

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Tuesday 7 September 2021

at 4.00 pm

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

A limited number of members of the public will be able to attend the meeting with spaces being available on a first come, first served basis. Those wishing to attend the meeting should phone (01429) 523568 or (01429) 523193 by midday on Monday 6 September 2021 and name and address details will be taken for NHS Test and Trace purposes.

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors, Ashton, Boddy, Fleming, Groves, Harrison, Lindridge and Moore.

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: Councillor Fleming, 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 20 July 2021 (*previously circulated and published*).



4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

- 4.1 Youth Justice Strategic Plan – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

5. KEY DECISIONS

No items

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Overview of Education – Autumn 2021 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*
- 7.2 Full Ofsted Inspection of Exmoor Grove – *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 Fostering Service Interim Report 1 April – 30 June 2021 – *Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 12 October 2021 at 4.00pm



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

7th September 2021



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

Subject: YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 Budget and Policy Framework.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To outline the process for the development of the draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2019-2021 (Appendix A) and approve the draft Plan for consultation.

The purpose of this report is to present the Council with the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2021-2023 (**Appendix 1**) and gain approval from Children's Service Committee to begin a consultation process for the approval of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021/23, which will be presented to Safer Hartlepool Partnership on the 20th September 2021 and Audit and Governance Committee on the 29th September.

Recommendations made by the Children's Services Committee, Safer Hartlepool Partnership and Audit and Governance Committee will be incorporated into the final plan which will be reported back to Children's Services Committee prior to final adoption of the plan by full Council.

2.2 The report will be presented to Children's Service Committee on the 12 October to seek approval for the presentation to Full Council on the 4 November to seek adoption of the Youth Justice Plan 2021/2023.

2.3 The final Strategy Plan will also be sent to the National Youth Justice Board.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The national Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children and young people between the age of 10 and 17 do not engage in offending or re-offending behaviour and to ensure that where a young person is

arrested and charged with a criminal offence, they are dealt with differently to adult offenders to reflect their particular welfare needs as children.

- 3.2 Local Youth Offending Services were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop, deliver, commission and coordinate the provision of youth justice services within each Local Authority.
- 3.3 Hartlepool Youth Justice Service was established in April 2000 and is responsible for youth justice services locally. It is a multi-agency service and is made up of representatives from the Council's Children's Services, Police, Probation, Health and Education.
- 3.4 The primary objectives of Youth Justice Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people and reduce the use of custody.
- 3.5 There is a statutory requirement for all Youth Justice Services to annually prepare, a local Youth Justice Plan for submission to the national Youth Justice Board.
- 3.6 The annual Youth Justice Plan provides an overview of how the Youth Justice Service, the Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board and wider partnership will ensure that the service has sufficient resources and infrastructure to deliver youth justice services in its area in line with the requirements of the *National Standards for Youth Justice Services* to:
 - promote performance improvement
 - shape youth justice system improvement
 - improve outcomes for young people, victims and the broader community
- 3.7 The Youth Justice Service were inspected by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in October 2020. This inspection is part of a four-year programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. HMIP inspected and rated Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (YJS) across three broad areas of its work, referred to as 'domains': the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. HMIP inspect against 12 'standards', shared between the domains. Overall, Hartlepool YJS was rated as 'Good' which is a very positive outcome and provides the authority with a level of assurance, the recommendations for improvement identified in this report have been address in YJS plan 2021/23.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that the Youth Offending Service and broader youth justice Partnership focus on the following key strategic objectives during 2021/23;

- **Early Intervention and Prevention** sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that there remain strategies and services in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour
- **Re-offending** Reducing further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis on the development of activities to address the offending behaviour of young women
- **Remand and Custody** – Demonstrate that there are robust alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands to custody whilst awaiting trial/sentencing
- **Voice of the Young Person** – – ensure that all young people are actively involved in developing their own plans and interventions and have the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery
- **Effective Governance** – ensure that the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Offending Service performance
- **Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus)** – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management
- **'Child First'** – ensure that the Child First principles are embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and makes a positive contribution to society.
- **Education, Training, Employment** – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School, One Stop Shop etc to ensure all Young People open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.
- **Substance Misuse** – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of young people open to the YJS within substance misuse services.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The strategic plan identifies key risk to future delivery as detailed in Section 8. of the plan these are:

- The unpredictability associate with secure remand episodes and secure remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the Youth Justice Service and the broader Local Authority
- Managing the potential for reduction in YJB grant and partnership financial and 'in-kind' contributions for post-2021/23
- Performance on reoffending outcomes and impact to children
- Emerging concerns around Serious Youth Violence, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 A local authority must submit a youth justice plan annually to the Youth Justice Board setting out (a) how youth justice services are to be provided and funded in their area and (b) how the YOTs established by them are to be composed and funded, how they are to operate and what functions they are to carry out. The plan must be published in such manner and by such date as the Secretary of State may direct.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 This plan has had the approval of the Youth Justice Management Board and consultation will be sought through the committee approval process before providing the Youth Justice Board with a final version.

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

9.1 Not applicable

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

10.1 Not applicable

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 There are no staffing consideration within this report

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 There are no asset management consideration within this report

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 To note the progress made against the local Youth Justice Plan (2019/2021).

13.2 To approve the required process of consultation.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 The development of the Youth Justice plan for 2021/2023 will provide the Youth Justice Service with a clear steer to bring about further reductions in youth offending and contribute to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families alongside the broader community.

14.2 The local Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2021/2023 will establish responsibility across the Youth Justice Service and the Youth Justice Strategic Board for taking each improvement activity forward within agreed timescales.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Jane Young, Assistant Director , Children and Families , Hartlepool Borough Council, level 4, Civic Centre, TS24 8AY. Tel 01429 523957. E-mail jane.young@hartlepool.gov.uk

Sign Off:-

Director of Finance and Policy ☒

Chief Solicitor ☒



HARTLEPOOL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021/2023

1	FOREWORD	Page 3
2	INTRODUCTION	Page 5
3	STRATEGIC VISION AND PRIORITIES	Page 7
4	STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE	Page 12
5	PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS	Page 16
6	RESOURCES AND SERVICES	Page 16
7	PERFORMANCE & PRIORITIES	Page 19
8	RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC AND RECOVERY FROM COVID 19	Page 32
9	RISKS TO FUTURE DELIVERY	Page 34
10	SERVICE BUSINESS & IMPROVEMENT PLAN	Page 35
11	STRATEGIC SUMMARY	Page 39

1. FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2021 - 2023 Hartlepool Youth Justice Strategic Plan. This plan sets out our ambitions and priorities for Hartlepool Youth Justice Service and the broader local Youth Justice Partnership for the next 2 years.

The Safer Hartlepool Partnership, Community Safety Plan 2020-21 establishes a vision for the town:

“To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit”

The Youth Justice Service and broader partnership has a key role in contributing to this vision, by continuing to deliver a high quality, effective and safe youth justice service that prevents crime and the fear of crime, whilst ensuring that young people who do offend are identified, managed and supported appropriately, without delay.

In recent years Hartlepool has witnessed a significant reduction in youth crime. The local youth justice partnership has been particularly effective in reducing the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time, but there still remains a need to drive down incidents of re-offending by young people who have previously offended. This will be achieved through a combination of robust interventions designed to manage and reduce risk of harm, support safety & wellbeing, restore interpersonal relationships, promote whole family engagement and achieve positive outcomes. Encouragingly, Hartlepool Youth Justice Service has implemented a strong health offer for all young people and continues to develop its restorative offer whilst ensuring that victims of youth crime also have a voice.

The recent HMIP inspection was a positive experience resulting in a strong GOOD result overall for the service. It highlighted many positives to be maintained and built upon and also areas requiring improvement, the YJS and partners continue to work hard to improve in all in areas. The HMIP inspection framework, ‘Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019’ and the ‘Child First’ ethos will be integral to the way the service builds upon progress to date. However, it must be acknowledged that the ongoing difficulties with the COVID 19 pandemic, current economic climate, and the continuing introduction of new reforms relating to how we respond to children, young people, families and communities, will inevitably present new challenges in the coming year and beyond.

Despite these challenges I am very confident that Hartlepool Youth Justice Service and the broader Youth Justice Partnership will continue to help make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

In 2021-23 we will strive to continuously improve by:

- Maintaining and building upon the current Health offer and Enhanced Case Management model, with trauma informed practice at its core.
- Continuing to work with partners to develop a clear and consistent approach to all forms of child exploitation.
- Building on the improving YJS offer of a 'whole family approach'
- Ensuring the Service maintains a 'child first' ethos.
- Continuing to develop and embed a creative Early Intervention & Prevention offer

None of the above will be possible without the continued support and close working relationships of our partners and Children's Social Care. In addition, these relationships allow us to mitigate the impact of ever reducing partnership budgets whilst maintaining the quality and effectiveness of the Service.

2020-21 has been a difficult and frustrating year for everyone, especially in light of the COVID 19 pandemic, an initial radical overhaul of service delivery and ever changing Business Continuity and Recovery Plans added to the ongoing pressures. It needs to be highlighted that all staff have coped admirably and very professionally throughout this period ensuring the service continued to reach out and deliver interventions to all young people in very difficult circumstances.

In light of the above, as always, the local authority and Strategic Management Board is extremely grateful for the skill and dedication of our employees in continuing to support young people who offend, or are at risk of becoming involved in offending.

On behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council Children's Services and Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board I am pleased to pledge my support to and endorse the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021-23



Sally Robinson, Director, Children and Joint Commissioning Services

2. INTRODUCTION

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (YJS) covers the local authority area of Hartlepool which is impacted upon by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. Using the 2019 average score of the Index of Multiple Deprivation Hartlepool is the 10th most deprived Local Authority in the country with high levels of unemployment, the initial impact of Universal Credit, crime and anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and substance misuse. All of these factors provide significant challenges to the young people we work with impacting on their behaviours and influencing outcomes.

Hartlepool is served by 5 Secondary Schools, 1 Pupil Referral Unit and Catcote Academy which caters for secondary and post-16 students with special educational needs. There are 4 Sixth Form providers two of which are located within Secondary Schools.

The current population of Hartlepool is in the region of 93,000 with approx.10,000 being between the ages of 10-17.

Hartlepool also has a low BAME population currently at 2.1%

The National Youth Justice System primarily exists to ensure that children and young people between the age of 10 and 17 (who are arrested and charged with a criminal offence) are dealt with differently to adult offenders, to reflect their particular welfare needs.

In summary, young people who offend are:

- Dealt with by youth courts;
- Given different sentences in comparison to adults and
- When necessary, detained in special secure centres for young people.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority and statutory partners to secure and coordinate local youth justice services for young people in our area who come into contact with the Youth Justice System as a result of their offending behaviour. This is achieved through the established Youth Justice Service.

The primary functions of Youth Justice Services are to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people, reduce the use of custody and ensure all of the above are delivered with a “Child First” ethos embedded across the service.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service was established in April 2000 and is a multi-agency service made up of representatives from Children’s Services, Police, Probation, Public Health, Education and Community Safety. Hartlepool Youth Justice Service seeks to ensure that:

- All young people entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk and protective factors associated with their offending behaviour in order to inform effective interventions.
- Courts and Referral Order panels are provided with high quality reports that enable them to make informed decisions.
- Orders of the Court are managed in such a way that they support the primary aim of the youth justice system, alongside managing risk of harm and ensuring there is due regard to the welfare of the young person.
- Services provided to courts are of a high quality and ensure that magistrates and the judiciary have confidence in the supervision of young people.
- Comprehensive bail and remand management services are in place locally for young people remanded or committed to custody, or on bail while awaiting trial or sentence.
- The needs and risks of young people sentenced to custodial sentences (including long-term custodial sentences) are assessed to ensure effective resettlement and management of risk.
- Those receiving youth justice services are treated fairly regardless of race, language, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or any other factor, and actions are put in place to address discrimination if identified

In addition to the above, the remit of the service has widened significantly in recent years due to both national and local developments relating to prevention, diversion and restorative justice and there is a now requirement to ensure that:

- Creative strategies and services are in place locally to prevent young people from becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour;
- Out-of-court disposals deliver targeted and bespoke interventions for those at risk of entering the Youth Justice System
- Assistance is provided to the Police when determining whether Youth Cautions should be issued and
- Restorative approaches are used, where appropriate, with victims of crime and ensures that restorative justice is central to work undertaken with young people who offend.

