed by families. The services have reflected on the feedback and adapted where appropriate.

We have reviewed the Children's Disability Register which provides us with data and information to help the Council plan services and this will also be available on line to make it easier for families to access.

We continue to maintain as a council the specialist changing facilities managed by the local authority which are located across Hartlepool.

We have consulted and worked with the Parent Carer Forum to review and redesign the Local offer of Services website which will be included within Hartlepool Now website.

We have provided free Max Discount Cards and continue to do so for families which provide great discounts to many attractions both locally, across the North East and the rest of the country. Families have benefitted from access to this service and saved money.

### **Short Breaks support**

Not all children and families need the same level of support and short breaks. Some will need more than others because of the nature of their child's disability

while some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances. As a local authority we therefore need to assess your child and family to ensure that we provide the right level of support and short breaks at the right time.

Not all services require an assessment to be accessed and can be attended directly by families. These are called 'Universal Services'.

## Universal Services

These short breaks are available to all families where there are **low support needs** and might include youth clubs, holiday play schemes, activity clubs, Children's Centres and the Max Discount Card (which offers a discounted cost to access many attractions across the country.) The local authority also produce a Short Break Activity Programme which does not require an assessment of need, but includes commissioned services that are more targeted to meet the needs of disabled children. To find out more about these universal short break services for disabled children and their families you can contact the Short Break and Parent Participation Officer on: 01429 284876 or visit the Local offer of Services website: <http://www.hartlepool.fsd.org/send>

## Targeted and Specialist

### Targeted

These are services available to children/young people with some support needs but may not meet the threshold for specialist social care support. In this case the family will have an Early Help Assessment which has been completed by any practitioner involved with your child/family such as a teacher, health visitor, parent support advisor or a family support worker within the Early Help teams.

Following assessment, a plan is drawn up outlining the support needed, which may include a short break. Plans are reviewed regularly to check what progress is being made and to decide whether less or more support may be needed.

Although the Short Break Activity Programme does not require an assessment of need to be undertaken these services partially commissioned by the local authority provide more targeted support than those delivered by universal services.

### Specialist

These are specialist or bespoke services which are available to children and young people with high support need. They can only be assessed as a result of a Child in Need (CIN) assessment which is carried out by a social worker from the Children's Disability Team.

The Social Worker has up to 45 days to complete the CIN assessment which looks carefully at the child's development needs, the parents'/carers' specific needs, any parenting issues and the wider family circumstances and environment. They will also gather relevant information from professionals involved with your child.

A support plan is devised following the assessment which includes the services and short breaks that may be appropriate to be provided and how this will meet the child's/families' needs. The plan is considered by a panel before the short break is approved.

All plans are reviewed at least 6 monthly to make sure they respond to the needs of a child and family. Examples of a specialist short breaks package may include: day placements/ overnight stays within a residential or foster placement, the provision of a Direct Payment in order to fund specific activities to meet the identified needs of your child such as accessing a specialist group or club or to fund 1:1 support to enable attendance and participation at a specific activity.

### **How do we know that Short Break services are meeting needs of children and young people?**

In Hartlepool we have a proactive Parent Led Forum that works in partnership with the Local Authority Short Break Lead Officer, other relevant agencies and groups to ensure that service delivery meets the needs of families of disabled children.

There is also parent representation on a number of strategic and operational groups, which provides a platform for parents to contribute and influence change. Parents are also actively involved in the commissioning of non-assessed short break provision and continue to play a very active role in the development of the local offer of services.

Children and young people are actively engaged in having their say about things they like to do. This is carried out in a number of ways including: questionnaires, face to face discussion and group work within the short break sessions. This information is also gathered to plan for future delivery.

All of our commissioned services are required as part of their terms and conditions of funding to engage service users in evaluating services on a quarterly basis. It is expected that this helps providers to adapt their services as required.

Examples of feedback are set out below:

## Sport and Physical Activity Team

The team on behalf of the Short Break Services Programme deliver 2 sessions a week across 50 weeks of the year. These sessions consist of Fun-ability sessions every Thursday and a Multi Sports Session every Saturday morning for children and young people aged 6 – 16 years to support them in participating in a wide variety of physical activities.

Throughout the year staff carry out participation feedback sessions to assist the delivery of future sessions to meet the needs of individuals accessing the session.

### **This is what parents, children and young people told us they enjoyed**

*“Playing various sports with my friends”*

*“The beginning where we play all different games”*

*“Meeting new people”*

*“Mixing with kids and making friends”*

*“My son always enjoys coming along to the Fun-ability sessions. He really enjoys taking part in different sports each week”*

*“My child looks forward to the Thursday session, never moans and enjoys it from start to finish”*

*“My child is able to socialise amongst children of his own age and has become more confident within himself and he sleeps well following the sessions”*

*“These sessions have helped my child move onto new activities and increased the number of activities he partakes in now”*

*“Staff are always good with the children and are really supportive. I always recommend the sessions to other parents”*





**Families First North East & Hartlepool, including Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group** provide the commissioned short break service on behalf of the local authority.

These services are offered over 50 weeks of the year and include extended afterschool activities, holiday play schemes, weekend activities, toy loan service and stay & play sessions.

**Here are quotes from families that use these services:**

**Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group**

*“My son loves attending the summer scheme, he does something different every day. It is a very well organised and the children are well looked after. My child is always so excited to go”*

*“My son is now a young adult but always looks forward to going to the scheme. He loves the freedom to ride a special bike that he can’t do normally. The staff are always very friendly, caring, organised and professional”*

*“My daughter looks forward to the summer scheme all year and discusses it throughout the year as one of her memories. The staff and the children there are her social support and I cannot even begin to tell you how important this is to her”*

*“He decorated his super hero pottery and we were all amazed as he doesn’t normally take part in crafts. It will have a special place in our home”*

*“My son came home and said he had made friends and that it was one of the best things he has ever done”*

## Families First NE

*"The guys are amazing...my son has been going here for some time now during the holidays, he now continues to go full time since leaving school. All of the staff will go out of their way to help and make sure that your child's needs are being met"*

*"Kristy the worker has been fab and my son is loving every minute of the day doing arts and crafts and being out and about as well as other activities"*

*"All I can say, if you get the chance for your child to go to FF, snap it up, don't wait cos your child is seriously missing out"*

*"My son attends the youth project and has also attended the play scheme during holidays. I honestly couldn't recommend FF enough. My son has made so many friends, the staff are fantastic and he has the opportunity to take part in activities he would never have gotten to do"*

*"After our daughters Autism diagnosis we felt like we were pushed out of the door and no help offered. I discovered FF and the help and guidance from them has been invaluable. She attends 3 group a week and last night I cried happy tears to see her playing and laughing, properly laughing, when I came to pick her up from the Girls Autism Group. The difference in her is amazing"*

*"We've not looked back. Our daughter loves it and is so much better now. She loves the team who work there and the difference in our daughter is amazing"*

## Parent Carer Forum - 1 Hart 1Mind 1 Future

1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future has continued to work with families in Hartlepool to develop family led activities. Through consultation with families the Forum has delivered many parent led activities for families to enjoy together. The activities delivered have brought the whole family together and the impact on families has been extremely positive. The Forum has increased families' resilience, reduced isolation and increased social opportunities for the whole family.

### **This is what families have told us:**

*"Great opportunity to meet other families and find out what is available"*

*"Had a great day, absolutely loved getting out with the kids and not worrying if they have a meltdown"*

*"Lovely that families can meet and not feel like they fighting a battle alone"*



*“The parent forum is fantastic, I am new to the sessions and they are so helpful, I get more information and guidance to help my son than I do from services. So glad I came along”*



## Short Break Activity Programme Survey

During the early part of 2019, a survey was circulated to parents and carers in relation to open access short breaks in Hartlepool. The survey questionnaire could be completed either by using the on-line Survey Monkey or by completing a paper version of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was circulated to both special schools, to groups delivering services, via the parent led forum. The online survey was also available on the local offer of services webpage. Workers also circulated the survey.

Responses mainly came from parents within the 5 - 11 years age ranges.

The three highest areas of need were:

- Autistic Spectrum
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
- Physical Disability

From the responses received they stated they accessed some form of non – assessed short break. When asked about the type of support they received or accessed, the following came out as the most accessed:

- 88% stated that they accessed extended activities delivered by a specialist provider
- 32% stated that they accessed play schemes delivered by a specialist provider
- 15% stated that they accessed physical sport activity
- 15% accessed parent led forum activities
- 18% stated they have accessed short break training for parents and carers

70% of families who responded preferred to access short breaks delivered with Hartlepool and the same number were happy with the distance they currently travelled. 18% said they would be happy to travel across neighbouring authorities to attend a short break activity.

76% of respondents told us that they were satisfied with the short breaks accessed, however 50% didn't know about all of the services on offer.

42% of respondents said they weren't aware of the Local Offer of Services. However those who were aware, 39% said they have used it.

Families were asked about how they found out about the short break activities on offer. The top 5 other than the local offer of services were:

- Free text messaging service
- Via Email
- Parent Carer Face Book page
- Other organisations websites
- Leaflets

Families were asked about the type of short break activities their children accessed. 47% accessed extended activities delivered by Families First, with 41% stating they used Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group. 15% stated that they accessed the physical activity sessions delivered and others accessed services delivered by other voluntary organisation based within and outside of the borough.

**From the responses that were received, these are some of the things families say are working well:**

*“My child enjoys all social events at HSNSG. Her needs are being met at all times. She says she can be herself and not worry about anything”*



*"The holiday plays scheme at Families First is amazing for both of my children. They have a great time and make fantastic memories. It has been a life saver for us especially in the 6 weeks it helps ease the pressure massively"*

*"The Saturday football is a fantastic session"*

*"Activities suited to children's needs"*

*"That all of the family can do activities together"*

*"It is a calm environment and the staff are brilliant"*

*"We currently attend the Fun-ability session and my child loves it. He has gained loads in terms of skills for different sports and also confidence"*

**This is what families told us that could be better to improve their experiences:**

*"More places on the holiday play schemes as demand outweighs the number of places available"*

*"Access to funding for services operating outside of the town"*

*"Increase the variety of services for children with Autism"*

*"Sessions where I can leave my child for a couple of hours"*

*"Drama clubs, singing, dancing and swimming"*

**How does the council support transition to adult services?**

The 0-18 children's disability team and the adults 18 – 25 disability team work together in partnership with a young person and the people that are important to them to explore if support needs to continue or be in place in preparation for the young person turning 18 years old. Children's and Adult Social Care work together in carrying out assessments of need under the Care Act 2014 to ensure that effective arrangements are in place which enhances the quality of life for all young people with a disability and their family as they move forward into adulthood.

The children and adults disabilities teams also work closely with the SEND education team to ensure that young people can access education and training.