The Hartlepool Youth Justice Plan for 2021-2023 sets out how youth justice services will be delivered, funded and governed in response to both local need and national policy changes and in line with the Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019, the recent HMIP inspection findings and the ongoing Business Continuity and Recovery plan. It also highlights how Hartlepool Youth Justice Service will work in partnership to prevent offending and re-offending by young people and reduce the use of custody.

3. STRATEGIC VISION AND PRIORITIES

Hartlepool's Children's Strategic Partnership has set out its vision for children and young people within the town as follows:

Vision:

Our ambition as a children's partnership is to enable all children and families in Hartlepool to have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities.

Obsessions:

- Children and young people have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and are safe
- Improving family relationships, strengths, skills and ability to cope
- Reducing the impact of domestic violence, mental health, drugs and alcohol misuse on children and families
- Helping parents, carers and young people to gain skills and get jobs

The Youth Justice Service, as part of the wider services for children, seeks to deliver on the vision and obsessions through a number of identified Youth Justice Service Strategic Priorities for 2021 - 2023.

In addition, these priorities align and overlap with the strategic priorities set by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership for 2020-21:

- Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reduce the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse

- Reduce Domestic Violence

To enable Hartlepool Youth Justice Service to contribute to the vision above, it will focus on the following strategic objectives and priorities:

Strategic Objectives and Priorities – 2021-2023

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service (and the broader Youth Justice Partnership) will be utilising the YJB grant to help achieve the following key strategic objectives during 2021-23:

Youth Justice Strategic Priorities

Re-offending - reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis continuing on the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive and tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Services and provided by external agencies).

Key Actions

- Undertake quality assessments of young people at risk of re-offending, ensuring risks, desistance factors and needs are identified which inform effective intervention planning
- Improve interventions delivered, through innovation and collaboration where appropriate
- Improve intelligence and timely information sharing relating to those young people who are at risk of offending, to inform service-wide improvement activity or targeted work
- Continue to improve the 'whole family' approach and Health offer within the service and with partners
- Continue to undertake scoping activities in relation to retaining both the Speech & Language Therapist, Trauma Informed Care Pathway and Emotional Wellbeing therapists presence within the YJS beyond March 2020

Early Intervention and Prevention – sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that creative strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Key Actions

- Embedding of the YJS Early Intervention and Prevention offer across Children's Services and the partnership
- Operate a targeted approach to supporting individuals and groups of young people at risk of offending - based on intelligence and collaborative working with key partners (Police, ASB, Early Help, Voluntary Community Sector, Schools, etc)
- Work with Partners to reduce and respond to the Child exploitation
- Ongoing trend analysis of past and current FTE's to identify key themes and responses
- Ongoing briefings to key partners (such as Police and Social Care) to emphasise and promote the Prevention and Diversion agenda
- Ensure point of arrest diversion is evident as a distinct and substantially different response to formal out of court disposals

Remand and Custody – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.

Key Actions

- Monitor and maintain the use of Compliance Panels to ensure continued effectiveness
- Ensure the Service provides intensive packages of supervision and support to high intensity orders and bail arrangements
- Ensure that the needs of young people in custody and the factors relating to their offending behaviour are addressed in the secure estate to prevent further offending upon release
- Ensure that robust and timely Resettlement Planning is in place for young people upon release to reduce the risk of further reoffending (HMIP Youth Justice inspection framework, standard 4.1 Resettlement, May 2021)
- Review capacity to deliver ISS, and resource appropriately, through a multi-agency approach

Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus) – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.

Key Actions

- Continued Asset Plus refresher training, ensuring robust assessment of a young person's needs
- Work in partnership with other agencies to ensure there is a co-ordinated assessment and plan relating to a young person's risk and safety & wellbeing
- Implement an audit cycle/performance clinic to ensure assessment and plans are meeting the appropriate quality standards through robust and transparent quality assurance and feedback.
- Ensure that desistance factors are identified and analysed in all assessments of every young person subject to YJS supervision through quality assurance and staff supervision.
- Attendance and contribution to YJB Regional Effective Practice groups and peer collaboration with Tees Valley and North East YOT colleagues
- Ongoing internal staff training and workshops to benchmark quality standards in the management of risk and safety & wellbeing
- Continue to work alongside the partnership to identify suitable interventions and pathways for children and young people criminally exploited and potentially being drawn into County Lines activity
- Undertake 'Practice Week', this consists of a team of independent auditors to carry out case work audits, undertake practice observations and gain feedback from young people and their families. The evaluation of practice week will inform the service development plan.

Restorative Justice – ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is incorporated in to the work undertaken with young people who offend.

Key Actions

- Ensure that victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches leading to improved outcomes for victims
- Continue to use restorative practice across all aspects of the Youth Justice Service
- Regularly re-visit, review and develop practice and process around Referral Order panels to ensure increased involvement from victims, panel members, young people and their families
- Continue to develop the in-house RJ 'offer' to consolidate and embed current and better integrated working practices – including the victim's evaluation

Effective Governance – ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Justice Service performance.

Key Actions

- The Youth Justice Management Board will provide oversight and scrutiny of the service action plan and performance
- Ensure Management Board members attend regular development and shadowing opportunities as provided by the YJS Team Manager.
- Continue to review the Terms of Reference for the YJS board to ensure it is fit for purpose and includes appropriate representation and contribution of all statutory partners.
- Attendance and representation at YJB Regional executive meetings with colleague YOT Managers from the North East – to share learning and Governance issues to improve wider regional service delivery

Voice of the Young People – ensure that all young people are actively involved in developing their own plans having the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery

Key Actions

- Ensure young people's involvement in relation to their assessment and plans is clearly evidenced within the records.
- Young people to be actively involved in developing their own plans and their comments are captured at implementation, review and closure of all plans
- The service will ensure young people are provided with opportunities to influence and shape service delivery – through access to, and completion of, Survey Monkey feedback
- YJS leadership team to hold regular evaluation/feedback meetings to ensure all comments are seen and actioned where required

'Child First' – ensure that the Child First principles are embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and make a positive contribution to society.

Key Actions

- Prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their needs, capacities, rights and potential.
- Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion.
- Ensure that all work carried out by the service is a meaningful collaboration with children and their parents/carers.
- The YJS will promote a childhood that is removed from the Justice System, using prevention, diversion and minimal intervention and that all work minimises stigma.

Education, Training, Employment – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Schools, Virtual School, One Stop Shop etc to ensure all Young People open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.

Key Actions

- Ensure Education is suitably represented on the Strategic Management Board
- Education reports submitted by partners for each Strategic Management Board meeting
- Encourage children's active engagement with their respective education provider
- The YJS leadership team to hold monthly Education meetings with all education partners
- Working in collaboration regarding children with EHCP/SEN

Substance Misuse – Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of young people open to the YJS within substance misuse services.

Key Actions

- Ensure Substance Misuse providers are suitably represented on the Strategic Management Board
- Regular reports/updates submitted to the Strategic Management Board by Substance Misuse providers
- Ensure the co-location and continued working arrangements/pathways are embedded between the YJS and Substance Misuse partners
- All children and young people identified as needing support are actively encouraged to engage with appropriate Substance Misuse services

4. STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

Service Structure:

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service employs a staff team of 27 people, which includes three seconded staff, and 5 sessional workers (**see Appendix 1**). The service also benefits from a team of 6 active volunteers who are Referral Order Panel members. All staff and volunteers are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks which are renewed every three years.

The YJS delivery model has been reconfigured and restructured during the last year to ensure the service remains sufficiently flexible to address future challenges. This will continue to be achieved through a generic case management and intervention delivery model, across pre and post court functions. This will ensure maximum resilience, capacity and flexibility to meet the needs of children and young people and the service as a whole.

The current YJS structure aims to consolidate areas of strong performance and effective practice, whilst also providing a dynamic framework to respond to emerging priorities, recognised both by the Local Authority and key partners.

This model (alongside the YJS strategic plan) allows the organisation and the wider YJS partnership to action the priorities for service delivery and to achieve best outcomes for children and young people across the range of statutory and preventative services.

Governance:

The Youth Justice Service is located within the Children & Joint Commissioning Services Department. The Management Board is chaired by the local Neighbourhood Policing Chief Inspector and is made up of representatives from Children's Social Care, Police, Probation, Public Health, Courts, Education, Youth Support Services and Community Safety.

Effective integrated strategic partnership working and clear oversight by the Management Board are critical to the success and effective delivery of youth justice services in Hartlepool. The board is directly responsible for:

- Determining how appropriate youth justice services are to be provided and funded;
- Overseeing the formulation each year of the youth justice plan;
- Agreeing measurable objectives linked to key performance indicators as part of the youth justice plan;
- Ensuring delivery of the statutory aim to prevent offending by children and young people;
- Giving strategic direction to Youth Justice Service Manager and Youth Justice Service Team;
- Providing performance management of the prevention of youth crime and periodically report this to the Safer Hartlepool Partnership;
- Ensuring that Standards for children in the youth justice system 2019 are embedded across the whole service and audits are completed within required timescales;
- Promoting the key role played by the Youth Justice Service within local integrated offender management arrangements;

- Advocate on behalf of the YJS within their own service areas and beyond, specifically supporting the YJS to overcome barriers to effective multi agency working;
- Oversight of all data submissions to the YJB ensuring timeliness, especially conditions set out in the YJB grant;
- Ensuring the recommendations outlined in the HMIP inspection report are addressed and monitored at board meetings

The Management Board is clear about the priority areas for improvement, and monitors the delivery of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan, performance and prevention work. It is well attended and receives comprehensive reports relating to performance, finance and specific areas of service delivery.

Members of the Board are knowledgeable, participate well in discussions and are members of other related boards, such as the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Safer Hartlepool Partnership, which contribute to effective partnership working at a strategic level. Board meetings are well structured and members are held accountable. The current membership of the Board is as follows:

Mark Haworth (Chair)	Chief Inspector – Neighbourhood Policing (Cleveland Police)
Jane Young (Deputy Chair)	Assistant Director – Children and Families' (HBC)
Roni Checksfield	Hartlepool YJS Manager (HBC)
Emma Rutherford	Virtual School Headteacher (HBC)
Ann Powell	Head of Cleveland NPS – National Probation Service (NE)
Rachel Parker	Community Safety Team Leader (HBC)

Zoe McKenna	One Stop Shop Manager (HBC)
Deborah Clark	Public Health Improvement Practitioner (HBC)
Jo Heaney	Clinical Commissioning Group (Tees Valley) (CCG)
Kate Stockdale	Head of Service, Substance Misuse (HBC)
Heather Moreton	Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)
David Ward	Head of Finance (Children's & adults) (HBC)
Lisa Oldroyd	Office for Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
Helen Marriott	Health & Justice Services (TEWV)
Linda Bush	Head of Innovation and Engagement (North East & Cumbria) Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

5. PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service is a statutory partnership which includes, but also extends beyond, the direct delivery of youth justice services. In order to deliver youth justice outcomes it must be able to function effectively in both of the two key sectors within which it operates, namely:

- Criminal justice services.
- Services for children, young people and their families.

The Youth Justice Service contributes both to improving community safety and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and in particular protecting them from significant harm.

Many of the young people involved with the Youth Justice Service are amongst the most vulnerable children in the borough and are at greatest risk of social exclusion. The Youth Justice Service's multi-agency approach ensures that it plays a significant role in meeting the safeguarding needs of these young people. This is achieved through the effective assessment and management of safety & wellbeing and risk, through working in partnership with other services, for example Children's Services, Health, Education, Secure Estate and Police to ensure young people's wellbeing is promoted and they are protected from harm. Regular ongoing communication, meetings, joint training opportunities and speedy information/intelligence sharing ensure ongoing strong links and relationships.

All high risk cases can be escalated to either one or both of the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked group (VEMT) or the Strategic Risk Management Group, the Youth Justice Service has representation on both groups which meet monthly. Discussions around serious youth violence, criminal exploitation and county lines are conducted within these forums ensuring tight plans are implemented and strategic management oversight is afforded

6. RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The Youth Justice Service budget is mainly funded by a combination of Local Authority funding and Youth Justice Board grant, although historically there have been financial contributions from the Police and Health (CCG and Public Health). The Local Authority's contribution to the service has remained protected; however over time there have been reductions in the other areas of funding.

In April 2021 the YJB announced their grant allocations which is an 8.8% increase for Hartlepool (£411k compared to £378k in 20/21) equating to an additional £33,000. It is unclear whether this increased grant will apply in future years as the grant award letter does state:- *“This one-off uplift is by exception and is not guaranteed for future years. The YJB has sought for this additional funding to support local authorities to address some of the pressures in the system as you move into recovery following the impact of COVID-19 and to support the delivery of our strategic plan.”*

The National Probation Service continue to provide funding (£5k) as well as their staffing contribution which is 0.5 FTE, and the CCG contribution is a non-cash contribution via the commissioning of the Trauma Informed Care Pathway.

Cleveland Police ceased their cash contribution in 2013/14, however still provide the seconded Police Officer. Funding secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner in 2015 towards the delivery of Triage continues, there has however been a slight reduction in the amount of this funding which is secured for the next 12 months.

2021/2022 Youth Justice Service Budget

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Police		45,000		45,000
Police and Crime Commissioner			32,000	32,000
Probation		18,500	5,000	23,500
Health				0
Local Authority	150,000	120,000	105,000	375,000
Welsh Government				0
YJB	256,000		130,000	411,000
Other				0
Total	406,000	183,500	272,000	886,500

Planned/Proposed Expenditure 2021/22

Direct Costs	2021/22 Budget
	£'000
Employees	585
Premises	40
Transport	15
Other Non-Pay Costs	141
Indirect Costs – HBC #	42
Indirect Costs - Police	45
Indirect Costs - Probation	19
Total	887

- Inc recharges for premises, management, payroll, HR, finance, legal etc

The minimum staffing requirements set out in the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 requires that the service has a nominated person from each of the following statutory partners; Police Service, Children's Social Services, National Probation Service, Education and Health. Hartlepool YJS does not have an education rep sitting within the team, however there is a designated Education Officer who deals solely with YJS children as well as a designated One Stop Shop (OSS) worker who leads on all YJS post 16 education. Monthly Education meetings, attended by Education representatives, OSS worker and YJS staff are held where each child in the current cohort is discussed in depth, barriers to education, current circumstances and plans moving forward are also agreed. All staff have direct access to the Education Officer, wider Virtual School staff who provide support, advice and guidance and OSS worker to discuss ongoing daily education issues as and when they arise and gather any information/data as required.

7. PERFORMANCE & PRIORITIES

A review of progress made against last year's plan highlights that the service has made progress across the majority of the strategic priorities; but there remains key areas for improvement that will need to be driven forward in the coming year:

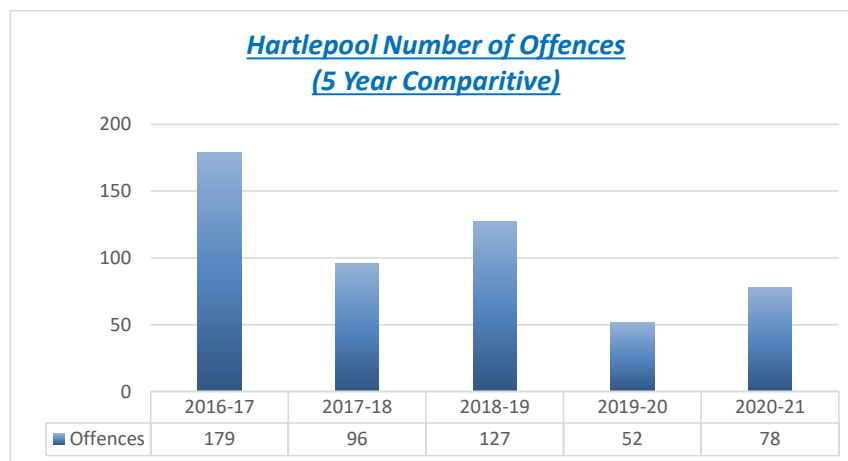
1. HARTLEPOOL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	COMMENTS/UPDATES
Re-offending - reduce further offending by young people who have committed crime with a particular emphasis in the development of Service interventions that are structured, responsive and tailored to meet identified individual need and evaluated. (Both within Youth Justice Service and provided by external agencies).	Hartlepool YJS are in the process of embedding a clearer more robust process of identification and intervening much earlier with YP regarding reoffending. This needs to be a multi-agency approach across the LA with regular communication and buy in from all service areas. Recently received updated data from the YDS indicates a reduction in reoffending over the last year, however this remains a key priority as we are all too aware of how these figures can fluctuate very quickly. The YJS and partners continue to work hard in this area, to ensure the reduction is built upon and improved over the next 2 years.
Risk and Safety & Wellbeing (Asset Plus) – ensure all children and young people entering or at risk of entering the youth justice system benefit from a structured needs assessment to identify risk of harm, safety and wellbeing concerns and desistance factors, to inform effective intervention and risk management.	All pre and post court cases within Hartlepool YJS benefit from an AssetPlus assessment. Quality Assurance frameworks have been implemented and aligned with HMIP Best Practice guidance, with all AssetPlus assessments countersigned by YJS managers. Risk management meetings are held for all High and V High and referrals to VEMT/Strategic Risk Management are made as required. The YJS Internal training programme 2021/22 (Attached at Appendix 2) covers the above as well as desistance etc.
Remand and Custody – demonstrate that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody.	Hartlepool YJS have a clear process for alternatives to custody through the offer of ISS bail packages and utilisation of pre-breach meetings for those at risk of custody via non-compliance. There has been a significant reduction in remands, 1 in 2019/20, 0 in 2020/21 and also 0 to date in 2021/22.

	Custody figures – 1 in 2019/20, 2 in 2020/21 and 0 to date in 2021/22. The YJS and partners continue to work hard in reducing these figures.
Early Intervention and Prevention – <i>sustain the reduction of first time entrants to the youth justice system by ensuring that strategies and services remain in place locally to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.</i>	Hartlepool YJS have a robust embedded diversionary offer and OoCD disposal process. To enhance this offer and widen Early Intervention/Prevention the YJS will be working directly 1:1 with referrals received from the wider Children's Services for those YP at risk of offending. A bigger onus is now being placed on Prevention/early Intervention and the service is working very hard on bespoke creative individual packages of support for all children/YP being identified and referred.
Child First – <i>ensure that the Child First principles are embedded within the Youth Justice Service and that every child has the opportunity to live a safe and crime free life, and makes a positive contribution to society.</i>	We continue to embed the "Child First, Offender second" principles across the service, our aim is to deliver a non-stigmatising approach to interventions where all children/YP have a voice and are active in planning their own pathways and plans. Alongside this there are ongoing discussions/meetings being held with Cleveland Police and partners regarding Criminal exploitation and LAC (the criminalisation of these young people) and the various forums these issues are discussed.
Restorative Justice – <i>ensure all victims of youth crime have the opportunity to participate in restorative justice approaches and restorative justice is incorporated in to the work undertaken with young people who offend.</i>	RJ and victim work continues to be delivered in house. We are now reviewing our own processes/monthly audit etc to improve our practice and the offer/outcomes to victims? This is being carried out at Leadership meetings, we have introduced an RJ database where this info is stored and monitored. We are seeing an increased improvement across the service with all areas of RJ.
Voice of the Young People – <i>ensure that all young people are actively involved in developing their own plans and interventions and have the opportunity to develop and inform current and future service delivery</i>	Hartlepool YJS continue to have an established in-house evaluation tool via 'survey monkey' – which is based on questions asked by HMIPs 'Viewpoint' survey before it was decommissioned in March 2017. We have now implemented Survey Monkey evaluations for young people, Parents/carers and Victims. AssetPlus self-assessments are completed at all initial, review and closure stages (across pre and post court cases). Children, YP and Parents/Carers are actively engaged in the creation of their plans and reviews with comments requested at all stages, as well as in depth Closure Summaries. This information is shared with the Management Board at board meetings for further discussion and to help shape future delivery and services.
Effective Governance – <i>ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Management Board is a well constituted, committed and knowledgeable Board which scrutinises Youth Justice Service performance.</i>	As a result of various national and local drivers, it is important to emphasise that the YOT partnership should reflect the most appropriate local arrangement for maximum effectiveness. The Board's membership and activity was reviewed in May 2021 and will be reviewed again in 2022, this will be undertaken with all board members. There is a need to ensure development days and shadowing days are prioritised. Board members attended the bite size sessions delivered by the YJB in early 2021 and activity from board members is and continues to improve.

Education, Training, Employment – <i>Working in collaboration with partners i.e. Virtual School, OSS etc ensure all Young People open to the YJS are actively engaging in some form of suitable ETE, thus reducing NEET numbers and increasing attendance.</i>	<p>Identified during the recent HMIP as an area needing improvement. There is a need for the YJS to work closely with all relevant partners and work towards reducing NEET figures and improving engagement/attendance for all YP and their education provision.</p> <p>Up to date education reports are now presented at each board meeting by the relevant representatives, monthly education meetings are held and a database of all YP updated. Support with EHCP, SEN, alternate provision, PEX, PRU and Post 16 education is available via the Education reps. All YJS staff have direct access to the Education reps on a day to day basis.</p>
Substance Misuse – <i>Working with partners i.e. Horizons/START to improve and sustain the engagement of young people open to the YJS with substance misuse services.</i>	<p>Identified during the recent HMIP as an area needing improvement. There is a need for the YJS to work closely with all relevant partners to understand the low engagement and work towards sustaining the engagement of all YJS YP with Substance Misuse services. HOS Substance misuse now sits on the board and will be producing up to data/reports for future board meetings.</p> <p>Co-location of staff, joint working, joint training and daily communication is ongoing.</p>

Young People Who Offend

In spite of the challenges that young people, families and communities contend with in Hartlepool, the local Youth Justice Partnership has had significant success in recent years in terms of preventing and reducing youth offending behaviour.



The number of offences committed by the YJS cohort has reduced from 179 (2016/17) to 78 in 2020/21, there have been slight fluctuations during this period, however this represents a significant reduction of 57% across the last 5 years and a 38% reduction in the last 3 years.

Prevention and Diversion

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service, and the broader youth justice partnership, continue to place a significant emphasis on the prevention of young people's involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. This continues to positively impact on the reduction of young people entering the Youth Justice System.

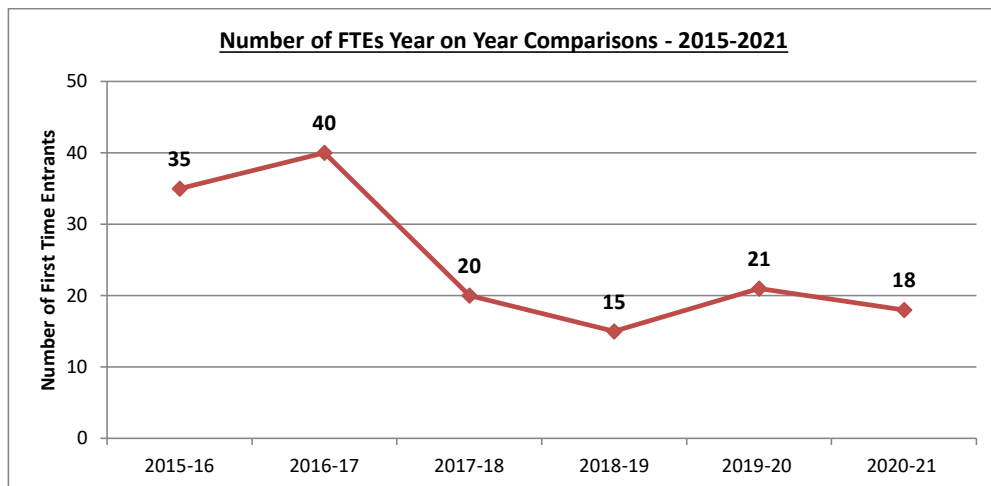
Youth crime prevention and diversion is based on the premise that it is possible to change the direction of young people by reducing risk factors that may lead to offending behaviour and enhancing protective factors that might help prevent offending.