## Where can families get more information about Short Breaks?

There are a number of places where you can find Information regarding Short Breaks in Hartlepool:

- Contacting the Short Break & Parent Participation Officer. Tel No: 01429 284876.
- Hartlepool's Local Offer of services for families of disabled children website :<http://www.hartlepool.fsd.org/send>
- Sign up to the Children's Disability Register either by contacting the Children's Disability Team by email: [ChildrensDisabilityRegister@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensDisabilityRegister@hartlepool.gov.uk) or request on line via the Local Offer of Services
- Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum - 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future T Contact: 07896 054361 or via their email address: [HartMindFuture@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:HartMindFuture@yahoo.co.uk) or join their face book page: 1Hart, 1Mind, 1Future Group Forum

If you are looking for more targeted or specialist service which may involve an assessment of need contact the Childrens Hub on: 01429 284284

## What do we want to achieve in the next 18 months?

All the feedback from children, young people, families and the Parent Carer Forum has been taken into account for the priorities for the next 18 months which are set out below:

Priority	Action
Holiday Play schemes	Maintain and wherever possible increase the numbers of places to accommodate children and young people to include 11 weeks of holiday play scheme provision
Extended Activities - out of school hours	Continue to maintain delivery of extended activity provision across 50 weeks of the year
Family Based and parent led activities	Continue to support the work of the Parent Carer Forum to increase awareness and engage with new families accessing short break services
Specialist Toy Loan service, including Stay & Play	Maintain the service to include access to specialist toy provision for families and settings and to support families of children under the age of 5 to access play and stay services
Sport/Physical Activities	Maintain the delivery of the current number of sessions across the year (100) in total, to increase the participation and encourage access to club based sporting activity

Increase access to information	<p>Maintain the provision of the free text messaging service facility and promote to increase the number of subscribers.</p> <p>Redesign and launch of the local offer of services website to increase better access to information.</p> <p>The Parent Carer Forum to continue to use and promote their own face book page to reach wider audiences to disseminate information.</p> <p>Attend information day events to widen the reach of families accessing services</p> <p>Produce easy read literature on services and products available</p>
Max Discount Card Membership	<p>Maintain access to free discount cards for families of children with additional needs and disability to enable them to access many attractions across the country at discounted prices</p>
Continue to support Parent Participation to influence the development of services	<p>Continue to support the parent led forum in the delivery of their work.</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness and increase the membership base of the group to ensure a broader range of parents are involved in the development of services.</p>
Increasing the capacity of the workforce	<p>Continue to ensure that both the workforce and parents have access and signposting to relevant training to ensure that they have the right skills and knowledge for supporting children and young people</p>

## What do parents/carers do if they want to register a complaint or compliment

If the Short Break is either delivered or commissioned by Hartlepool Borough Council, then the Comments, Complaints and Compliments Procedure should be followed. For further information you can complete an online form by going to: [www.hartlepool.gov.uk](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk) or via email to [cascomplaints@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:cascomplaints@hartlepool.gov.uk) or by calling: 01429 284020.

## How can people access the statement?

Hartlepool's Short Break Service statement will be available in the following places:

- Hartlepool's Local Offer of Services for Families of Disabled Children  
Published on the councils website: <http://www.hartlepool.fsd.org/send>
- Hartlepool's Parent Carer Forum: 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future
- The Children's Disability Team
- The Short Break & Parent Participation Officer. Tel No: 01429 284876



# Evaluation Report

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## Junior Funability & Saturday Short Break

2018/19

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## Introduction

### Overview

During 2018 – 19 Hartlepool Borough Council's Sport and Physical Activity Team have been working in partnership with the Short Breaks Intervention Programme to deliver weekly sessions in Hartlepool. These sessions run on a Thursday (Funability) and a Saturday (Short breaks) aiming to break down barriers and engage more people with additional needs to participate in physical activity and sports including, football, basketball, multi-skills and more.

The reporting period is from April 2018 to January 2019. The purpose of this report is to highlight the programmes statistics from the year, provide evidence of the impact it is having, collate feedback from both parents/guardians and participants in order to use this information to explore the development of the initiative.

### Junior Funability

The Junior Funability Session runs weekly on a Thursday 4:30pm-6pm at Brierton Sports Centre. The session is aimed towards Hartlepool based children and young people aged between 6-16, with special educational needs or disabilities. It is a multi-sports session, which sees the children participate in a wide variety of activities including Tennis, cricket, and target games.

### Short Breaks Session

The Short breaks session runs weekly on a Saturday 11am – 1pm at Brierton Sports Centre. This session is a partnership between, the sport and physical activity team and Hartlepool's Families First North East. The target audience for this session is children aged 8 – 16, with Special educational needs or disabilities who live in Hartlepool. The children participate in a wide range of different sports and physical activities, including football, basketball and badminton.



## Participation Figures

Figure 1: Thursdays Junior Funability & Saturday Short Breaks Combined Statistics

Measurement	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
<b>Participants</b>	30	29	31	30	28	28	27	25	21	25
<b>Males</b>	25	24	25	24	22	24	24	22	18	21
<b>Females</b>	5	5	6	6	6	4	3	3	3	4
<b>Disability/Vulnerable</b>	30	29	27	21	20	22	27	21	18	25
<b>Throughput</b>	111	113	142	115	110	120	98	99	73	72

Throughout the year an Excel spreadsheet document has been used to document monitor key statistics from the sessions, these can be seen in figure 1. The data shows how many participants attend the sessions with a breakdown of males and females. Although this document is useful in capturing attendance it does not clearly show the impact that the session is having on individual participants; this is why we have chose to collect feedback and information from both parents/guardians and the participants to give us more information.

Throughout the reporting period from April 2018 to January 2019, a total of 42 sessions took place on a Thursday and 41 took place on a Saturday, having a 2 week break over Christmas. This equates to 145 hours of physical activity provision offered to children and young adults with additional needs in Hartlepool. Both sessions combined have seen a throughput total of 1053, which is the total number of weekly attendees added together.

The Saturdays Short Break session has obtained a higher attendance records on a weekly basis, this is partly credit to the great partnership have with Families First North East and the transport links.

## Participant Feedback

During the sessions a cohort of 16 participants completed feedback forms (Appendix 1) based on the Physical Activity session that they attend, to reflect their thoughts on the sessions and allow them to have some input on future sessions. Below is a breakdown of the findings from the feedback, giving us a greater understanding of what children enjoy and what else they may want from the session.

Figure 2:

Question 1&2	Good	OK	Not Good
<b>The Session is?</b>	100%		
<b>The Coaches are?</b>	87.5%	12.5%	

Question 3&4	Yes	No
<b>Do you enjoy coming to the session?</b>	100%	
<b>Would you like to continue coming to the session?</b>	100%	

From the answers above we can see that the participants are very happy with the session, and the coaches that deliver. 100% of the participants enjoy coming to the session and would like to continue attending. The sessions have high levels of coach continuity, ensuring the same staff deliver on a weekly basis where possible; however, when cover is required coaches are selected from a small pool of coaches that the young people are familiar with. This allows the children and staff to build a rapport.

Question 5 asked the participants what is their favourite part of the session, below are some of the more popular answers.

‘Playing Various Sports with my friends’

‘Football’

‘Playing Football with all my friends’

‘Everything’

‘All of it’

‘The beginning where we play all different games’

‘Meeting new people’

‘Playing football’

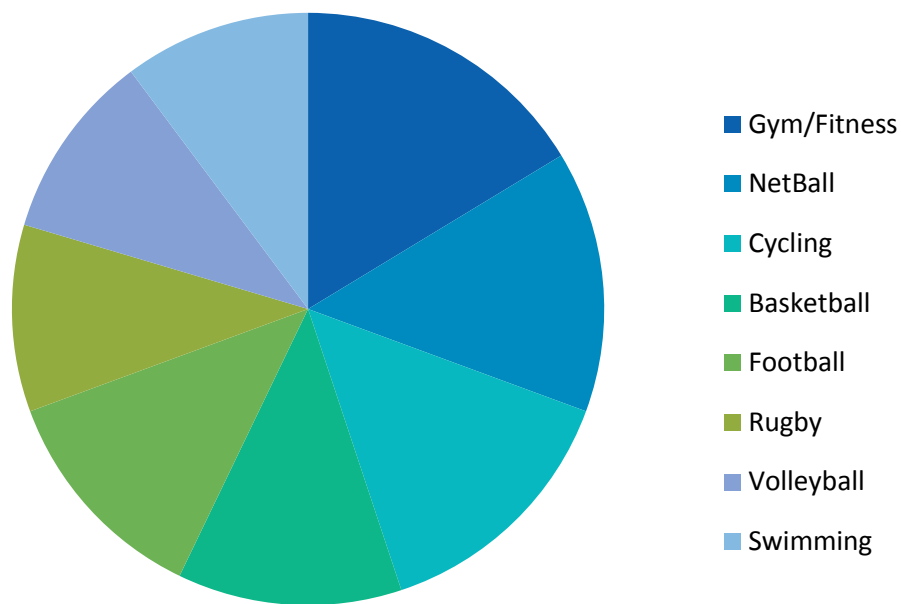


‘Mixing with other kids and making friends’

‘Football and scoring goals’

It is evident that Football is very popular with participants, although we ensure a variety of sports and physical activity is delivered, to cater for all the participants.

Figure 3:



Participants were asked through a visual picture choice for Question 6, which other sports they would like to try? The top 8 most popular choices can be found in the pie chart above. A full list all sports chosen can be found in Appendix 2.

Looking at the chart we can see that the young people are very keen to try a range of sports during the session, the majority of these sports have been delivered throughout the year, which gives us indication that participants have enjoyed provision. This information will be provided to coaches delivering weekly within the sessions, so they can incorporate these activities where possible into the delivery plan for the future.

## Parent/Guardian Feedback

Parents/guardians of the young people who attend Junior Funability session on a Thursday have completed a feedback form (Appendix 3), which provides the below information. This information is vital in order to understand parents/guardians opinions and for staff to gain a better understanding as to the impact of delivery.

Figure 4:

Question 1	Great	Ok	Not Good
Time of the session	100%		
Length of the session	100%		
The facility	100%		
The coaches who deliver	100%		

Parents/guardians were also asked numerous questions that required a written answer about the session. Below is a list of questions and some of the answers that were provided.

**Has the young person enjoyed coming to the session, and what parts of the session did they enjoy the most?**

A1: Callum always enjoyed coming along to the Funability sessions. Callum really enjoyed taking part in different sports every week.

A2: Jack looks forward to his Thursday session every week and never moans about going. He enjoys the sessions from start to finish.

A3: Tristen loves the sessions; his favourite part is the Dodgeball.

**How has attending the session benefited your child?**

A1: Callum has dyspraxia so these sessions helped him loads with his gross motor skills. These sessions also help children with special needs to develop social skills.

A2: With his autism he has a weight issue, we try as much as possible to get him to participate in physical activities, these sessions are ideal. Also the interacting has been crucial with other children; he has built friendships with the others over the years.

A3: Tristen is able to socialise amongst children his own age, he has become more confident within himself and he sleeps well.

**Since starting at the session, has your child progressed onto any further physical activity?**

A1: Callum has now moved onto going to Hartlepool Kicks football sessions twice a week.

**What other sports and physical activities would you like to see available within the session and the town?**

A1: This session incorporates a bit of everything

A2: we are happy with what is available

A3: All the sports are covered over a number of weeks.

**Please give any further comments regarding the session**

A1: Staff are always really good with all the children and really supportive when Callum found the sessions difficult. I always recommend these sessions to lots of parents.

From the information gained from the parent/guardian feedback forms we can see that they are really happy with the service we are providing.

It is pleasing to see that the environments we are providing are allowing the participants to benefit in many different ways, not only improving their physical activity levels but also improving self confidence, building friendships, develop social skills and helping keeping weight under control.

## Summary

From the findings in Figures 1 we can see that the majority of participants that attend are male, this reflects last year's findings. Increasing the number of females attending the session is something we are looking to do.

During the year a number of promotional flyers have been distributed at primary school events aimed at pupils with additional needs or disabilities. In addition to this we have promoted the session through local schools, community centres and leisure centres as well as on social media platforms and via referrals. In the future we are looking to maintain/develop further links with Hartlepool Carers and Penderels Trust, who are already advertising sessions to people who access their services. We are hoping a big push on promotion will increase the awareness of these sessions around the town, ensuring more participants with additional needs engage in these sessions.

Looking back at previous evaluation reports on this programme it was highlighted as a recommendation to engage with local clubs within the town to provide additional opportunities for participants. Throughout this year we have been working with local clubs that have an offer for the participants, we had coaches from local tennis, badminton and cricket clubs to attend and coach a session alongside the weekly delivery staff. This allowed the young people to meet the coach and understand what activities will be on offer in the club, which will enable a smoother transition to participants who may wish to try other community based session.