It marks a concerted shift away from reactive spending, towards early action and intervention, through a range of programmes for young people who are at risk of offending, which can result in better outcomes and greater value for money.

For young people whose behaviour has become more problematic, robust out of court interventions have proven to be highly successful in diverting young people away from further involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. The use of out of court interventions are able to impress upon the young people the seriousness, and potentially damaging effect, of their actions however they do not criminalise the young people in the way that statutory court orders inevitably do.

Hartlepool YJS partnership arrangements with Cleveland Police are established and effective in relation to the diversion of young people from the Youth Justice System. This remains primarily through the delivery of Out Of Court Disposals (OOCd), with longer term data trend evidencing significant success in this area. Indeed, Hartlepool YJS will continue to monitor the number of FTEs and for those young people subject to an OOCd, ensuring interventions are robust and sufficient to address the offence committed, alongside other areas of need identified in the assessment, in order to help prevent any further offending.

Cleveland PCC continues to fund the diversionary Triage programme which has made a considerable contribution to the continuing reduction of FTEs. There was a recorded 40 FTEs in 2016/17 compared to 18 in 2020/21 a reduction of 55%, although figures have fluctuated over the last 3 years we are confident as a partnership that we can continue to reduce these figures.



Discussions are currently ongoing between the 3 Cleveland YOTs, Cleveland Police, CPS and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to discuss implementation of a “Divert from Charge” process, if and when implemented this will add another strand to the Prevention/Early Intervention/Diversion offer

Our Prevention and Early Intervention Offer has been overhauled and redesigned continuing the focus of a Child First Youth Justice Service. This will be delivered by ensuring that we:

- Prioritise the interests and needs of all children/YP
- Promote their individual strengths and capacities
- Build trusting supportive relationships
- Empower Children/YP to make positive contributions
- Encourage participation
- Ensure a non-stigmatised contact with the service

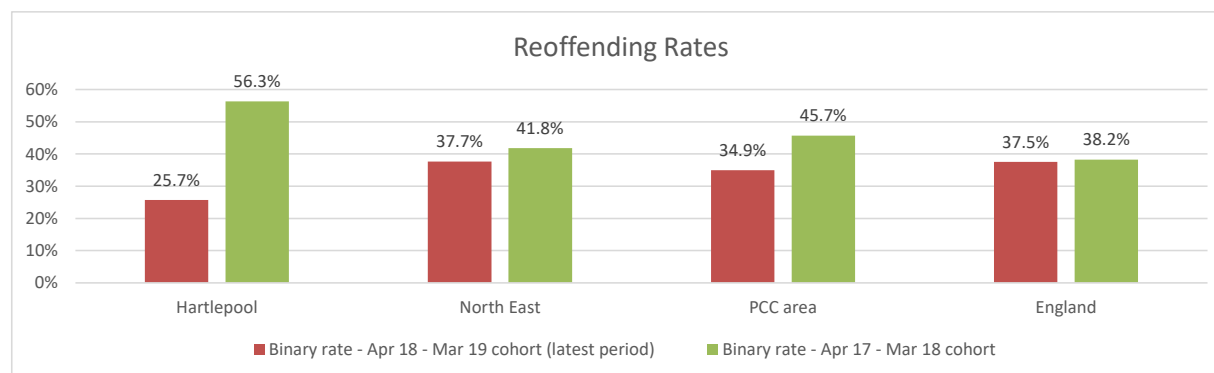
Referrals and numbers via this route will continue to increase into the service, this will be recorded and highlighted within all Management Board reports to indicate the ongoing importance of this work and the effect this is hoped to have on the reduction of children/YP entering the service via statutory means.

Continued multi agency partnership work is ongoing to implement suitable interventions and processes to work intensively with those young people identified as potentially being criminally exploited. Hartlepool YJS will be providing a leading role in this process alongside the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) local board. Discussions and plans are in the advanced stages within Children's Services with the implementation of a Contextualised Safeguarding Hub which will bring the other forums together under one roof.

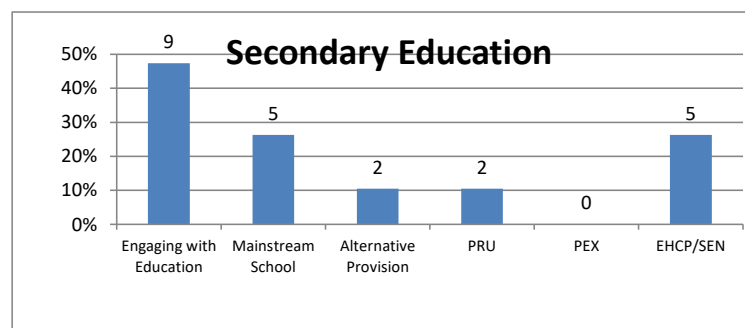
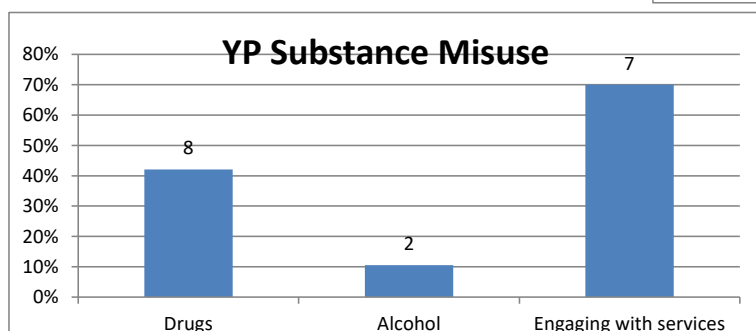
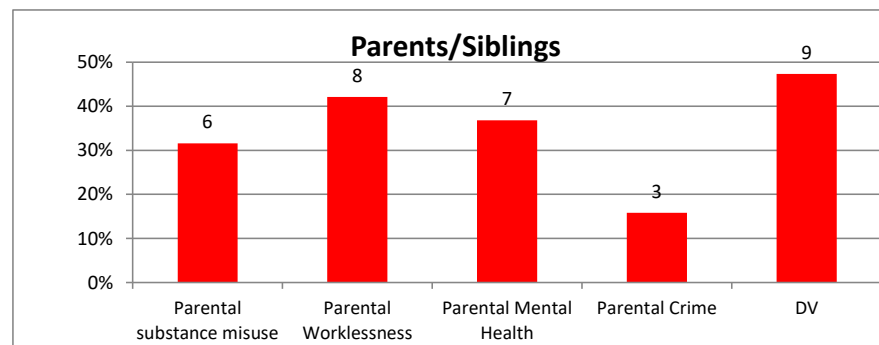
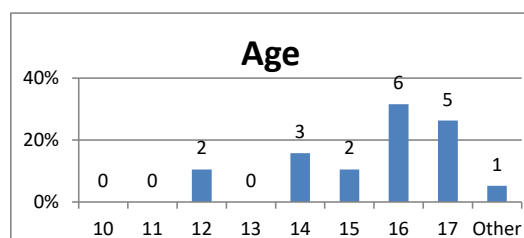
Reoffending

The rate of youth reoffending within Hartlepool has reduced significantly over the last year, it is currently below the national and regional average, however, it will continue to be a key priority in the coming year. Numbers can and will no doubt fluctuate in the future, we need to continue to work together as a service and partnership to aim to drive these figures down.

Each of the cohorts are tracked for a period of 12 months, plus a further waiting period of 6 months to allow for any offences which may not have yet been dealt with by the Criminal Justice System – therefore the most recent reoffending data always has an 18 month time lag.



The service is dealing with smaller caseloads consisting of complex individuals with multiple risks and vulnerabilities. Hartlepool YJS carry out a quarterly Needs Analysis of all YP open to the service and place a big onus on this. The Needs Analysis enables the service and partnership via Management Board meetings to have a good snap shot of the current cohort's complexities and potential gaps within delivery, services and areas of concern. Recent analysis reveals a cohort which display broader lifestyle choices relating to substance misuse and the need to generate income to maintain this. This also reflects the national and regional picture in terms of caseload composition.



**These graphs highlight a small snap shot of the Needs Analysis

**There are numerous graphs created depicting a multitude of up to date data

Furthermore, this cohort of young people who continue to offend are predominantly young males aged between 15 and 17, many of whom reside within Hartlepool's most deprived neighbourhoods. Although not mutually exclusive, the common criminogenic need and welfare issues prevalent amongst this cohort as identified within quarterly Needs Analysis as:

- higher than average mental health/emotional wellbeing needs
- higher levels of drug and alcohol use than for the general population and in particular 'heavy cannabis use'
- low educational attachment, attendance and attainment
- having family members or friends who offend
- higher than average levels of loss, bereavement, abuse and violence experienced within the family
- a history of family disruption
- chaotic and unstructured lifestyles

Alongside this cohort of young males, there is another cohort of young females aged 14 -17 whom, although perhaps not as prolific in terms of reoffending, are of significant concern due to multiple complex issues which are predominately welfare-orientated. These include:

- Substance misuse
- Chaotic lifestyles
- Sexual exploitation
- Missing from home
- Family breakdown

Again, as with the male cohort, young females who are offending are noted to have a higher prevalence of poor emotional well-being. Analysis shows that this arises from loss, bereavement and domestic or sexual abuse.

Working in partnership is key to supporting a greater understanding of these underlying issues, alongside addressing them in a holistic and co-ordinated way to provide "pathways out of offending", with the intention of trying to reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations. This collaborative work is achieved through the following partnerships:



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It is also important to adopt an 'intelligence-led' targeted approach, particularly in relation to prevention, and build on service-wide staff training to respond to Speech, Language, & Communication, alongside the emotional health and wellbeing needs of the young people. An important element to the reduction of reoffending and the number of those entering the youth justice system is the development of the YJS interventions. Interventions are bespoke, based on high quality, integrated assessments and plans, delivered by YJS staff and partner agencies. Progress has been made in this area, however further work is needed in the forthcoming year. Innovative interventions have been developed and a more evident 'Whole Family' approach is being further developed with the recent inclusion of Psychological Therapists and the re commission of the Speech and Language Therapist alongside the Trauma Informed Care Pathway within the service. This will continue to be monitored through established quality assurance and performance measures, such as the monthly YJS performance clinics and the Hartlepool Community Safety Partnership meetings between Police, Social Care, ASBU, YJS, Fire and Rescue Services and Adult Services.

Hartlepool YJS Health Offer is attached at Appendix 3

Victims of Youth Crime

Whilst crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. The YJS and broader Youth Justice Partnership are working hard to reduce the numbers of victims of crime, by incorporating the use of restorative justice practices. Restorative Justice (RJ) provides opportunities for those directly affected by an offence (victim, offender and members of the community) to communicate and ensure victims of youth crime have a voice.

In addition victims of youth crime are helped to access appropriate support pathways that enable them to move on from the impact of crime. A personalised approach is taken to ensure that victims of crime in Hartlepool are placed at the centre. This includes ensuring that individual needs and wishes are fully taken into account. As a result we aim to visit all victims of crime so they are able to access pathways to support, including the option to participate in restorative justice. Across 2019/20 and 2020/21 there were **79** contacts with direct victims of crime and where consented a Victim Impact Statement carried out.

RJ is an important underlying principle of all disposals for young people on YJS caseload, from Triage to Detention & Training Orders. Whilst restorative processes typically result in practical reparation, for example participating in a task that benefits the community, the communication between victim and offender, as part of this process, can also produce powerful emotional responses leading to mutual satisfaction and socially inclusive outcomes.

The decision was made to in-source the RJ and Victim provision as of 1/4/17. These statutory duties have been re-aligned within the existing staffing of Hartlepool YJS – all of whom have undertaken service-wide RJ training, many to level 3.

This decision has enabled Hartlepool YJS to have direct control and influence in shaping the direction and quality of RJ work, including the establishment of updated working policies, practices and procedures. In turn, this has already begun to result in better outcomes for both victims and young people and is much more responsive to local need.

There is considerable evidence that RJ practice is much more integrated across all areas of the service. In particular, there is a closer link between those workers with additional RJ responsibility and case managers in relation to the needs and wishes of victims.

During the last year direct and indirect reparative projects were difficult to deliver, as part of the ongoing recovery plan we are now introducing suitably risk assessed 1:1 reparation projects, these are individual bespoke projects and are planned to take place involving furniture restoration, bird boxes for distribution to local groups and Christmas hampers for those in need. This will build over the year and hopefully allow us to get back into the position we were in prior to the COVID 19 pandemic.



Quality of Services

Throughout 2019/20 & 2020/21 the YJS continued preparation for the much anticipated HMIP inspection, considerable time was put in by all staff. All Policies & Procedures were re written and regular case audits were carried out to ensure assessment, planning, intervention and delivery were off a good standard.

The service was inspected in Oct 2020 virtually over a 4 day period, and was rated as GOOD, 4 areas were Outstanding, 6 Good and 2 Requiring Improvement. The service, board and wider partnership were very pleased with the outcome and agreed with the findings of the report. Work hasn't stood still and everyone continues to drive forward to ensure the recommendations are addressed and actioned.

Performance management and data analysis has continued to be a priority with significant work undertaken in conjunction with the Local Authority's Data information and IT teams. This has enabled various processes and documents (including the YJS Board Report) to be aligned with cleansed data, which not only makes performance management data more accessible and understandable, but also allows such data to inform service improvement activity, comparative analysis and the directing of resource to areas of organisational need.

Hartlepool YJS continue to commission South Tees YOS, to provide duty cover of Youth Court work in Teesside. Whilst allowing the service to maintain excellent working relationships within the Court arena, this continues to create some necessary and critical capacity within the team to manage the volume of post-court work and utilise staffing time more effectively. Given the success of this arrangement (strategically, operationally and financially) this was re commissioned in March 2021 for a further 12 month period.

A continued key strength of Hartlepool YJS and identified within the HMIP inspection is the ability of all staff to engage complex and challenging young people, through outstanding assessments and response to individual need. This builds positive relationships and leads to better outcomes – both for the young person as an individual and their families and the community as a whole. There continues to be a considerable service-wide training programme (attached at Appendix 2), which complements staff members' professional development on an individual level and alongside the training from the Local Authority and other statutory and voluntary partners. Alongside internal training around Risk of Harm, Safety & Wellbeing, and Asset Plus refreshers. Hartlepool YJS has received Talking Mats training which is a specialist Speech Language and Communication Need (SLCN) intervention and some staff attended Kids for Law training. Our extensive health offer (attached at Appendix 3) is now embedded within the service which has allowed the implementation of an Enhanced Case Management model, The HMIP Lead Inspector did comment "There is excellent health provision that meets the physical, emotional and mental health needs of Hartlepool children".

Staff development continues throughout and remains a key focus in working towards a quality service. This will be supported by regular supervision and appraisal, alongside reflective supervision sessions which encourage staff to analyse their practice within a supportive learning environment.

Service User Feedback

The voice of the young person continues to be a key strategic objective and completion of Asset Plus self-assessments remains critical in capturing the voice and perceived needs of those young people with whom the YJS work. Hartlepool YJS completed some internal work to develop an evaluative Survey Monkey (based on the original Viewpoint questions) to measure Young People's perceptions of: Quality of Service, Likelihood of Offending, and Fairness of treatment by YJS staff and Quality of interventions.

59 surveys were completed by young people across the last 2 years:

- Just under 90% of YP indicated they know what kind of things make them more likely to offend;
- Just under 90% of YP indicated work with the YJS made them realise change is possible;
- 90% of YP indicated they are a lot less likely to offend;
- Over 90% of YP felt they were treated fairly;
- Over 80% of YP felt the service they were given was 'very good';
- 100% of YP felt listened to by the people who worked with them
- Just under 80% of YP indicated the sessions helped change their behaviour

Alongside this Children/YP and Parents/Carers comments are captured within the assessment SAQ, individual personalised plans and reviews as well as Closure Summaries. All of this information is produced in report format for quarterly management board meetings and used to improve service delivery and identify gaps within the service as well as areas of good practice which can be shared and maintained.

8. RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC AND RECOVERY FROM COVID 19

Hartlepool Borough Council responded to the COVID 19 pandemic by ensuring all staff were WFH from 23rd March 2020 – below is a snap shot of the last year and ongoing recovery.

Response and Challenges:

- The first few weeks as with most services were of confusion and frustration, the not knowing. After coming to terms with the situation and starting to receive guidance from the local authority the YJS quickly settled into a process of virtual contact with all YP. All cases were RAG rated in terms of risk levels which identified the volume of calls needed for each YP. This process continued for a considerable period of time, it allowed staff to become creative with methods of virtual contact and delivering interventions.
- It was decided in June 20 after guidance and following the national protocol that the service would start face to face contact again, initially this was via doorstep visits and walks and once again this was prioritised by our RAG rated risk process. The Courts also opened again in June and began to start moving YP through the process. Virtual Court processes were set up and suitable training given, however Cleveland didn't carry out virtual hearings for any YP.
- Prior to any planned face to face visits staff would phone the YP/Parent/Carer to ascertain the situation in the home, i.e. did anyone have the symptoms. This proved problematic at times as we were not in a position initially to confirm responses.
- Following restrictions easing, the service were in a position to quickly implement direct 1:1 interventions from our offices which were suitably cleaned, risk assessed and allowed suitable social distancing. At the same time our Referral Order Panels were reintroduced from a virtual to face to face process and continues as such to date.
- All staff have remained WFH with suitable IT, they were and are in a position to utilise the team offices, off site provision and other suitable local authority buildings for 1:1 face to face interventions. These sessions were centrally booked allowing the monitoring of the footfall into these buildings. PPE was available at all times in all buildings.
- Anxiety has been a challenge throughout the pandemic, the not knowing and at times not understanding, the multitude of differing guidance received from various sources added to the confusion and at times the anxiety.
- Initially there was the considerable challenge of preparing for and delivering the service virtually, positive lines of communication were opened across the local authority and regular updates and discussions via regional YJB HOS meetings eased the pressure and ensured the service and staff had the relevant support and guidance available to move forward. IT was also initially frustrating and a challenge, however with perseverance and regular support the service is now fully functional with all staff having suitable access and support as required.

Recovery:

Recovery was an ongoing process from the outset, below are the salient points and recovery/learning to date.

- In March 2020 the YJB requested Business Continuity Plans from each YOT for analysis and fortnightly YJB virtual meetings were established.
- All open cases were RAG rated in line with order/risk levels and engagement identified.
- Procuring suitable IT to allow staff to WFH
- Ensuring all YJS meetings and business could be delivered virtually and face to face where feasible
- Courts opening in June 2020
- Face to face interventions starting in June 2020
- Local Authority organises lap tops for all vulnerable pupils without one, including YJS cohort.
- Organisation of Referral Order panels and Risk Management Meetings into a hybrid model with face to face and a virtual option
- In July 2020 the YJB published the guidance for COVID recovery plans for all YOTs
- YP back in the majority of schools in Sept 2020
- YJS cohort identified as Vulnerable Pupils and encouraged to attend their education provision
- YP access to suitable IT now implemented within assessment process (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)

Learning Points:

- The YJS is flexible and dynamic in its response and able to react quickly to situations
- A lot of virtual meetings do work better, attendance has improved at these meetings and they need to continue (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)
- The service can be delivered virtually as and when required
- Walk and talk interventions have been positive and will remain
- Ensuring all YP have access to suitable IT to ensure engagement is positive with the YJS and Schools, this is now captured and identified as part of the initial AssetPlus assessment (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)
- The constant discussions locally, regionally and nationally ref the YOT cohort being classed as a “vulnerable pupil” took too long before the right decisions were made (Identified in the HMIP COVID 19 Thematic Inspection)
- Staff, children, young people and families emotional wellbeing needs to be monitored very closely and taken into account with all engagement at all times.

Hartlepool Borough Council will be implementing a Hybrid Model of working, this is due to be revisited and potentially implemented from 19th July 2021 and following Government guidance. Staff will split their working week WFH and being office based. This has been tested over the last 15 months and the YJS are in a strong position to implement and maintain this model without any impact on service delivery.

9. RISKS TO FUTURE DELIVERY

The key risks that have the capacity to have an adverse impact on the Youth Justice Service in the coming twelve months and potentially beyond are detailed below:

Risks	Potential Impact	Control Measures
Secure Remand Costs	The continued unpredictability associated with remand episodes and remand length has the potential to place significant financial pressure on the YJS and broader Local Authority.	It remains essential that the service can demonstrate to magistrates that there are robust and comprehensive alternatives in place to support reductions in the use of remands and custody. Coordinated multi-agency responses to young people at risk of remand where safe and secure accommodation is the precipitating factor to be further developed. Remand budget is incorporated within Wider Children's Services placement costs.
Managing the potential for reduction in YJB grant and partnership financial and 'in-kind' contributions post-2021/22	Consequential negative impact on performance. Reduced capacity to meet strategic and operational obligations and statutory requirements. Reduced capacity to continue to focus on early intervention and identification	Targeted resources to address need. Continue to administer and embed the current structure and practice. Regional collaboration with neighbouring YOS' such as coverage of Teesside Youth Court. Robust financial management and oversight from strategic board.
Continued concerns around Serious Youth Violence, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines	The rise in FTE, reoffending rates and exploitation of vulnerable children. Ultimately leading to criminalisation and wider service	Continued regular communication, intelligence and information sharing across all services. Ensuring a multi-agency approach is adopted with senior strategic oversight.

	involvement having an adverse impact on Looked After Children (LAC) figures	Ongoing joint training and regular updates on the national and local picture enabling timely and relevant interventions. Ensure clear processes and pathways (known to all staff) are implemented to work with identified children.
COVID Risk The risk of further waves and further national/local lockdown imposed	Negative impact on staff/YP/families leading to a rise in anxieties/EWB, adding to engagement/contact difficulties. Disengagement from education and the added problems of reintroduction	Carefully monitoring of the local, regional and national picture regarding further waves and risks of national and local lockdowns. The YJS is in a position to revert to initial "lockdown" delivery of the service as required.
COVID Risk Staff emotional wellbeing/Safety	Negative impact on staff anxieties/EWB Risk of increased staff sickness levels Negative impact on workload and output	The YJS Leadership team continue to carry out face to face and virtual supervisions, Skype/TEAMS team meetings are in place and continued communication across all staff is very good. PPE is readily available to all staff and regular updated LA guidance is shared with everyone regarding HV, Transportation etc etc. **All staff have received 2 Vaccinations**

10. SERVICE BUSINESS & IMPROVEMENT PLAN

As a result of the recent HMIP inspection findings, five recommendations were made that HMIP believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Hartlepool and will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Service has identified actions already taken and planned to ensure these recommendations are implemented and remain key priorities in the future. This Improvement Plan is added to future quarterly Management Board reports produced by the YJS Manager and discussed/monitored to ensure the relevant senior strategic oversight is in place and direction of travel remains positive.

Added to the Improvement Plan below is the YJS internal training programme (attached at Appendix 2) which targets operational improvements and refreshers throughout the year.