The overall feedback from the sessions both written and verbal has been hugely positive; it has highlighted the impact that the session is having on individual participants. From the feedback received we can see that the parents/guardians feedback echoes that of the participant



Pictures (Saturday Short Breaks Session)





Pictures (Thursday Junior Funability Session)





## Appendix 1 - Participant Feedback Form

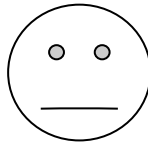
**Activity Attended**.....

**Date**.....

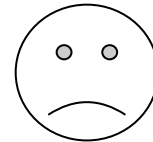
**The session is?**



Great



OK

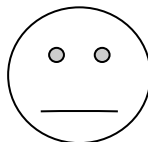


Not Very Good

**The Coaches are?**



Great



OK



Not Very Good

**Do you enjoy Coming to the session?**

YES

NO

**Would you like to continue coming to the sessions?**

YES

NO

**What is your favourite part of the session?**

.....

.....

Please turn over

What other sports would you like to try?



**GOLF**



**SAILING**



**VOLLEYBALL**



**BASKETBALL**



**ARCHERY**



**NETBALL**



**FOOTBALL**



**RUGBY**



**HOCKEY**



**DANCE**



**BADMINTON**



**CYCLING**



**GYM/FITNESS**



**RUNNING**



**SWIMMING**



**GYMNASTICS**



**BOCCIA**



**TABLE TENNIS**



**KURLING**



**MULTISPORT**

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

## Appendix 2 – Results Participant Feedback

Question 1&2	Good	OK	Not Good
The Session is?	16		
The Coaches are?	14	2	

Question 3&4	Yes	No
Do you enjoy coming to the session?	16	
Would you like to continue coming to the session?	16	

Question 5 - What is Your Favourite Part?
Joining in
Mixing with the other kids and making friends
Meeting new people
A lot of the times the beginning where we all play different games and not sticking to the same thing every week and also the football at the end.
Playing various sports with my friends
Football
All of it
Dodgeball
Football
Football
Playing football
All of it
Scoring Goals
Football
Everything
Playing football with all my friends

Question 6 - What other Sports Would You Like to try?			
Gym/Fitness	8	Running	4
NetBall	7	Archery	4
Cycling	7	Table Tennis	3
Basketball	6	Gymnastics	3
Football	6	Golf	2
Rugby	5	Boccia	2
Volleyball	5	Dance	2
Swimming	5	MultiSports	0
Hockey	4	Kurling	0

### Appendix 3 – Parent/Guardian Feedback form

Please provide comments based on your child attending the Junior Funability Session.

Question 1: Please tick which best describes the below

	Great	Ok	Not Very Good
Time of the session			
Length of the session			
Cost of the session			
The facility			
The coaches who deliver			

Question 2: What other Sports and physical activities would you like to see available within this session?

Question 2: What other Sports and physical activities would you like to see available within the town?

Question 3: Does your child enjoy coming to the session, and what parts of the session do they enjoy the most?

Question 4: How has attending the session benefited your child?

Question 5: Since starting at the session, has your child progressed onto any further physical activity?

Question 6: Please give any further comments regarding the session

I consent to HBC to use the above information as evidence in reports and in publications to promote services.

Name: ..... Sign: ..... Date: .....

Thank you for completing the form.



# An amazing journey !

**Three years of delivering short  
breaks in Hartlepool**

**April 2016 – March 2019**

# Introduction to Short Breaks

Over the past 3 years, Hartlepool Borough Council has contracted with Families First (North East) to provide Extended Activities, Short Breaks and Specialist Loan Equipment for those children and families with Children with additional needs. Some of the provision has been delivered in partnership with Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group.

This report sets out the progress of service, achievements during this time and the positive impact that this work has had on the intended client group.

## What is a short break?

Sometimes families who have disabled children and/or health conditions benefit from a break from their caring responsibilities. Local authorities now have duties to provide short break services and make clear how families can access these.

Taking a break from caring for your child is not an admission of failure or a way of saying you don't care. A break is an opportunity to recharge batteries, spend time with others or pursue a particular interest. Short breaks may also allow your child to have a change of scene, try different experiences, have fun and make friends.

Short breaks can include:

- Care at home - includes sitting or care attendant schemes, which provide someone to sit with or 'mind' your child.
- Day care away from home - includes nurseries, playgroups, out of school and weekend clubs and, during school holidays, access to playschemes.
- Overnight short breaks - includes an overnight sitting or nursing service if your child needs it.
- Residential breaks - includes residential homes, special units in hospitals and hospices.
- Family link schemes - where your child stays with another family on a regular basis or occasionally.

*(Source : Contact, the charity for families with disabled children)*



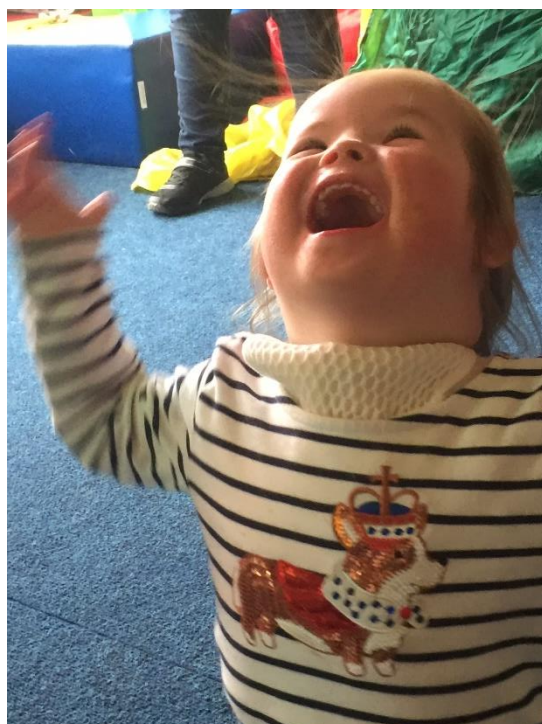


## Details of the services that are covered

The short breaks and extended activities contract provides the following services:

**SNIPS** - An after-school and holiday playscheme specifically for children with profound learning disabilities and challenging needs (the only service in Hartlepool offering such respite for parents/carers). Many of our children who attend the after-school and holiday programme cannot access any other scheme due to their complex needs and in some cases their need for 1:1 or 2:1 support. This operates every week day. This service also receives considerable financial support from BBC Children In Need.

**SocialEyes** - a new and innovative approach to facilitating social skills and social understanding with people on the autism spectrum. Launched by The National Autistic Society in 2010, this learning resource has been developed with people with autism and Asperger syndrome, along with leading professionals in the field. All SocialEyes resources have been extensively piloted and re-piloted with ongoing development and research since 2005.



SocialEyes does not ask people on the autism spectrum to change 'inappropriate' social behaviour, or to acquire social skills by copying the 'typical' behaviour of others. Instead, it gives people the option of learning social interaction skills or alternative social strategies. SocialEyes focuses on eight social skills that people on the autism spectrum can have difficulty with, including starting a conversation, eye contact and personal space.

**ACTIVE KIDS** - a number of physical activity projects aimed at children and young people with additional needs under the name of Active Kidz. It includes the following:

- dance sessions,
- a weekly football group
- basketball sessions,
- outdoor activities (orienteering, den building, archery)
- adventure activities (canoeing, abseiling, water sports)

Some of this activity happens weekly, some only during summer months

**STREET Projects** - are principally supported youth provision for young people with additional needs across Hartlepool. Those attending are wide ranging including those who have low confidence, self-esteem or social skills, young people with learning and physical disabilities, those with autism and some who have suffered some form of emotional trauma in their lives.



The project prides itself on using modern techniques to engage young people with challenging issues and additional support needs.

The service initially launched specifically for those aged 13-19, but now successfully operates over 6 nights a week offering sessions targeted at Juniors and Seniors as well as a holistic family session and a much smaller group aimed at children with ASD. This has become possible due to significant financial support from National Lottery Community Fund.



**Special Needs Toy Loan Service** - A facility for parents that have or organisations that work with a child with a disability / additional support need. It offers toys and play equipment that can be used on either a short term or long term hire.

The equipment is chosen by children and parents to meet their needs. Regular outreach and parental demonstration sessions will be held in order for families to get the best out of the resource. Equipment out on long term hire will receive regular safety inspections.

The project holds two sessions per week where parents and children can attend, use equipment and offer each other peer support. In addition, there are opportunities for families to access the service during our weekly Saturday Street Family sessions.

**The Fun Club** - is held on a Monday evening 5.30 pm to 7.00 pm, term-time and occasionally at other times. The club is available to children with additional needs and their siblings, aged 3-12 years and based within Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group. Activities at the club include: Arts and Crafts, Games, Multi-sensory Room, Cold Cookery, Parachute Games, Watch movies, Sing songs, Themed parties and Sensory Stories.

**HSNSG Friends Fun** - is a performance group for children with additional needs and their siblings, aged 3 – 13 years of age. Sessions are held weekly on a Sunday afternoon 4.00 pm - 6.00 pm (term-time only). During the sessions, children enjoy singing and dancing to their favourite songs. The children also have the opportunity to take part in our annual theatre performance. There is also time for fun and games! These sessions are based within Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group.

**HSNSG The Youth Club** - Our Youth Club is available for young people with additional needs, aged 12+. Session are held weekly on a Wednesday evening 6.00-8.00 pm (term-time only). This club gives young people a chance to meet up and relax with their friends. We have a huge variety of activities available including: Board Games & Card Games, PlayStation & Wii, Laptop, Watching movies, Multi-sensory room, Arts and crafts

**HSNSG School Holiday Activities** - During school holidays we run a program of activities and community visits. The program varies each time but our most popular activities include: Trampoline Park session, Theatre & Cinema visits, Social Lunches, Soft Play sessions, Circus Tricks demonstrations, Magic Shows, Parties.

**HSNSG Summer Programme** - The very popular Summer Scheme caters for all ages and needs. It runs for 11 days during the school summer holidays. Parents/carers can leave their children, young people and adults to enjoy a very varied programme of activities and entertainment during the fun packed days in a safe environment. A huge range of activities are available including :Arts and Crafts, Specialised Bicycles and Tandems, Face Painting, Farmyard Bus/Pet Corner, Sing and Sign, Magic/Circus Tricks and Bubble Man Shows and much more.



## Background Information on the children using the services and their conditions.

Over the last 3 years, the service has supported 571 different children and young people from across Hartlepool with a vast array of different conditions and additional needs.

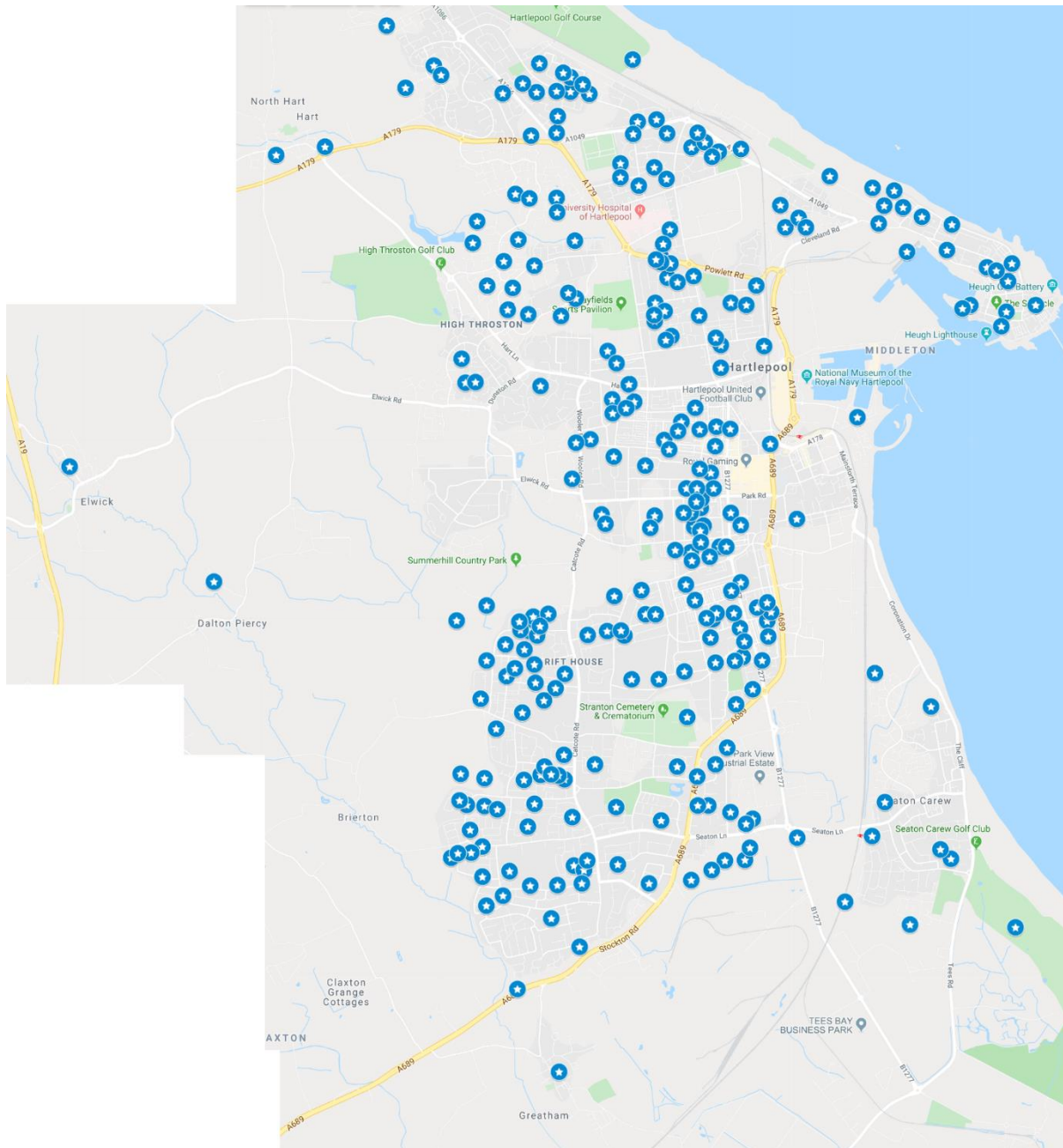
	Their age today				
Gender	0 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 16	17 to 18	TOTAL
Male	91	81	136	44	352
Female	74	63	66	16	219
Total	165	144	202	60	571

Condition / additional need	No of Children
AD - Attachment Disorder	6
ADHD - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	25
ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder	114
CHD - Chromosome Disorder	12
CP - Cerebral Palsy	6
CPS - Chronic Pain Syndrome	2
DS - Downs Syndrome	8
DYS - Dyslexia	12
DYSP - Dyspraxia	13
EBD - Emotional Behavioural Difficulties	37
EPIL - Epilepsy	11
FAS - Foetal Alcohol Syndrome	2
GAD - Generalised Anxiety Disorder	24
GDD - Global / General Development Delay	16
HI - Hearing Impairment	14
KAB - Kabuki Syndrome	1
MED - Medical	46
MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty	38
MSI - Multi Sensory Impairment	1
OTHER - Not Listed	75
PD - Physical Disability	5
PIT - Pitt Hopkins Syndrome	1
PREASD - On the ASD / Neuro Pathway and awaiting diagnosis	8
RET - Rett Syndrome	1
SEMH - Social Emotional Mental Health	38
SLCN - Speech Language and Communication	22
SLD - Significant Learning Difficulty	14
SPD - Sensory Processing Disorder	7
VI - Visual Impairment	8



The children and young people accessing these services are from every part of the town and quite uniformly spread.

The below map shows this spread. Each dot represents a postcode where one or more child / young person who access any of the services live.



## Usage over the last three years (Quantitative Data)

Over the past three years, the projects have enjoyed higher than expected attendances which have increased year on year.

### Total attendances by activity

	1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017	1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
SNIPS (A/S)	2013	2957	3261
STREET Juniors	401	786	843
STREET Seniors	1373	1494	1419
STREET Families	n/a	621	893
STREET ASD	n/a	237	319
Active Kidz	762	944	805
Adventure Activities	202	357	366
SNIPS (Hol)	678	940	1188
HSNSG Youth Group	566	447	421
HSNSG Friends Fun	216	181	224
HSNSG Holiday Activities	606.5	390	460
HSNSG Fun Club	445	395	432
<b>Totals</b>	7262.5	9749	10631

### Total hours by activity

	1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017	1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
SNIPS (A/S)	5032.5	7392.5	8152.5
STREET Juniors	1203	2358	2529
STREET Seniors	4805.5	5229	6835.5
STREET Families	n/a	1242	1786
STREET ASD	n/a	474	638
Active Kidz	1524	1888	1610
Adventure Activities	1120	2142	2196
SNIPS (Hol)	4068	5640	7128
HSNSG Youth Group	1132	896	842
HSNSG Friends Fun	435	378	464
HSNSG Holiday Activities	2396.5	1973	2277.5
HSNSG Fun Club	890	790	864
<b>Totals</b>	22,606.5	30,402.5	35,322.5

## Stay and Play (Toy Loan Service) – Quarterly Attendance

Quarter	No of Parents / Carers	No of Children	Gender of children attending		Age group of children attending		
			Male	Female	0 to 5	6 to 9	10 plus
1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016	84	165	85	80	148	8	9
1 July 2016 to 30 Sept 2016	64	112	60	52	92	16	4
1 Oct 2016 to 31 Dec 2016	77	99	50	49	85	7	7
1 Jan 2017 to 31 Mar 2017	89	111	62	49	104	4	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>

1 April 2017 to 30 June 2017	101	142	73	69	131	7	4
1 July 2017 to 30 Sept 2017	57	83	49	34	73	8	2
1 Oct 2017 to 31 Dec 2017	83	132	67	65	122	8	2
1 Jan 2018 to 31 Mar 2018	49	106	79	27	107	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>

1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018	47	92	63	29	89	3	0
1 July 2018 to 30 Sept 2018	57	98	60	38	90	6	2
1 Oct 2018 to 31 Dec 2018	68	114	74	40	114	0	0
1 Jan 2019 to 31 Mar 2019	142	219	112	107	213	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>

# Headline summary of usage data

## Attendances

- 10631 attendances in the last year and this number has continued to rise in this current year
- From 2016/17 to 2017/18 there was a 34.24% increase in demand for services
- From 2017/18 to 2018/19 there was a further 9.05% increase

## Hours provided

- A whopping 35,322 hours of activity provided, again this continue to rise
- From 2016/17 to 2017/18 there was a 34.49% increase in demand for services
- From 2017/18 to 2018/19 there was a further 16.18% increase

## Toy Loan Service

- 1473 children attended the Play and Stay sessions over 3 years, supported by 918 adult attendances
- Over £40,000 of new equipment purchased to support families – this is in excess to the funding provided and generously donated by local trusts and businesses.
- 1786 different toy loans during the three year period of this report.

## The difference made (Qualitative data)

Over the past 4 years, we have developed our own tool which measures qualitative data, often referred to as the distance travelled, journey made or impact change. This tool is called C.H.R.I.S. This has been designed alongside children and young people.

It is a digital tool which the young people can either complete themselves or with the assistance of a team member if they have profound learning needs.

There are two elements to C.H.R.I.S. The first is completely anonymous and young people complete each time they end a session. It asks them three questions, at random, from a bank of 10 questions. The questions are designed to inform service delivery and responses are reviewed each week. Examples of the questions are “Did you enjoy tonight’s session?”, “Do you feel that you can trust the staff?”, “Was tonight’s session appropriate to you?”. The questions can be added to as required. It is then completed using an iPad by young people as they leave (similar to the type you see when you check through airport security).

The second element is the more substantive part. Again, digital but this time all entries correspond to a unique reference number for each of our young people. This allows us to track the progress that each individual young person is making. It starts off with a ‘baseline assessment’ where the young person answers a series of questions about themselves and how they feel about particular issues

CHRIS specifically looks at 9 key areas :

- Communication skills
- Participation skills
- Confidence
- Mental Health
- Social Skills
- Friendships
- Behaviour
- Leadership skills
- Practical skills

They grade themselves, using a very simple set of indicators, and can add further evidence to support their ‘grade’. This can be either by speaking to the iPad, making a short selfie-video or typing something in.

Once the initial assessment is completed, a team member will work with them to see which area they wish to improve and set milestones as to what and how they are going to do to achieve this. The team member will then support them through this process.

During each session, the young person can record further evidence to their own personal journal on C.H.R.I.S. They can upload things that they have created, such as photos, videos, speech, music and text along with a journal entry of their own words.

The young person will re-complete C.H.R.I.S. at regular intervals and complete the same assessment. This will track progress that is being made for that individual and see if milestones are being met. It will allow us to measure how effective the sessions are for that particular young person.



The above cumulates in bringing together all supporting evidence and assessments to create a timeline of involvement with the project. It's quite powerful and visual when you review it and supports the young person in their progression.

Over the past three years, CHRIS has told us :

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Yet to make progress</b>	<b>Some progress</b>	<b>Significant progress</b>
Communication skills	3 %	70 %	27 %
Participation skills	8 %	51 %	41 %
Confidence	6 %	38 %	56 %
Mental Health	7 %	39 %	54 %
Social Skills	8 %	31 %	61 %
Friendships	5 %	28 %	67 %
Behaviour	7 %	45 %	48 %
Leadership skills	11 %	51 %	38 %
Practical skills	7 %	53 %	40 %

### **Notes:**

**(For presentation reasons, these figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage)**

#### **Yet to make progress**

This is where there is no difference between the starting point and the current position. In the main, this is children and young people who are relatively new to engaging with any of the services.

#### **Some progress**

This is where the distance travelled from a starting point to the current position is 1 or 2 points higher

#### **Significant progress**

This is where the distance travelled from a starting point to the current position is more than 2 points higher.

## Added Value

As well as the incredible difference that the services make to individual families and children / young people, the combined services also bring in significant further investment to Hartlepool and create a number of additional good quality jobs, which are underpinned by quality training and professional development.

Furthermore, all services offer a plethora of learning opportunities and placements for those studying from GCSE right through to Masters Degrees.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Paid Regular Staff</b>	<b>Additional Paid staff</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>Additional Funding each year</b>
SNIPS Afterschool / Holiday Provision	8	6	12 regular 25 throughout the year	£ 79,865.00
Adventure Activities	2	2	2	£6,000.00
Street Seniors, Juniors and ASD	6	10	15 regular 35 throughout the year	£71,000.00
Active Kids	2	1	4	£4,000.00
HSNSG Fun Club	3	4	4	£ 7,500.00
HSNSG Youth Group	3	4	4	£ 7,500.00
HSNSG Fun Friends	2	4	4	£ 5,000.00
HSNSG Holiday Provision	10	8	15	£ 19,000.00
Special Needs Toy Loan Service	1	0	6	£15,000.00
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL FUNDING</b>				<b>£214,865.00</b>

## Feedback from children, young people and parents

Here is just a short snapshot of some of the comments received from parents and carers over the past 12 months :

**My son loves attending the Summer Scheme, he does something different every day, it is very well organised and the children are well looked after, he is always so excited to go.**

My son is now a young adult but always looks forward to coming to the Scheme. He loves the freedom to ride a special bike that he can't do normally. The staff are always very friendly, caring, organised and professional.

**She looks forward to Summer Scheme all year and discusses it throughout the year as one of her memories. The staff and the children there are her social support and I cannot even begin to tell you how important this is to her.**

He decorated his superhero pottery and we were all amazed as he does not normally take part in crafts it will have a special place in our home.

**My son came home and said he had made friends and that it was one of the best things he has ever done.**



The guys here are amazing...my son Kai has been going here for some time now during the holidays...but he is now continuing to go full time since leaving school. All of the staff will go out of there way to help and make sure that your child's needs are met.