No	Recommendation	Action taken/Planned	Owner	Target Date
1	Ensure that the identified priorities for the service correspond to the needs of the children supervised by the Hartlepool YJS to ensure these needs are met.	Strategic Priorities have been amended following the findings of the inspection. These will continue to be amended and discussed at all future Management Board meetings to correspond with the needs of children supervised by the YJS and in line with the up to date Needs Analysis/Data presented at all board meetings. Individual meetings have also been undertaken with the Virtual School, OSS and Substance Misuse Services to strengthen this process – all are members of the YJS Management Board and will submit updates at board meetings.	YJS Management Team Management Board Chair/Members	Completed and monitored at all future Management Board meetings
2	Work with the relevant partner agencies (virtual school and one-stop shop) to maximise the education, training and employment opportunities for children	Work is underway with the Virtual School Headteacher and OSS Manager. Education Reports with relevant data will be produced at all future Management Board meetings allowing for discussion and more strategic oversight/challenge as required. The YJS Management team are in the process of identifying and forming closer links with the relevant staff at all Academies/Schools to build better communication on a direct level. YJS attendance at Vulnerable Pupils group and Team around the secondary school meetings to build positive links with schools across Hartlepool	YJS Management Team Virtual School Headteacher OSS Manager Management Board Chair/Members	Initial Reports presented at May Management Board meeting and then subsequent board meetings

3	Develop an effective escalation and challenge process with children's social care	Discussions are ongoing between the YJS Manager and the Safeguarding and Assessment/Through Care Teams to ensure any issues/requests are addressed ASAP and recorded appropriately on all systems. All challenges/differences of opinion will be discussed between the YJS Manager and relevant Social Care Head of Service/AD and will be recorded appropriately and discussed at future Management Board meetings. The YJS will follow the "Professional Challenge and Resolution of Professional Disagreement" process which can be found in the Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Procedures at https://www.teescpp.org.uk/	YJS Management Team Management Board Chair/Members	Process in place and any unresolved issues/challenges to be shared and discussed at future Management Board meetings
4	Confirm a start date for the new Chair of the Board	A start date was confirmed and the Chair of the Board took over at the Board meeting 25 Nov 2020 and also chaired the meeting on the 16 Feb 2021. The Chair also signed up and attended the YJB "Bite Size" session for YOS Board Chairs on 23 Feb 2021.	Management Board Chair	Completed and to be continually monitored
5	Use the existing process to get feedback from children and their families to develop services.	The YJS Leadership team have slightly re worded the current Survey Monkey questions which will be implemented and used for YP, Parents/Carers and Victims. Data will be produced at all future board meetings where discussions will be held regarding the development of services. As an addition ongoing quarterly feedback will also be gathered direct from the Children/YP and families by the	YJS Management Team YJS Management Board Chair/Members	Process in place and all feedback/evaluation to be presented at Management Board meetings for discussion

		YJS Management Team and fed back into the system above.		
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11. STRATEGIC SUMMARY

In spite of the ongoing adversities that families and communities contend with in Hartlepool and the added difficulties everyone continues to face with the COVID 19 pandemic the local Youth Justice Partnership has had significant success in recent years in preventing and reducing youth offending behaviour.

A continued emphasis on a creative prevention, early intervention and diversion model needs to be maintained, however this presents significant challenge in light of the continued economic climate and potential impact on staffing and resources. In spite of the continued reductions in offences, FTE and the recent reductions in reoffending, these will all remain areas of priority, the Youth Justice Service will continue to work with partners to identify and support children and young people at risk of offending and ensure all children and families in Hartlepool have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities.

Evidence highlights that it is often the complex interplay of multiple deprivation factors and difficulties that makes problems in some households insurmountable and places these vulnerable children at significant risk of criminal exploitation, involvement in anti-social and offending behaviour and in some instances links to County Lines. As a result there is now a greater emphasis on “Contextualised Safeguarding” and the soon to be creation of a Contextualised Safeguarding Hub with all partners should help identify “pathways out of offending” and ultimately help reduce crime and break the cycle of offending behaviour across generations.

Whilst youth crime rates in Hartlepool have fallen, the likelihood of being a victim of crime still remains a reality, especially in our most disadvantaged communities and there remains a need to continue to invest in the delivery of restorative approaches to give victims of crime a voice, choice, control and satisfaction in the criminal justice system.

As identified in the recent HMIP inspection Hartlepool Youth Justice Service is a good service, staff are motivated and engaged, and there is an excellent health provision to meet the requirements of children. Assessments for all cases were outstanding. Staff analysed information well and were skilled at engaging with children and their families. Staff make good use of the outstanding health offer to ensure that the delivery of interventions meets the needs of all children and all staff worked well in sequencing and coordinating these interventions. There are areas to improve and the YJS are fully aware of these with a current improvement plan in place.

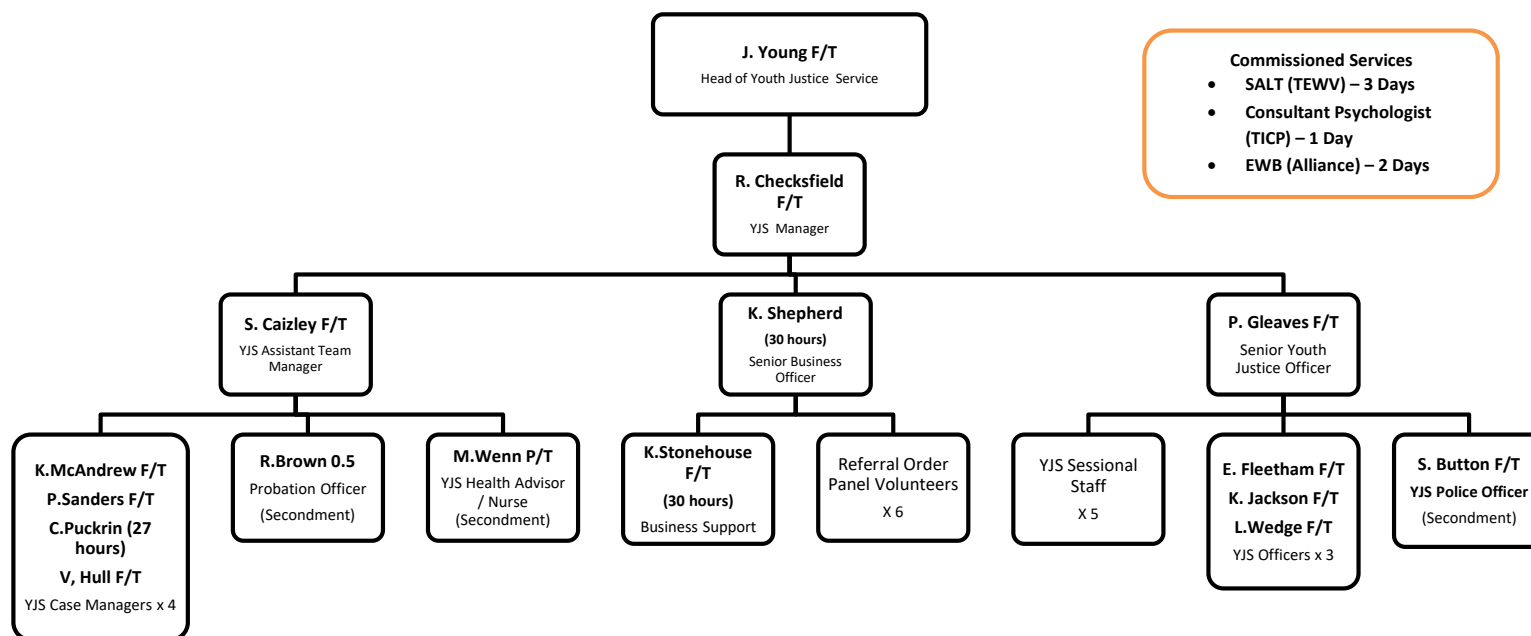
All of the above has the child and the child's voice prioritised and running throughout, as identified in the YJB Business Plan 2021-2022 we will continue to help, support and create a "Child First Youth Justice System" across Hartlepool.

Hartlepool Youth Justice Partnership



Appendix 1

Youth Justice Service Structure



Appendix 2

Youth Justice Service Internal Training Programme

Month	Date	Briefing/Training	Delivery	Comments
	16th & 22nd April 1000-1130 TEAMS dial in	Health Offer Briefings –	Health Team Update on respective areas of the Health Offer	All available staff to dial in to at least one of the sessions
	21st April 1100-1200 TEAMS dial in	Distinction between Mental wellbeing & Mental illness (Screening and Signposting)	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in
May				
	12th May 1000-1130 TEAMS dial in	Start of an Order – The front end process – getting it right	Leadership Team	All available staff to dial in
	19th May 1100 – 1200 TEAMS dial in	Neurodevelopmental Presentation (ASD & ADHD)	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in
June				
	9th June 1000-1130 TEAMS dial in	ROSH/Safety & Wellbeing	Leadership Team	All available staff to dial in
	16th June 1000 – 1100 TEAMS dial in	Suicide & Self Harm	Clinical Physiologist	All available staff to dial in
	23rd June 1000 – 1130 TEAMS dial in	SLT and communication needs awareness training (refresher)	SALT	All available staff to dial in
July				
	Date & Time TBC	Education – Role of the YJS and Case Manager/Officer	Virtual School Headteacher	All available staff to dial in
	21st July 1000 - 1130	Accessible Information training	SALT	All available staff to dial in
August				
	4th August 1400 - 1530	Team Choice Topic	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in

September				
	23rd September 1000-1130	Desistence Refresher	Leadership Team	All available staff to dial in
	15th September 1400-1530	Team Choice Topic	Clinical Psychologist	All available staff to dial in

Appendix 2

Youth Justice Service Health Offer

Alliance Psychological Services

Jemma Westwood-Horner

Jemma can help with **mental health difficulties** such as anxiety, low mood and depression.

- Jemma can **work with you** and **your family**
- Jemma can help you with issues such as bereavement (coping after the death of a loved one), relationship difficulties and behaviour. You can find out more on this website: <https://www.alliancepsychology.com/young-people/>
- You can be seen face to face, at home, at school or online (Skype and Zoom). Whatever works for you!

Speech and Language Therapy

Katie Hughes



Speech and Language Therapy can **look at** and **help** with your **communication skills**.

- Katie's job is to work with you to find out what you are **good at** and what can be **difficult for you**.
- Katie will look at what your **talking** and **understanding** are like in everyday situations, like school or college.
- Katie can help other people to understand your communication and tell them how they can help.



Youth Justice Nurse Specialist

Melanie Wenn

The Nurse can help with your **health needs**. Mel sees every young person who comes into the Youth Justice Service.

- Mel can do a **full health assessment** – this looks at any medical problems, your behaviour, your sexual health, skin problems, issues with your eyes or hearing, dental health, relationships and anything else that might affect your health and wellbeing.
- Mel can do some **work with you** around your health and wellbeing. She can make sure you are working with the right people to meet any health or learning needs you might have
- Mel offers **one to one appointments**, usually face to face.



Trauma Informed Care Pathway / Adolescent Forensic Outpatients Service

Dr Kay Anne Rooney

- **Trauma informed care pathway**→ aims to better understand your needs and behaviours. Kay does this by getting to know you and looking at your life and your experiences as a whole. You can be offered *Direct Work* (where you work with Dr Kay) or *Indirect Work* (where Dr Kay works with the professionals involved in your care).
- **Outpatients Service**→ Dr Kay or someone she works with from the Adolescent Forensic Outpatients Service can help and support you with any mental health difficulties.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

7 September 2021



Report of: Director Children's & Joint Commissioning Services

Subject: OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION – AUTUMN 2021

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1 This report is for information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide a summary of the educational measures for Hartlepool up to summer 2021.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The report provides headline data and information from 2021 across all Key Stages.

4. EDUCATION OUTCOMES: ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT EXPLANATION

4.1 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there have been changes to how GCSEs have been awarded this year. Students have not been able to sit nationally set exams as usual and students have been awarded grades based on an assessment by their teachers using a range of evidence, such as mock exams and student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the exam board.

Exam boards have reviewed all schools' and colleges' quality assurance processes before they submitted grades and have also completed checks of the evidence for a sample of students in a sample of schools and colleges.

5. EDUCATION OUTCOMES: ATTENDANCE

5.1 Primary Attendance

Primary	Autumn/Spring 18-19	Autumn/Spring 19-20	Autumn/Spring 20-21	National*
All	95.6	95.4	94.5	96.1
Boys	95.5	95.3	94.3	96
Girls	95.7	95.4	94.8	96.2

- National Data is 2018-19 as this is the last published data for the autumn and spring terms.

5.2 Secondary Attendance

Secondary	Autumn/Spring 18-19	Autumn/Spring 19-20	Autumn/Spring 20 - 21	National*
All	92.5	92.3	90.5	94.8
Boys	92.5	92.3	90.1	94.8
Girls	92.6	92.4	90.9	94.8

- National Data is 2018-19 as this is the last published data for the autumn and spring terms.

- 5.3 Attendance sanctions were suspended between April 2020 and August 2020 and reinstated on 1st September 2020. As a LA we took a more supportive approach to attendance procedures until 12th October 2020 when the Attendance team started attendance procedures again.

During 2021 the attendance sanctions were suspended again between 7th January 2021 and 5th March 2021, however, procedures started again after the Easter break in 2021.