Kirsty has been fab and Kai is loving every minute of the day doing arts and crafts and being out and about as well as other activities.

He also does the after school club and one to one and he loves Nicola (Nic Nic) ...all I can say is if you get the chance for your child to go here...snap it up, don't wait cos your child is seriously missing out. Kai comes home and he is so happy you can tell he has enjoyed his day.

Thanks Guys I really appreciate all you do and also Paul & Nicola for sorting things out to allow Kai to be with you all :)

**Excellent help with our son and he really enjoys going there. Plus the staff are fabulous to.**

My son attends the youth project and has attended the play schemes during holidays.. I honestly couldn't recommend Families First enough. My son has made so many friends, the staff are fantastic and he has had the opportunity to take part in activities he would never have gotten to do.

**After our daughters autism diagnosis we felt like we were pushed out of the door and no help at all was offered. I discovered Families First and the help and guidance from them has been invaluable. She attends 3 groups a week at One77 and last night I cried happy tears to see her playing and laughing, properly laughing, when I came to pick her up from her girls only autism group. To see her interact with other children in a natural (to her) way meant so much. The difference in her because of this is amazing to see.**



We've not looked back, Kara loves it and is so much better now. The people there are great, she goes to after school care, to Street and the holiday care, she goes on trips and does all sorts of different things. She loves the team who work there and the difference in Kara is amazing. Just last week she took part in a dance class, not from the beginning, but they know how to help her, they don't push her, just take time with her. There is no way she could or would have done that before going to 177."

She is so much calmer and happier. She has friends, is doing much better at school and we live calmly most of the time. She still has the odd bad day but they are much more manageable. She takes less medication, some days only one tablet and no longer needs one at night time."



I tell everyone how good they are. I have a friend with a little girl of four, she struggles with her speech, I told her, go to Families First, they'll help. I don't know what we'd do without them, I don't want to think about that. I want them always to be there for Kara.

**He can do more, has more words and is achieving things people said would never be possible. I think this is because they are ambitious for Kai, they believe he can do more and that helps Kai to believe he can do more. And what's more important is that he is happier, he loves the praise and support he is given and is so much more relaxed and peaceful".**

Paul organised everything, 24/7 care with people he trusted. Gary and I knew he was safe and so we could get on with getting ourselves well enough to be allowed home. This wasn't about doing a job because you get paid, the entire team got involved to make sure Kai was happy, understood what was going on and could continue to learn. They were all absolutely amazing.

I worry about what would happen if I wasn't here, but I know there are other people who now care for, and support him. He is a great help with Gary and I see amazing improvements and him learning so much from his time with Families First and with Kirsty and Nicola and the rest of the team. Maybe people wouldn't understand because they don't know Kai, but I wouldn't change him for the world. When he achieves something new it's just amazing to see and I know that Families First are part of that and appreciate that.



The young people accessing the services are just as vocal. Here is just a selection of the comments made by young people whilst updating CHRIS :

<i>Really enjoyed the activities today</i>	<i>I love it here</i>
<i>Joined in the activities tonight and enjoyed them</i>	<i>This place is awesome</i>
<i>This night was "Mint"</i>	<i>I would like to do more arts and crafts please!</i>
<i>I liked the computer room in tonight's session</i>	<i>One77 is the best youth. Club in the world</i>
<i>This place is amazing! I love it!</i>	<i>I really loved the games down stairs and the staff joining in as well</i>
<i>I'm happy here</i>	<i>I enjoyed playing with my friends in Club today</i>
<i>I love it</i>	<i>The games where really good today I had an awesome time at club</i>
<i>They are good staff</i>	<i>Enjoyed the games</i>
<i>Amazing environment to grow and enjoy</i>	<i>I enjoyed the games with my friends today in cafe and loved playing the games with the staff</i>
<i>Club is the best</i>	<i>Today was good at Club</i>
<i>Happy</i>	<i>I enjoyed playing with my friends today in club and the ipads</i>
<i>New experience for me to take part in</i>	<i>Knocking about with my mates in club was awesome today whitest playing on the iPads I enjoyed my sandwich as well</i>
<i>Staff listening to my problems</i>	<i>The staff is awesome and super cool</i>
<i>The session was cool</i>	<i>I like it here</i>
<i>Thumbs up</i>	<i>I love family first</i>
<i>Big smiles on my face</i>	<i>Staff are lovely</i>
<i>I love the play area with all the lights</i>	<i>I enjoyed being in the computer room with my friends</i>
<i>Happy to be here</i>	<i>I've enjoyed everything we have done today in club</i>
<i>Staff are really good they are funny and talk to you when needed.</i>	<i>I liked playing on the iPads and the computers with my friends</i>
<i>I liked playing on the games on the laptops and also liked the food today as well yummy</i>	<i>I like playing with my friend on the trampoline</i>
<i>The staff are awesome and I like them very much</i>	<i>It's an amazing youth club and I love to come here</i>
<i>I likes bringing my toy to Club today</i>	<i>I love the staff and to be here</i>
<i>I like talking to the staff about my problems because they help and after playing on the iPads</i>	<i>It's very good here</i>
<i>Staff are awesome and I really like them</i>	<i>I like the staff</i>
<i>I liked all the activities today and playing bingo was mint</i>	<i>I loved watching the movie today</i>
<i>I liked wining prizes in the bingo and playing bingo</i>	<i>I enjoyed playing in the arts and crafts room and watching the movie.</i>
<i>I have enjoyed the activities today</i>	<i>Love the session today</i>

*I like all the staff*

*Families first is awesome*

*Love all the staff from Kara*

*it's outstanding here every time*

*It's really good and fun in here*

*Families first is a really nice place*

*I like everyone here*

*I love it here*

*I like to go on the iPads*

*I like coming to the cafe to meet up with my friends and socialising.*

*I like playing games and seeing friends*

*I like getting out the house and coming to club and socialising*

*I like interacting with other people and playing games with friends*

*I enjoyed the computer room today*

*I love coming to club as it makes me feel good*

*The parachute is so cool*



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 December 2019



**Report of:** Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

**Subject:** FOSTERING SERVICE INTERIM REPORT  
1st July 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019

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## 1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Children Service's Committee with information relating to the activity of the Fostering Service for the second quarter of 2019/20 financial year. The Fostering Service is a regulated service and as such there is a requirement to provide the executive side of the Council with performance information.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The work of the Fostering Service is subject to National Minimum Standards, applicable to the provision of foster care for children looked after. The National Minimum Standards, together with regulations for fostering and the placement of children looked after, form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of Fostering Agencies.

3.2 The report provides details of the staffing arrangements in the service, training received by both staff and Foster Carers, the constitution of the Fostering Panel, activity in relation to the recruitment, preparation and assessment of prospective Foster Carers and progress in relation to the priorities set out in the Fostering Annual Report.

3.3 The Fostering Services Minimum Standard 25.7 requires Fostering Services to ensure that the Executive of the Local Authority:

- Receives a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency once every 3 months;



- Monitors the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and achieving good outcomes for children;
- Satisfies themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of the registration.

#### **4. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION (as of September 2019)**

- 4.1 The fostering team continues to recruit and assess prospective Foster Carers to provide placement choice for children and young people and limit the authority's dependence upon more costly external provision for children.
- 4.2 There are currently 149 Foster Carers, of whom 44 are approved as Connected Carers (a known and connected person to a specific child). Foster Carers provide placements for 193 children and young people in none connected provision and 54 children/young people are with Connected Foster Carers. There continue to be 15 young people in 'staying put' placements, these are Care Leavers living with their previous Carers post 18 years of age.
- 4.3 Of the 149 approved fostering households, five fostering households in this period were 'on hold' due to, either, the individual circumstances of the Carer, or to issues in respect of their performance. This equated to seven potential placements. There are a small number of these placements that cannot be used due to the specific matching needs of the children/young people already in that foster placement.
- 4.4 The ongoing Foster Care Recruitment Strategy has produced a positive response from the roadside banners, 'pull up' banners and posters which were distributed across the authority in the last quarter. Enquiries have almost doubled in this quarter and, whilst the understood and anticipated reduction from enquiry stage to actual attendance at a preparation group is evident (see 4.5 below), this is demonstrating that the strategy is having a positive impact.
- 4.5 (See overleaf)

4.5 The table below provides details of the recruitment (enquiry and preparation) activity which has taken place in the second quarter of 2019/20.

Initial Enquiries – including survey of where did people hear about the service	Initial Enquiries 15 <b><u>Source</u></b> HBC Website 2 Not disclosed - 1 Banners – 2 Posters – 2 HBC Video about Fostering - 1 Own volition - 4 Hartbeat 0 Facebook 0 Friend recommendation - 2 TV/Radio advert - 1
Information packs sent	15
Initial Visits How many proceeded	12 NB 3 did not proceed due to; 1. Bereavement 2. Smokers 3. Did not respond to pack Of the 12, 5 'families/potential resources' attended the September Skills to Foster Group, 1 missed the group but commenced with assessment (to join the November Group) Others will join a future group - once issues of availability/family concerns and other reasons shared for being unavailable for the September group - have been resolved.
Preparation Groups	Skills to Foster Group was held: 24 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> and 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019;  5 prospective households attended (1 of whom is now placed on hold for personal reasons)
How many prospective Carers are in the assessment process?	11 Connected Carers (a further 2 to be allocated) 7 mainstream Foster Carers

## 5. FOSTERING PANEL

- 5.1 In the quarter July to September 2019, the Fostering Panel has met on four occasions and made recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker on the following fostering matters:
- One mainstream Foster Carer approval;
  - Three Connected Carer approvals;
  - The match of five children with three long term Foster Care families;
  - A best interest decision for four children for long term foster care;
  - Two Foster Carer reviews.
  - One Foster Carer resignation.
- 5.2 There are effective processes in place for the recommendations made by Panel to be considered by the Agency Decision Maker and the timescale for this is within five working days of the Panel meeting taking place.

## 6. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Fostering Team has, from mid – September, a full establishment of staff. This has enabled the service to achieve its aim of dedicating specific, named workers to lead on the Connected Care process and assessments. The aim of this is to ensure more timely intervention so that the suitability of potential applicants is understood at an earlier stage and that those applicants are fully informed about the expectations associated with becoming a Connected Foster Carer for Hartlepool Council.

## 7. SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

- 7.1 Where last quarter's data demonstrated a net 'loss' of Foster Carers, this quarter has shown (as anticipated) an overall growth in our Foster Care resource. There have been 4 new Foster Care families approved and only one Foster Carer resignation (which was due to their poor health). The new Carers are comprised of one 'mainstream' Foster Carer and three new Connected Carers, which is exactly as last quarter. The fact that 8 new Foster Care families have been approved in the first two quarters of the year means that the service target of approving a *minimum* of 10 new fostering resources in the year 2019/20 is on track. However, the aim is to increase placement choice and, whilst Connected Carers are an essential and valued resource, the service needs to ensure that those offering none-connected (ie 'mainstream') Foster Care are supported and encouraged to progress to approval as, approving one 'mainstream' Foster Carer per quarter, will not meet current demand for placements.
- 7.2 As demonstrated at 5.1, Hartlepool strives to care for its own children and to offer them permanence via Foster Carers who have been prepared and supported by Hartlepool. Whilst this is providing stability and security for many children (5 matched in this quarter and 3 in the last) it also creates a pressure in terms of the service's capacity to care for those children who need short term provision. The authority's use of Independent Fostering Agency placements was at 30 on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019, increasing to 39 by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019, which shows that our focus upon recruitment (and retention) cannot waver, if we are to avoid an increased reliance upon external provision. With this in mind, the service has recently

approved the use of school (yellow) buses to carry Fostering adverts with the message "You could give a child or young person a loving home". These buses follow circuitous routes around Hartlepool, so will be seen by many more members of the public than would be the case if 'public transport' buses were used.

- 7.3 Within this quarter, the Fostering Team has hosted the annual BBQ for Foster Carers and cared for children and young people (2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019) and attended a Local Authority hosted 'Family Day' on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2019 – both at the Summerhill Centre in Hartlepool. Each event gave the opportunity for discussion about Fostering, about becoming a Foster Carer and for networking with professionals, elected members and other members of the Team which works with and for our children and young people. Ten information packs were given out at the family event and, whilst there is no direct correlation (seen yet) between those events and the recent increase in enquiries, we know that keeping Foster Care in the public's 'line of vision' is fundamental to successful recruitment.
- 7.4 In August the Local Authority submitted a bid for innovation funding to the DfE, to be included in the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) project. The DfE evaluation report of 2016 describes the model as follows;  
***'MFM aims to ensure that young people in foster care experience improved placement stability; stronger birth family and sibling relationships; more successful early reunifications with birth family; increased successful transition to other permanence options; more opportunities for the development of strong and lasting relationships with adults and within communities; improved educational outcomes. The model also aims to ensure that foster carers experience: improved peer support, including uptake of respite with consistent carers; reduction in stress; improved retention rates.'***
- 7.5 Unfortunately, Hartlepool was not successful in the above bid but **has** been successful (again, in August) in commissioning a skilled practitioner to deliver 'Secure Base' training to key workers within the service. Secure Base will equip Social Workers with a framework to assess Foster Carers and prospective Foster Carers' ability to develop secure attachments in children and to recognize and work upon providing children with the security of belonging to, and becoming part of, a new family. This is very much in keeping with the Mockingbird concept and its adoption may assist Hartlepool in any future bid to join the Mockingbird project, which is still in its infancy, having been introduced to only 8 Local Authorities in the UK (the model originated in America) in 2015. Secure Base will be rolled out to Fostering Team Social Workers and Team Managers, Independent Reviewing Officers and Panel members from November 2019 to January 2020. Impact of implementation should be measureable, specifically in terms of placement stability, recruitment and retention from 2020 onwards.
- 7.6 Foster Carers have been offered the following Training in this quarter;
- Emergency First Aid (1 day course covered over 2 days)**  
 16<sup>th</sup> September and 17<sup>th</sup> September  
 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September (1 day course covered over 2 days)
- Autism**  
 3<sup>rd</sup> September (no take up – this is being explored)
- Supporting Children experiencing Bereavement and Loss**

12<sup>th</sup> September and 19<sup>th</sup> September

The Foster Care **support groups** of 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of September were delivered by the NSPCC on the subject of on line safety

In September 2019 the Fostering Service began discussions with Dr. Crispin Day about EPEC (Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities) in relation to Foster Care training. This will ultimately enable those Carers who have said they want to be more directly involved with service development to become accredited trainers and to deliver training to their peers. The training topics will be added to the annual schedule already in place. Meanwhile, Foster Carers continue to feature in the 'Skills to Foster' Preparation Group, supporting Social Workers, the Head of the Virtual School, Panel Chair and young people who are cared for (a Care Leaver) to give applicants an holistic view of the Fostering task. In this quarter, the 'Skills to Foster' programme has been extended from two to three days to ensure prospective Carers have time to absorb and reflect upon the information shared so that their decision to progress is as 'educated' as it can be.

- 7.7 The Council's annual Foster Care Celebration Event took place on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September at the Grand Hotel, Hartlepool. Awards were given to a total of 20 Foster Carers, by the Ceremonial Mayor of Hartlepool, Councillor Brenda Loynes who was accompanied by her husband and consort Mr Dennis Loynes. A special award was given to the family of a Foster Carer who, sadly, died in April 2019. Hartlepool wished to recognize her life time commitment to Fostering services and the award was received by her son, on behalf of the family. The awards event will be featured in a future publication of Hart Magazine for the purpose of honouring our existing Carers and (as ever) attracting new Carers into the Fostering Family.

## 8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Increased use of Independent Agency Foster Carers represents a financial risk. This is evident despite the net number of in house carers being (gradually) increased. Additional capacity in the fostering team, reviewing foster care payments (draft report now completed) and the continued improvement in the training and support offer to Foster Carers aims to mitigate this risk.

## 9. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific financial considerations within this report.

## 10. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific legal considerations within this report.

## 11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1 Foster Carers are supported by their Supervising Social Worker and the social workers meet with them regularly to ensure that their voice is heard and influences service design and development. In addition to this, there has been (and will be annually going forward) a Foster Care Survey which has already helped create service improvement.

## **12. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 12.1 The Fostering service ensures that it supports all Foster Carers to enable them to support our children and young people.

## **13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 13.1 The service continues to recruit and assess prospective Foster Carers to provide placement choice with a range of fostering families which reflect the needs of the children we care for.

## **14. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

- 14.1 There are no staff considerations for Hartlepool Borough Council employees.

## **15. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 15.1 There are no asset management considerations.

## **16. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 16.1 The Children's Service Committee is asked to note the report in relation to the work of the Fostering Service.

## **17. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 17.1 The Fostering Service is required to fulfill its statutory responsibilities to children in care by the local authority and provide regular reports to the Children Services Committee to enable the Committee to satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.
- 17.2 Children's Services Committee has an important role in scrutinising the activities of the Fostering Service to ensure that performance in this area is robust.

## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Fostering National Minimum Standards Services 2011;
- Fostering Regulations 2011;
- Fostering Annual Report 2019/20
- Secure Base Model: Promoting Attachment and Resilience in Foster Care
- Mockingbird Evaluation documents 2016.

**19. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 December 2019



**Report of:** Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services

**Subject:** FULL OFSTED INSPECTION OF EXMOOR GROVE  
CHILDREN'S HOME

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## 1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Children's Services Committee the outcome of recent full inspection report of Exmoor Grove Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31st July 2019.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Inspections of Children's homes are unannounced. Ofsted has a duty to inspect children's homes twice a year under the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. This takes the form of a full inspection followed by an interim inspection. If a home is judged to be good or outstanding the home can move to an annual inspection cycle. Exmoor is judged to be an outstanding provision and therefore, is currently inspected annually.

3.2 The scheduling of inspections takes account of:

- Standard of care provided;
- previous inspection findings;
- complaints and concerns about the service;
- notifications from the home; and
- the content of monitoring reports to Ofsted by children's homes under regulations 44 and 45 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

3.3 The inspection judgments and descriptions for a full inspection are:

- Outstanding;
- Good;
- Requires improvement;
- Inadequate.

3.4 Inspectors will use inspection descriptors as the benchmark against which to grade and judge performance. They are required to weigh up the evidence on how well children and young people are helped and protected and the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers.

3.5 The table below show the inspection outcomes for Exmoor Grove over the last three years:

DATE	INSPECTION TYPE	JUDGEMENT
19/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/08/2016	Full	Outstanding
28/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
07/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
31/07/2019	Full	Outstanding

## 4. PROPOSALS

4.1 A full inspection of Exmoor Grove took place on 30-31 July 2019 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 above and the service was judged as 'Outstanding' overall. The report of the inspection is attached at **Appendix 1**. The headlines and reasons why the Children's home provision is judged outstanding is because:

- There is an excellent admissions process introduces children and young people and their families to this warm, inviting and well-equipped home.
- The home offers ongoing communication between the staff team and parents continues as a result of the trusting relationships developed from the beginning of a child's or young person's stay at the home.
- Children and young people receive excellent care and support from the experienced and skilled long-standing staff team.
- All the children and young people make progress in different areas of their lives. Their life experiences are enhanced, and they transfer the skills they develop to home and school.

- Children and young people build new friendships, which helps them with the development of their social skills. The children and young people spoke of the fun they have at the home.
- The staff team provides a flexible service and staff go over and above to make sure that children and young people are kept safe. The staff have excellent working relationships with safeguarding professionals.
- Staff use a reward system to promote positive behaviours. Children and young people are fully involved in this system and are proud of their photograph and the points they have been awarded, which are maintained on the display board.
- The registered manager is a highly motivated, inspirational leader. She leads by example and is child focused and aspirational for children and young people to reach their full potential.
- The home has a stable team of staff, many of whom have worked at the home for a number of years. This provides continuity of care for the children and young people.

4.2 The inspection made no statutory requirements however they made three recommendations. These are as follows;

- For children's homes to follow a programme of redecoration in the bedrooms, to match the high-quality decoration in other parts of the home.
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b) ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3); and
- Children's homes staff should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. In particular, if there is delay with a child's blood tests, the manager needs to escalate their concerns to the placing authority.

4.3 The team are working hard to implement these actions in accordance with the timescales stipulated.

## 5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Children's Home needs to provide high quality care to children and young people in their care. If the children's home does not continue a programme of improvement and does not implement the recommendations made, it runs the risk of being judged 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'

meaning the care of children and young people has become unsafe or receive poor care.

## **6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 There are no legal considerations arising from this report. Inspections are carried out in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015

## **8. CONSULTATION**

8.1 During the course of the inspection, inspectors consulted with children and young people who access services at Exmoor Grove and this informed their findings

## **9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)**

9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications arising from this report.

## **10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)**

10.1 The inspection outlines how the Children's home, care and practice are sensitive and responsive to age, disability, ethnicity, faith, or belief, gender, gender identity, language, race and sexual orientation.

## **11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

11.1 There are no staffing considerations arising from this report.

## **12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

12.1 There are no asset management considerations arising from this report.

### **13. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1 Children's Services Committee is asked to note the positive inspection report of Exmoor Grove Children's Home. The provision has been judged to be outstanding, which is the highest judgment. The home has been judged outstanding consistently over the last four years which demonstrates the hard work and commitment of the staff team as a whole and positive management and leadership of the Registered Manager.
- 13.2 Children's Services Committee is also asked to note the change in the role of Responsible Individual from Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director to Jane Young, Assistant Director.

### **14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14.1 Exmoor Grove is a regulated statutory service providing care for children and young people and Children's Service Committee must be kept informed of inspections and the judgments of OFSTED in relation the provision.

### **15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 15.1 Full Inspection report July 2019

### **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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Tel: (01429) 405584 (Direct) / (01429) 405588 (Reception)

# SC030967

Registered provider: Hartlepool Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for children and young people who have learning disabilities. The home offers respite care for six children and young people, and care and accommodation for two longer-term placements. It is owned and operated by a local authority. The manager has been registered since April 2008.

**Inspection dates:** 30 to 31 July 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 6 November 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
28/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/08/2016	Full	Outstanding



## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

An excellent admissions process introduces children and young people and their families to this warm, inviting and well-equipped home. A talking photograph book and a children's guide written in pictorial symbols help to give children and young people information about the home before they arrive. Parents are also reassured by discussing their child with the home's managers at a child appreciation day. This provides the staff team with full information so that there is a shared understanding of the child's or young person's needs.

Introductions to the home go at the pace of the child or young person so that they are fully prepared. This helps to make their stays even more enjoyable. Parents are also reassured. Ongoing communication between the staff team and parents continues as a result of the trusting relationships developed from the beginning of a child's or young person's stay at the home.

Children and young people receive excellent care and support from the experienced and skilled long-standing staff team. As well as providing respite care, some children and young people stay at the home for longer periods of time. Staff have more involvement in their health, education and care needs. When a child or young person needs more specialised health support, such as having blood tests carried out at the home, staff explore the different options available. However, this has so far proved unsuccessful and one child is still waiting for an appointment.

The staff team has a close working relationship with the schools that the children and young people attend. This offers a consistent approach across the different settings. Additionally, the staff help young people to obtain recognised awards so that they can develop skills for learning, work and life.

All the children and young people make progress in different areas of their lives. Their life experiences are enhanced, and they transfer the skills they develop to home and school. This includes improved sleep patterns, more tolerance towards others and improved personal-care skills. The child-friendly care plans provide a clear measure of the progress that children and young people make in respect of their development and self-management skills.

The use of symbols, objects of reference, pictures and talking door-signs, together with the active use of sign language, gives children genuine choice. Children and young people, including those who have communication difficulties, feel understood and able to influence the care they receive. Speech and language improve and, as a result, negative behaviours lessen.