- 5.4 The Attendance Team have worked very closely with schools to help understand reasons behind poor/non- attendance and have worked with identified parents/carers to link to appropriate support.
- 5.5 The Attendance Team have met regularly with other teams across the council e.g. Social Services to raise joint awareness of any vulnerable pupils/students where attendance is a concern and to identify coordinated strategies for addressing this.

6. EDUCATION OUTCOMES: EXCLUSIONS

6.1	Academic Year	Number FTE	Number pupils with one or more FTE	Number of days lost	Male	Female	Number of pupils PEX
	2019-20	1271	449	2761	287	162	12
	2020-21	1407	567	2690.5	377	190	5

- 6.2 From September 2021 Fixed Term Exclusions will be referred to as suspensions and permanent exclusions are to be called expulsions.
- 6.3 English Martyrs has seen a significant rise in Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) because they have excluded students to home rather than use their own in house sanctions (The Bridge) which they state they have been unable to use due to the bubble system. English Martyrs accounts for 508 of 1407 FTE's (36%).
- 6.4 Hartlepool has endeavored to lower the rate of Permanent Exclusions across the landscape (PEX). In general terms this has been achieved through outreach work from Horizon working alongside schools to develop strategies to address needs within school. Fixed Term Exclusions have risen and this reflects the national picture anecdotally and is to be unpicked.

7. EDUCATION OUTCOMES: EHE

7.1

Year	No. Pupils EHE at any point in the year		Year	Month	Number removed to EHE
2014	7		2020	January	5
2015	16			February	9
2016	26			March	2
2017	37			April	0
2018	65			May	1
2019	107			June	1
2020	135			July	1
2021 (to 29.06.21)	122			September	40
				October	10
				November	5
				December	2
			2021	January	3

				February	0
				March	1
				April	7
				May	1
				June	8

7.2 The table at 7.1 shows the increase of Elective Home Educated (EHE) Pupils from 2014 to present. Increases in 2020 and 2021 appear to be exacerbated with COVID.

7.3

Gender			
Male	Female		
39	57		
Current Year Group			
Year Group	Number	Previous School Type	Number
Rec	3	Mainstream Primary	32
1	5	Mainstream Secondary	53
2	4	Specialist Provision	0
3	4	Pupil Referral Unit	1
4	4	Independent	1
5	7	Out of Authority	9
6	4		
7	6		
8	8		
9	15		
10	20		
11	13		
12	1		
13	1		

7.4 The table at 7.3 shows the spread across the educational sector of EHE pupils. It is interesting to note the large proportion of students in Years 9, 10 and 11. Some of the reasons are cited below at 7.5.

7.5

Reason cited by Parents	Number
Parental Choice – Covid	33
Parental Choice (no other reason provided)	24
General dissatisfaction with school	19
Attendance (previous issues)	6

Physical/Mental Health	6
Parental Choice – SEND	3
Lifestyle/Philosophical	4
Bullying	1

8. EDUCATION OUTCOMES: OFSTED

School	Academy	Ofsted rating and Date
Primary Schools		
Barnard Grove	Yes	Good, March 17
Brougham	Yes	Good, June 19
Clavering	No	Good, May 19
Eldon Grove	Yes	Good, Jan 19
Eskdale	Yes	Good, Dec18
Fens	No	Good, March 18
Golden Flatts	No	Good, July 17
Grange	No	Good, July 19
Greatham	No	Good, Oct 17
Hart	Yes	Outstanding, April 16
Holy Trinity	Yes	Outstanding, Jan 10
Jesmond Gardens	Yes	Good, May19
Kingsley	No	Good, Jan 19
Lynnfield	No	Requires Improvement, June 19
Rift House	No	Good, Nov 18
Rossmere	No	Good, March 17
Sacred Heart	Yes	No grade due to academisation. Previously Requires Improvement, Jan 19
St Aidan's	Yes	Good, Oct 16
St Bega's	Yes	Outstanding, July 18
St Cuthbert's	Yes	Good, April 17
St Helen's	No	Good, Jan 19
St John Vianney	Yes	Outstanding, Oct 2008
St Joseph's	Yes	Good, Nov 17
St Peter's	Yes	Good, June 15
St Teresa's	Yes	Good, Nov 17
Stranton	Yes	Outstanding, June 12
Throston	No	Good, Jan 17
Ward Jackson	No	Good, April 19
West Park	Yes	Good, Nov 18
West View	Yes	Good, Sept 17
Secondary Schools		
Dyke House	Yes	Good, March 19
English Martyrs	Yes	Requires Improvement, July 19
High Tunstall	No	Pending Report, July 21
Manor	Yes	Requires Improvement, Feb 18
St Hild's	Yes	No grade due to academisation. Previously Inadequate, Oct 19
Special schools and PRU		
Catcote	Yes	Good, March 20
Springwell	No	Outstanding, March 19
Horizon (PRU)	No	Good, Nov 19

9. EDUCATION OUTCOMES: NEET

- 9.1 The 3 month average from Feb to April (latest published figures) shows that NEET was higher than the previous year (up from 3.5% to 4.1% which is a 17.7% increase).
- 9.2 The North East has seen a 12.2% increase up from 4.3% to 4.9%. England has seen a 3.6% increase from 2.8% to 2.9% at 4.1%, only Middlesbrough and North Tyneside have a lower NEET rate.

10. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no risk implications.

11. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no financial considerations.

12. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no legal considerations.

13. CONSULTATION

- 13.1 No consultation was required in the production of this report.

14. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 There are no child and family poverty considerations.

15. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 15.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

16. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 16.1 There are no staff considerations.

17. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 17.1 There are no asset management considerations.

18. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 18.1 It is recommended note the contents of this report.

19. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 19.1 It is important that Committee scrutinises education data in order to support and challenge Hartlepool schools and Council officers to ensure that children receive a first class education in Hartlepool. This will also help to realise this Committee's stated ambition that every school in Hartlepool will be graded at least GOOD by Ofsted.

20. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 20.1 There are no background papers.

21. CONTACT OFFICER

- 21.1 Amanda Whitehead
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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

7 September 2021



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

Subject: FULL OFSTED INSPECTION OF EXMOOR GROVE CHILDREN'S HOME JUNE 2021

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 Exmoor Grove Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on 8th and 9th of June 2021.

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 OUTSTANDING which Exmoor Grove 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 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.

3.3 Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, Ofsted suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020. A monitoring visit was carried out on the 3rd December 2020, Ofsted were assured that the home was effectively caring for and safeguarding the children during the Covid Pandemic, the letter is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Exmoor Grove's previous inspection record:

Inspection date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgment
11/7/2017	Full	Outstanding
6/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
30/7/2019	Full	Outstanding
2020	No inspections due to COVID	
8/6/2021	Full	Outstanding

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 A full inspection of Exmoor Grove took place on 8th and 9th June 2021 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 above and the service was judged as **outstanding** overall. Therefore meeting the criteria that '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'. The report of the inspection is attached at **Appendix 2**.

The headlines and reasons why the Children's Home provision is judged outstanding is because:

4.2 Overall experience and progress of children and young people: OUTSTANDING

- Children make exceptional progress because of the specialist care provided by the staff. Detailed and individualised care plans help staff to support children to thrive and make measurable and sustainable progress in all areas of their development.
- These are life-changing achievements for the children and as a result, children's confidence and self-esteem are clearly evident.
- Children's families are exceptionally positive about the home. One parent said, 'It makes [child's name] so happy coming here and I know he is safe and looked after.'
- Staff encourage and support children to participate in a range of activities, such as going to trampoline parks, going on holidays and enjoying walks on the beach. All activities are designed to challenge the children's physical capabilities and this in turn supports the development of their social skills.
- The experiences that children enjoy would not be possible without the support of the exceptionally competent staff team. Children naturally gravitate towards staff for care and comfort, such as cuddles and hugs. This means that the children have secure and safe attachments with staff and feel comfortable in the home.

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

- Staff know the children well and have a good understanding of their specific risks and vulnerabilities.
- Health and safety concerns were identified within the grounds during the inspection. Weedkiller was stored in a shed with no door and an access ramp was not securely fixed to the wall. The registered manager took immediate action to secure the ramp and remove the weedkiller to prevent harm to children.
- Managers and staff provide stability and continuity of care to the children and families who use the service. This means that children and their families are able to build close and trusting relationships with the staff. This ensures that children feel safe and secure when they are at the home, and that children's families are confident that their children are safe, and that they are well looked after

4.4 The effectiveness of leaders and Manager: OUTSTANDING

- The registered manager is new in post. She is making positive changes that are of benefit to staff, and consequently children, such as introducing new and meaningful documentation that reflects children's progress.

- The registered manager makes sure that staff receive regular and reflective supervision, and that they are able to participate in the development of the home through effective team meetings. The home operates an open-door ethos where leaders and managers are also available for discussions outside of supervisions and team meetings. This promotes a cohesive culture which means that leaders, managers and staff work together to focus on meeting children's needs.
- The registered manager and staff team are highly valued by their fellow professionals.

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

- In particular, ensure that all potential hazards to children's safety are removed and/or made safe to prevent injury.

4.6 The home received one recommendation as follows;

- The registered person should ensure that the children's bedrooms are clean and fresh, and that the home should, as far as possible, maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression

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 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 observed and communicated 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, this is testament to the care, commitment and skill of the staff team. A new register manager and deputy manager have been appointed since the previous inspection in July 2019; despite this, the home has continue to improve and develop which has been recognised in the **outstanding** judgement. The home provides exceptional, individualised care for children with complex needs, which is held in high regard by the children families and professionals.

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 Ofsted Assurance Visit 3rd and 4th December 2020.
Ofsted Full Inspection Report 8th and 9th June 2021.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Jane Young
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Children and Families
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01429 523957

SC030967

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for children and/or young people who have learning disabilities. The home offers short-break care for up to six children and/or young people, and care and accommodation for two long-term placements. It is owned and operated by a local authority.

There is a new manager in post who has yet to apply to Ofsted for registration. The previous registered manager has not yet cancelled her registration as required.

Visit dates: 3 to 4 December 2020

Previous inspection date: 30 July 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Outstanding

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children benefit from good-quality and personalised care provided by a skilled staff team. The children have trusting relationships with the staff, and the staff are responsive to the individual needs of children. Children enjoy coming to the home and feel safe in the care of staff.

Where children are not able to verbally express themselves, staff make use of sign languages, pictorial references and visual cues to communicate with children. Parents say that they have 'absolute confidence' in the staff's ability to care for their children and that they know the children 'inside out'. The staff's knowledge of the children and their skills in non-verbal communication allow children to express their wishes and feelings effectively and be understood.

Education has remained a priority during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Where children have been unable to attend school due to their complex health needs, staff have continued to promote their learning. This has involved liaising with schools to provide suitable school work, monitor progress and set targets. This means that children have continued to learn throughout this period.

Some children have not been able to access the service due to the COVID-19 pandemic and their own complex health needs. The manager and staff have maintained excellent communication with those families and continued to offer support. One family has benefited from staff visiting their home to offer short-break care. This has offered children and their families much needed practical support at a time of increased stress, without putting children at an increased risk of contracting COVID-19.

Children who move on from the home are well supported. Staff are creative in developing clear plans for introductions to their new home. Children complete individualised key work to prepare them for the move. Children are supported to remain in touch and maintain their relationships with staff.

Staff have supported the children to continue taking part in a range of activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Photographs of the children enjoying these events are collated into personal memory books as a record of their experiences. Children also participate in cultural events, such as Diwali and Halloween. This encourages children to learn about other cultures and encourages them to try new experiences.

The safety of children

Staff have a good understanding of the needs and risks of each child in their care and are able to anticipate some common behaviours. Effective risk assessments and care plans ensure that there is a clear and consistent response to meet their complex needs. This helps to manage and de-escalate unsafe behaviours and this reduces the risks to children's safety.

At times, physical intervention is required as a last resort to keep children safe and protect them from harm. Interventions are well documented and a clear rationale for any restraint is provided. The manager reviews all physical restraints and helps staff to reflect on and learn from each incident. However, not all restraints are reviewed within appropriate timescales and this may result in delays in addressing any concerns related to the use of a restraint.