Children and young people enjoy a wide range of exciting and sensory activities at the home. In the large garden area, play equipment and a hot tub offer physical exercise and stimulation. Activity plans are tailored for each child and young person. This gives them a balance between individual time with staff and group trips with their peers. Children and young people build new friendships, which helps them with the development of their social skills. The children and young people spoke of the fun they have at the home. The support and supervision from staff allow them to have new opportunities, such as going swimming, eating out in restaurants or going on train journeys. Their enjoyment is captured in the many photographs displayed around the home, and in their personalised memory books.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

The high staffing levels keep children and young people safe and allow them to be closely observed and supervised as needed. The staff team has an extensive knowledge of the children's and young people's vulnerabilities. As a result, the children and young people do not go missing from home. They stay safe and have the support they need to make progress.

The staff team is well versed in how the children and young people communicate their needs. The staff quickly recognise and respond to changes in presentation and the different vocalisations of non-verbal children and young people. The intuitive staff are excellent at noticing when children and young people are distressed. Parents spoke of the trust they have in staff to keep their children safe and well cared for. This includes those who have complex health needs.

There are robust and effective risk assessments in place which enable the staff to anticipate risks and de-escalate behaviours before they become dangerous to the child or young person or the staff. On the rare occasions when children and young people need to be held to keep them safe, these interventions are well documented and include a clear rationale. The manager reviews each incident and supports staff to reflect on their response. If needed, the positive behaviour management plans are changed, with new strategies included to prevent further episodes.

The staff team provides a flexible service and staff go over and above to make sure that children and young people are kept safe. The staff have excellent working relationships with safeguarding professionals. This provides an important multi-disciplinary approach. The children and young people share information with the staff due to their trusting relationships. Staff remain vigilant and feed back relevant information to social care professionals.

Staff educate children and young people about issues such as e-safety and bullying, using material that is appropriate to the individual's age and stage of development. This provides children and young people with the knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm and abuse. Children and young people are empowered to complain and said they would speak to either the manager or other staff if they were worried.

The staff use their training and research effectively to promote the safety and welfare of young people. Following sensory training, there has been a programme of redecoration to softer, neutral colours, to promote a calm environment. This has had an immediate, positive impact on the behaviour of the children and young people. However, some bedrooms are looking dated and are due for redecoration to bring them in line with the high-quality decor of the home.

Staff use a reward system to promote positive behaviours. Children and young people are fully involved in this system and are proud of their photograph and the points they have been awarded, which are maintained on the display board. Rewards are tailored to their individual goals and capabilities. This allows all children and young people to achieve and make positive progress.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager is a highly motivated, inspirational leader. She leads by example and is child focused and aspirational for children and young people to reach their full potential. This filters down to the staff, who are equally committed and are enthusiastic about making sure that children and young people have the best possible time when they stay.

The manager and staff are creative and forward-thinking and continue to make improvements at the home, such as in the sensory room and with the development of personalised communication packs and individualised sensory aids.

The home has a stable team of staff, many of whom have worked at the home for a number of years. This provides continuity of care for the children and young people. The staff have a diverse range of skills and some have additional responsibilities that make the best of the team's abilities, such as a positive-behaviour worker. They share their knowledge during team meetings and group discussions, helping others to develop their own insight.

The manager considers staff development and training as essential to maintaining the exceptionally high standard of care provided for children and young people. Staff benefit from receiving good-quality ongoing training which is tailored to their service and informs their practice.

Staff feel valued and supported by managers and receive regular supervision. However, as supervision sessions are delivered by different members of the management team, the quality of these discussions is not consistent.

The staff team attends regular team meetings as well as having monthly meetings with an external clinical team to discuss the children and young people who are being cared for. This offers the team opportunities to have regular reflective discussions.



## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food, hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9). In particular, the programme of redecoration needs to continue in the bedrooms, to match the high-quality decoration in other parts of the home.
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b) ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3). Specifically, the manager should ensure that supervision is consistently delivered to the same standard by all supervisors.
- Children's homes staff should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. Where children have specific health needs or conditions, they should be supported to manage these, subject to their age and understanding. When a child needs additional health or well-being support, staff should work with the child's placing authority to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist medical, psychological or psychiatric support required, and challenge them through regulation 5 – engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met, if this doesn't happen ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10). In particular, if there is delay with a child's blood tests, the manager to escalate their concerns to the placing authority.

### Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC030967

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider address:** Hartlepool Borough Council, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, Durham TS24 8AY

**Responsible individual:** Danielle Swainston

**Registered manager:** Sylvia Lowe

## Inspectors

Tina Ruffles: social care inspector

Deb Duffy: social care inspector

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# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 December 2019



**Report of:** Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services

**Subject:** FULL OFSTED INSPECTION OF ST DAVID'S WALK  
CHILDREN'S HOME

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## 1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Children's Services Committee the outcome of recent full inspection report of St David's Walk Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on the 17 and 18 September 2019.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Inspections of Children's homes are unannounced. Ofsted has a duty to inspect children's homes twice a year under the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. This takes the form of a full inspection followed by an interim inspection. If a home is judged to be good or outstanding the home can move to an annual inspection cycle. St David's Walk is judged to be a Good provision and therefore will be inspected annually.

3.2 The scheduling of inspections takes account of:

- Standard of care provided;
- previous inspection findings;
- complaints and concerns about the service;
- notifications from the home; and
- the content of monitoring reports to Ofsted by children's homes under regulations 44 and 45 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

3.3 The inspection judgments and descriptions for a full inspection are:

- Outstanding;
- Good;
- Requires improvement;
- Inadequate.

3.4 Inspectors will use inspection descriptors as the benchmark against which to grade and judge performance. They are required to weigh up the evidence on how well children and young people are helped and protected and the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers.

3.5 St David's Walk in a new home and this was its first inspection.

DATE	INSPECTION TYPE	JUDGEMENT
18/ 09/ 2019	Full	Good

#### 4. PROPOSALS

4.1 A full inspection of St David's Walk took place on 17 and 18 September 2019 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 above and the service was judged as **Good** overall. The report of the inspection is attached at **Appendix 1**. Ofsted made a number of statutory requirements and recommendations as follows;

4.2 The protection of children standard – Overall there was six statutory requirements made in this area to support the staff team ensuring children are assessed and actions are taken if a child is at risk.

4.3 The leadership and management standard – the registered manager was advised on setting up a monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality and care provided in the home

4.4 The registered manager is required to ensure that at all times; at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification.

4.5 The registered manager is required to ensure that a record is made of any complaint, and any action is recorded.

4.6 The registered manager must notify HMCI and each other relevant person if there has been a significant incident.

4.7 Each of these requirements have a timescale that the register manger has to meet.

4.8 The inspection also made three recommendations;

- Firstly, the registered manager is required to ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny;
- The registered person must set up a system of regular supervision; and
- The registered manager must also ensure that children's records are kept up to date

4.9 These have been implemented in accordance with the timescales stipulated. Due to this being a new home it is not unusual to receive a number of statutory requirements and recommendations, this supports the home moving forward with the development of the quality of care and new staff team. The manager has noted and completed the statutory requirements and recommendations by ensuring the staff team have been briefed and understood what is expected of them, ensured the three members of staff have completed the first aid training, new paper work has been implemented to support the completion of the actions related to complaints and sanctions and the registered manager is also ensuring that practice is shared amongst the team e.g importance of signing paper work, so there is shared knowledge and practice.

4.10 The headlines and reasons why the Children's home provision is judged good are because:

**4.11 Overall experience and progress of children and young people: GOOD**

- Children are making good progress from their starting points. They enjoy going to school, and attendance levels are good.
- Children's achievements are celebrated using individualised reward schemes.
- Children experience a range of activities, days out and holidays. These moments are captured in personalised photograph albums, which enables children to build a record of positive memories; and
- Children's opinions and preferences are taken into consideration when planning activities. This demonstrates that children's views are valued and respected.

**4.12 How Well children and young people are helped and protected: GOOD**

- Children are cared for by a warm and nurturing staff team. Children are responding to the boundaries in place and say that their carers are people whom they trust.

- The manager and her team do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities in the process of reporting safeguarding concerns. This is an area of development; and
- Children are encouraged and supported to make friends.

#### **4.13 The effectiveness of leaders and Manager: GOOD**

- The manager is passionate about the care that children receive. When she identifies that standards can be raised, she tackles this with confidence in order to drive improvements forward.
- Her team shares her vision, and the result is that children live in a very homely environment; and
- The manager demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing areas that require improvement. She welcomed issues being raised during the inspection and showed enthusiasm to learn in those areas identified for development.

### **5. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Children's Home needs to provide high quality care to children and young people looked after. If the children's home does not continue a programme of improvement and does not implement the recommendations made, it runs the risk of being judged 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' meaning the care of children and young people has become unsafe or receive poor care.

### **6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no legal considerations arising from this report. Inspections are carried out in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015

### **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 During the course of the inspection, inspectors consulted with children and young people who access services at St David's Walk and this informed their findings

**9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)**

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications arising from this report.

**10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS (IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED AS APPROPRIATE.)**

- 10.1 The inspection outlines how the Children's home, care and practice are sensitive and responsive to age, disability, ethnicity, faith, or belief, gender, gender identity, language, race and sexual orientation.

**11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no staffing considerations arising from this report.

**12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations arising from this report.

**13. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1 Children's Services Committee is asked to note the positive inspection report of St David's Walk Children's Home. The provision has been judged to be Good, which for a first full inspection is an excellent achievement. This demonstrates the manager and the new teams hard work and care for the children living there.

**14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14.1 St David's Walk is a regulated statutory service providing care for children and young people and Children's Service Committee must be kept informed of inspections and the judgments of OFSTED in relation the provision.

**15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 15.1 Full Inspection report September 2019

**16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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Tel: (01429) 405584 (Direct) / (01429) 405588 (Reception)

# 2490894

Registered provider: Hartlepool Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is run by the local authority, and provides care and accommodation for up to two children who may have emotional, behavioural and/or learning disabilities.

The manager has been registered since July 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 17 to 18 September 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** first inspection

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none



## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards.' The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p> <p>that staff–</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1), (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	23/10/2019
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that–</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to–</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous</p>	23/10/2019

improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b), (2)(h))	
The registered person must ensure that–  at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31(2)(a))	23/10/2019
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.  In particular–  the registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(1), (3))	23/10/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if–  a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;  an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;  there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;  a child protection enquiry involving a child–  is instigated; or  concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or  there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	23/10/2019

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the principles as set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the

needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. Children's case records must be kept for 75 years from the date of birth of the child, or if the child dies before the age of 18, for 15 years from the date of his or her death. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children live in a home that is clean, nicely decorated and well maintained. The garden is a private, enclosed area with equipment for a variety of activities. The photographs displayed around the home are of the children and the adults who care for them. This helps children to develop attachment and a sense of permanence.

Children are making good progress from their starting points. They enjoy going to school, and attendance levels are good. Staff from the home visit school on each occasion that they are invited. This shows the children that they are a priority, which improves their self-esteem.

Children's achievements are celebrated using individualised reward schemes. As a result, children can understand when they are making progress. This boosts their confidence and helps to promote good behaviour.

Children experience a range of activities, days out and holidays. These moments are captured in personalised photograph albums, which enables children to build a record of positive memories. Children's opinions and preferences are taken into consideration when planning activities. This demonstrates that children's views are valued and respected.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

Children are cared for by a warm and nurturing staff team. Children are responding to the boundaries in place and say that their carers are people whom they trust. This shows that the children have strong and positive relationships with staff. It is these relationships that are helping children to be safe.

The manager and her team do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities in the process of reporting safeguarding concerns. This has not led to serious failure, but a development of knowledge in this area is required to ensure that children are protected. Risk assessments do not always consider the impact that children's behaviour may have on each other. Without an assessment, it is not possible to see whether risks are being managed or reduced.

There is no system in place to record when sanctions are used to manage behaviour. Without a method to record this, practice cannot be sufficiently scrutinised. This means that there is no effective oversight to ensure that children are being treated fairly.

Children are encouraged and supported to make friends. Key-work sessions are used to help children to learn about healthy and appropriate relationships, and the topics covered are pertinent to the children's individual needs. This helps children to learn about keeping themselves safe.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The manager is passionate about the care that children receive. When she identifies that standards can be raised, she tackles this with confidence in order to drive improvements forward. Her team share her vision, and the result is that children live in a very homely environment.

The manager has not always ensured that all staff are suitably qualified in first aid or the administration of medicine. This shortfall means that there are times when it would not be possible for children's health needs to be met by those on duty. Children have not suffered due to this, but the current arrangements are not appropriate.

There is no effective system to monitor and review records. This has resulted in some documents that provide guidance to staff being contradictory. The gaps in records create confusion, resulting in the care that the children receive being inconsistent. In other areas, some key information is missing from records. Without this information, it is not possible for the manager to review the quality of care children receive.

The manager demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing areas that require improvement. She welcomed issues being raised during the inspection and showed enthusiasm to learn in those areas identified for development.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards.'

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 2490894

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Hartlepool Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, Durham  
TS24 8AY

**Responsible individual:** Jane Young

**Registered manager:** Sylvia Lowe

## Inspector

Paula Kelly, social care inspector



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# CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 December 2019



**Report of:** Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

**Subject:** FULL OFSTED INSPECTION OF STOCKTON ROAD CHILDREN'S HOME AUGUST 2019

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## 1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 For information only.

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Children's Services Committee the recent full inspection report of Stockton Road Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on 13th and 14th of August 2019.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Inspection of children's homes are carried out by Ofsted, Ofsted have a duty to inspect children's homes twice a year under The Children's Homes Regulations 2015. If the home is judged as GOOD which Stockton Road is this can move to an annual cycle. The scheduling of inspections takes account of;

- Children's standard of care
- previous inspection findings;
- complaints and concerns about the service;
- notifications from the home; and
- The content of monitoring reports to Ofsted by children's homes under regulations 44 and 45 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2015.

3.2.1 The inspection judgments and descriptions for a full inspection are:

- Outstanding
- Good

- Requires improvement
- Inadequate
- Inspectors will use the descriptors as the bench mark against which to grade and judge performance. Inspectors are required to weigh up the evidence in;
- How well children and young people are helped and protected; and
- The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers;
- and consider it against the evaluation criteria, outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate before making the judgment of the experience and progress of children and young people.

Stockton Road's previous inspection record:

Inspection date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgment
22/02/2016	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	Outstanding
22/02/2017	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
17/07/2017	Full	Good
12/02/2019	Full	Good
14/08/2019	Full	Good

#### 4. PROPOSALS

4.1 A full inspection of Stockton Road took place on 13 and 14 August 2019 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 above and the service was judged as **Good** overall. The report of the inspection is attached at **Appendix 1**. The headlines and reasons why the Children's home provision is judged good is because:

##### 4.2 Overall experience and progress of children and young people: GOOD

- The children receive good-quality, nurturing care from a motivated and committed staff team that genuinely cares about them;
- All children are making good progress in different areas of their development, particularly in respect of reduced risk-taking;
- The children develop positive relationships with staff who use a therapeutic model of parenting. This gives the children stability through learning how to grow trusting and meaningful bonds with their peers and carers;
- There are mixed results in respect of education progress, with one child making exceptional progress at school; this is supported by the high level of stability at the home. Another is undertaking home tuition during the holidays to help improve his learning outcomes; and

- Staff provide experiential learning and the children have many opportunities to participate in a range of activities that support existing interests or provide new ones.

#### 4.3 How Well children and young people are helped and protected: GOOD

- The children said that the staff help them to feel safe and talk to them about how to stay safe. This contributes to children developing trusting relationships with staff and consequently they are able to talk to staff about any issues or problems.;
- The children do not self-harm and there are no issues with alcohol misuse. Staff provide children with information to educate them about the risks associated with substance misuse and ensure that children have access to external agencies for additional support; and
- Positive behaviour is promoted in the home. The staff team uses a therapeutic parenting model and they meet regularly with an external clinician to reflect on their own responses to the children.

#### 4.4 The effectiveness of leaders and Manager: OUTSTANDING

- Leaders and managers are highly effective, well respected and valued. The manager is committed and passionate about the care given to children and the development of the home;
- The staff work effectively with other professionals to ensure that the children receive the best possible care;
- Staff have high expectations and aspirations for the children. There is a stable, long-standing staff team that provides children with stability and consistent care;
- Children and young people that have left the home remain in contact with staff. They receive ongoing emotional and practical support that helps them to prepare for adulthood and independence; and
- There is a strong focus on improving the quality of care and outcomes for children. This involves regular consultation with children and other professionals.

#### 4.5 The home received one statutory requires which is as follows:

- That the registered manger is to escalate any concerns in relation to the children's education and therapy to the relevant senior management team.

4.6 The home received one recommendation as follows;

- The staff are required to attend training related to county lines.
- The statutory requirement and recommendation have been followed up. A meeting has been held with the Assistant Director's of children and families and Education, the Virtual Head Teacher, head of service and the registered manager. Following the meeting a number of recommendations were made. The staff team have either attended the recommended training or are due to attend in relation to county lines.

**5. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Children's home needs to action and implement the statutory requirement and recommendations to ensure children and young people continue to receive a good service. If the children's home does not continue a program of improvement and does not follow up on the recommendations made, it runs the risk of being judged 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' meaning the care of children and young people has become unsafe or poor.

**6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no legal considerations arising from this report. Inspections are carried out in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015

**8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 During the course of the inspection, inspectors consulted with children and young people who access services at St David's Walk and this informed their findings

**9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY**

- 9.1 There are no child and family poverty implications arising from this report.

**10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 10.1 The inspection outlines how the Children's home, care and practice are sensitive and responsive to age, disability, ethnicity, faith, or belief, gender, gender identity, language, race and sexual orientation.

**11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no staffing considerations arising from this report.

**12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations arising from this report.

**13. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1 Children's Services Committee is asked to note the positive inspection report of Stockton Road Children's Home. The provision has been judged to be Good. It also has some improvements to make which the Manager has put in an action plan on how the staff team will achieve these. The good demonstrates the overall good quality leadership and dedication of the team which supports the children to achieve positive outcomes. Stockton Road have an ethos of experiential learning, to ensure the children have fulfilled lives, have fun, feel safe and cared for and where ever possible and safe to do, promote family and friends contact. The team will continue to strive for excellence and ensure they evidence how children and carers influence the care at Stockton Road. The Team Manager continues to develop the staff team and adopt new ways of working to support the children and young people. By the next inspection all staff will be trained within the Dyadic Development Psychotherapy approach.
- 13.2 Children's Services Committee is also asked to note the change in the role of Responsible Individual from Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director to Jane Young, Assistant Director.

**14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14.1 Stockton Road is a regulated statutory service providing care for children and young people and Children's Service Committee must be kept informed of inspections and the judgments of OFSTED in relation the provision.

**15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 15.1 Full Ofsted report 13 and 14 August 2019

## **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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# SC472417

Registered provider: Hartlepool Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A local authority owns and operates the home. The manager has been in post since the home opened in October 2013.

**Inspection dates:** 13 to 14 August 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 12 February 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2019	Full	Good
17/07/2017	Full	Good
22/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	Outstanding

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The children receive good-quality, nurturing care from a motivated and committed staff team that genuinely cares about them. The eclectic staff team members are excellent role-models for children. They provide good support and guidance and encourage positive social skills and behaviour. The children have positive day-to-day experiences at the home. They live in a friendly, warm and well-presented home. Shared mealtimes provide a family environment and a natural way of nurturing children.

All children are making good progress in different areas of their development, particularly in respect of reduced risk-taking. Three of the children have moved into the home since the last inspection and have settled well. The manager gives thorough scrutiny to new referrals, considering the needs of individual children and the potential impact on each of them from group living. The careful deliberation and robust care planning help to reduce any negative impact. As a result, the children all live harmoniously together.

The children develop positive relationships with staff who use a therapeutic model of parenting. This gives the children stability through learning how to grow trusting and meaningful bonds with their peers and carers.

There are mixed results in respect of education progress, with one child making exceptional progress at school; this is supported by the high level of stability at the home. Another is undertaking home tuition during the holidays to help improve his learning outcomes. However, although all children have some form of education, some children have been waiting many months for a full-time education provision.

Staff provide experiential learning and the children have many opportunities to participate in a range of activities that support existing interests or provide new ones. One child has a horse that she cares for. Staff take children on holidays which are linked to their interests or culture; for example, one child is going to the Notting Hill Carnival.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

The children are safeguarded by staff who have a good understanding of their risks and vulnerabilities. The individualised risk assessments provide staff with clear instructions on how to lessen those risks and manage any negative behaviour. The children said that the staff help them to feel safe and talk to them about how to stay safe. This contributes to children developing trusting relationships with staff and consequently they are able to talk to staff about any issues or problems. Staff ensure that children have access to the right support in response to their concerns and disclosures.

The children do not self-harm and there are no issues with alcohol misuse. Staff provide children with information to educate them about the risks associated with substance misuse and ensure that children have access to external agencies for additional support.

Although the children are at low risk of sexual and/or criminal exploitation, the staff would benefit from receiving training about county lines to give them a greater understanding of this issue. Instances where children go missing from home are low and when a child is not back home at the agreed time, staff follow the correct procedures and contact the child by phone, look for the child and work closely with the police. Return to home interviews take place, so the reasons for missing episodes are well recorded and understood.

There is secure monitoring around children's internet use based on the children's individual vulnerability. The home uses bespoke technology to track and restrict access to unsafe sites.

Positive behaviour is promoted in the home. The staff team uses a therapeutic parenting model and they meet regularly with an external clinician to reflect on their own responses to the children. The children receive positive rewards and incentives and negative behaviour is addressed without the need for sanctions. This is proving successful and children enjoy looking after the garden or helping with DIY. There has only been one occasion since the last inspection when a very low-level hold was used to keep a child safe.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

Leaders and managers are highly effective, well respected and valued. The manager is committed and passionate about the care given to children and the development of the home. External feedback is positive, with one professional saying, 'Stockton Road is an outstanding home.'

The staff work effectively with other professionals to ensure that the children receive the best possible care. The manager advocates strongly for children, for example in challenging placing authorities about education and therapy. However, this has been ineffective and children are still waiting for services.

The manager and staff have an excellent knowledge of the children's stories, risks and vulnerabilities and how to meet their needs. Staff have high expectations and aspirations for the children. There is a stable, long-standing staff team that provides children with stability and consistent care. Children and young people that have left the home remain in contact with staff. They receive ongoing emotional and practical support that helps them to prepare for adulthood and independence.

The manager is influential in creating a culture of reflection and development. Staff feel supported and benefit from the regular training, supervision and team meetings. This promotes their personal and professional development. Appraisals take place regularly and the manager includes feedback from the children. Children are also involved in the recruitment of new staff and their views are valued.

There is a strong focus on improving the quality of care and outcomes for children. This involves regular consultation with children and other professionals. The registered manager has an excellent understanding of the strengths of the home and areas for development. The requirements have been met from the last inspection.

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (c))</p> <p>In particular, for the registered manager to escalate any concerns in relation to the children's education and therapy to the relevant senior management team.</p>	27/09/2019

### Recommendations

- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14) In particular, for staff to receive training related to county lines.

### Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC472417

**Provision sub-type:** children's home

**Registered provider:** Hartlepool Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, Durham TS24 8AY

**Responsible individual:** Danielle Swainston

**Registered manager:** James Welsh

## Inspectors

Deb Duffy, social care inspector

Tina Ruffles, social care inspector

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