The manager responds effectively to safeguarding concerns. An error in relation to medication recently occurred and there is an independent investigation currently ongoing. The manager has been proactive in accessing additional training for all staff and new procedures have been implemented prior to the outcome of this investigation. This ensures additional levels of safety and protection for children.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager has recently left the home and a new manager is in post. However, she has yet to submit a complete application to register with Ofsted. The manager has overseen the completion of the redecoration of the home and is implementing positive changes. Staff said that the new manager is approachable and supportive, and that staff morale is good.

The manager has adapted the service provision to adhere to government guidance regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, also balancing the changing needs of families. This has been achieved through good communication with other professionals and robust planning. The manager has introduced staffing 'bubbles' to reduce the number of people that staff or children are in contact with. With the introduction of additional cleaning routines, this has meant that the care of children has not been compromised during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff receive regular supervision and training, which supports their ongoing professional development. Group supervision allows for reflection and discussion to develop a greater insight into meeting the needs of the children. As a result, children receive high-quality care from a skilled workforce.

Monitoring and audit processes are good and the manager has a range of resources to track progress. However, the manager's review of the quality of care report has not been sent to Ofsted. This diminishes the effectiveness of independent scrutiny of the services provided to children and young people.

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>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii))</p>	22 January 2021

Recommendations

- The processes the registered person puts in place to enable such a review to take place, should allow for a report to be generated at least once every six months. The generated report should be sent to Ofsted and the placing local authority of all children in the home who are looked-after children. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC030967

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

Deb Duffy, Social Care Inspector

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SC030967

Registered provider: Hartlepool Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority and provides short breaks and two residential placements for children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 3 December 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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: 30 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding



Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/07/2019	Full	Outstanding
06/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
28/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness



Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people:
outstanding

Children make exceptional progress because of the specialist care provided by the staff. Detailed and individualised care plans help staff to support children to thrive and make measurable and sustainable progress in all areas of their development. For example, one child has taken positive control of their toileting routine. For another child, they are now able to speak in complete sentences and their vocabulary continues to grow. These are life-changing achievements for the children and as a result, children's confidence and self-esteem are clearly evident. Children's families are exceptionally positive about the home. One parent said, 'It makes [child's name] so happy coming here and I know he is safe and looked after.'

Staff help the children to lead healthy lifestyles, eat a good diet and take part in regular exercise. The chef tailors the menu around children's specific dietary needs to ensure that they enjoy a balanced diet. Staff support children to attend any routine health and medical appointments. The registered manager ensures that the children have access to specialist emotional or mental health and well-being support. This means that children receive individualised healthcare that reflects their bespoke needs.

Children's bedrooms are personalised and clean, although at the time of the inspection, one bedroom did have an unpleasant smell due to the location of a clinical waste disposal bin. The rest of the home is clean and well maintained. There are photographs of the children on the walls, easily accessible books and toys and a sensory room that children can use at their leisure. This creates an environment where children flourish and enjoy spending time. One child put on a show for other children and staff; this is an innovative way to build the children's confidence and self-esteem.

Children learn appropriate cognitive skills, such as tying their shoelaces and riding a bike, that support their dexterity. These are skills and experiences that children will continue to use throughout their lives.

Staff encourage and support children to participate in a range of activities, such as going to trampoline parks, going on holidays and enjoying walks on the beach. All activities are designed to challenge the children's physical capabilities and this in turn supports the development of their social skills. The experiences that children enjoy would not be possible without the support of the exceptionally competent staff team.

Children naturally gravitate towards staff for care and comfort, such as cuddles and hugs. This means that the children have secure and safe attachments with staff and feel comfortable in the home.



Many of the children have additional needs that impact on their ability to articulate their views and opinions verbally. The staff use a variety of communication methods to support children to express their preferences and to be involved in decision-making.

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

Health and safety concerns were identified within the grounds during the inspection. Weedkiller was stored in a shed with no door and an access ramp was not securely fixed to the wall. The registered manager took immediate action to secure the ramp and remove the weedkiller to prevent harm to children. Nevertheless, staff did not notice these shortfalls.

Staff know the children well and have a good understanding of their specific risks and vulnerabilities. These are reflected in clear plans and risk assessments that help staff to manage these risks appropriately. The registered manager regularly reviews children's risk assessments and always does so following any incidents of concern. This provides staff with an insight into the frequency of the presenting risks and the effectiveness of the steps taken to reduce these.

Managers and staff provide stability and continuity of care to the children and families who use the service. This means that children and their families are able to build close and trusting relationships with the staff. This ensures that children feel safe and secure when they are at the home, and that children's families are confident that their children are safe, and that they are well looked after. Parents recognise that their children enjoy going to the service. When asked to describe how the staff manage incidents that may potentially cause a child distress or harm, a parent said: 'They are absolutely brilliant. I just can't fault them at all. My child is safe and happy and not stressed at all.'

Detailed plans help staff to manage children's behaviour and staff quickly respond to these incidents. Consequently, there are only a few occasions when staff use physical restraint to keep children or others safe. Following these incidents, staff and children participate in debriefs and discuss their responses to the situation. This means that the registered manager can review these incidents and when needed, ensure that staff use a different approach. This continual learning and evaluation results in a reduction in the number of negative incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is new in post. She is making positive changes that are of benefit to staff, and consequently children, such as introducing new and meaningful documentation that reflects children's progress.

Children's records are well organised in a way that enables the registered manager to track and monitor children's progress effectively against their personal targets. Consequently, the registered manager is able to adjust practice and routines in the home to continually and consistently support children to achieve their goals.



The registered manager makes sure that staff receive regular and reflective supervision, and that they are able to participate in the development of the home through effective team meetings. The home operates an open-door ethos where leaders and managers are also available for discussions outside of supervisions and team meetings. This promotes a cohesive culture which means that leaders, managers and staff work together to focus on meeting children's needs.

Staff benefit from specialist training, such as play therapy. This helps them engage effectively with children and to use this engagement to stimulate children's sensory and motor skills.

The registered manager and staff team are highly valued by their fellow professionals. Feedback is consistent in recognising the positive care and help that the registered manager and staff provide for children and the exceptionally positive impact that this has on children's development. Other professionals, such as children's social workers, recognise that the registered manager is a strong advocate for the children and will escalate concerns to ensure that the children's rights are promoted.

The registered manager has a clear passion for the home and continually demonstrates her sense of responsibility ownership and dedication. She is innovative with her ideas, such as creating memory books for the children and sending education and activity packs out to families during the COVID-19 pandemic for children who were unable to attend the service. This approach means that children's day-to-day experiences are greatly enhanced because of their involvement with this home.



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>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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that all potential hazards to children's safety are removed and/or made safe to prevent injury.</p>	20 July 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's bedrooms are clean and fresh, and that the home should, as far as possible, maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: Hartlepool Borough Council

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

Responsible individual: Jane Young

Registered manager: Natasha Salmon

Inspectors

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

Deb Duffy, Social Care Inspector



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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

7 September 2021



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

Subject: FULL OFSTED INSPECTION OF ST DAVID'S WALK CHILDREN'S HOME MAY 2021

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 St David's Walk Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on 25th and 26th of May 2021.

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 St David's Walk 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 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.

3.3 Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, Ofsted suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020. St David's Walk previous inspection record is as follows:

Inspection date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgment
17/9/2019	Full	Good
25/2/20	Interim	Decline in effectiveness
26/5/21	Full	Good

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 A full inspection of St David's Walk took place on 25th and 26th May 2021 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 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**

- Staff build good relationships with children and these enable children to form secure bonds that support their development. Children are cared for by staff who know them well, and they can identify staff they trust to help with their problems. This gives children security and helps them to feel settled. As a result, children make good progress and their day-to-day experiences are positive. One child told the inspector that they know staff have their best interests at heart and that they are 'loved and cared for'.
- Children are making progress with their education Staff have a good understanding of the challenges and barriers to education that another child faces. Staff continue to show their commitment to finding the right academic placement and encourage the development of other key skills. This means that the child is developing career aspirations for their future.

- Staff have effective working relationships with professionals such as teachers and social workers. This ensures that children's needs are well understood, and they are making progress in all areas of their development.

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

- Staff work with children to increase their knowledge and understanding of their own responses to emotional trauma. Children learn and develop appropriate responses to their feelings of anxiety or stress. This has brought about a significant reduction in unacceptable or anti-social behaviour and, as a result, physical restraint has not been used. This creates a safer, calmer environment for children
- Children's risk assessments are not routinely updated with the most recent events and information. While information is passed on through handover meetings and information sheets, risk management plans do not always sufficiently guide staff in relation to how to reduce risks. This may mean that staff do not always know what response is required or where to find information
- Children who have previously gone missing from the home are now choosing to follow boundaries. Children feel listened to and able to contribute to the rules of the home. This empowers them to make better choices. This means that there have been no instances of children going missing from the home. This is significant progress for some children.

4.4 The effectiveness of leaders and Manager: requires improvement to be good

- The registered manager and the senior staff member are both currently away from work. This has resulted in instability and led to shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home. The current manager has been in post for two weeks.
- Staff report that they are well supported in their roles and that they receive regular supervision. Supervision records demonstrate a focus on the progress of children and the impact that staff have on that progress. There is a review of staff training needs and plans in place to address shortfalls. This supports staff development and practise

4.5 The home received statutory requirements which are as follows:

- In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or

the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans

- The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe
- The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare
- The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises
- The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which— is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect
- The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which— is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect

4.6 The provision has been judged to be good and feedback to the inspectors from the children who live at St David's was extremely positive about the care they received.

4.7 The home has had a new registered manager since the last inspection, however she is currently absent from work having suffered a serious illness and therefore another new manager was appointed who had only very recently started in post at the time of the inspection and as a result some information the Ofsted inspector required we were not able to locate. Although this was an unprecedented and unpredictable situation we have ensured that actions were taken immediately to address the issues raised in the inspection and systems are in place to address the shortcomings identified and to ensure this does not occur in future.

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 observed and communicated 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.

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 Ofsted Full Inspection Report 25th and 26th May 2021.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Jane Young
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Children and Families
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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 social, emotional, behavioural and/or learning disabilities.

The manager was registered in March 2021 but is currently away from work. An interim manager is in day-to-day charge of the home.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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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: 25 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Declined in effectiveness



Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/09/2019	Full	Good



Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff build good relationships with children and these enable children to form secure bonds that support their development. Children are cared for by staff who know them well, and they can identify staff they trust to help with their problems. This gives children security and helps them to feel settled. As a result, children make good progress and their day-to-day experiences are positive. One child told the inspector that they know staff have their best interests at heart and that they are **'loved and cared for'**.

Children are making progress with their education. For one child, this means that they attend school full time and are now academically aligned to their peers. Staff have a good understanding of the challenges and barriers to education that another child faces. Staff continue to show their commitment to finding the right academic placement and encourage the development of other key skills. This means that the child is developing career aspirations for their future.

Children who are preparing for independent living are encouraged to learn new skills. The staff work alongside the children and the local authority to plan their transition. Children are given an information pack which covers key aspects of independent living such as budgeting, cooking and shopping. This will help them to succeed when they are no longer supported by staff.

Children are supported by staff to make healthy choices and attend routine medical appointments. The manager ensures that children access specialist help if this is needed. When children feel unable to engage with outside agencies, staff support them with bespoke key-work sessions. This means that children are able to express their emotions and learn strategies to better manage their feelings and behaviour.

Staff have effective working relationships with professionals such as teachers and social workers. This ensures that children's needs are well understood, and they are making progress in all areas of their development. Professionals report that staff communicate well and always advocate strongly for the children in their care.

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

Children's risk assessments are not routinely updated with the most recent events and information. While information is passed on through handover meetings and information sheets, risk management plans do not always sufficiently guide staff in relation to how to reduce risks. This may mean that staff do not always know what response is required or where to find information. This could compromise the safety of children.



The home's refuse bins are not adequate for all the rubbish, and therefore some bags are left on the ground. Staff do not routinely remove any excess bags to the local refuse centre. This presents a possible health and safety risk to the children from the rubbish itself and any pests it might attract.

Children who have previously gone missing from the home are now choosing to follow boundaries. Children feel listened to and able to contribute to the rules of the home. This empowers them to make better choices. This means that there have been no instances of children going missing from the home. This is significant progress for some children.

Staff work with children to increase their knowledge and understanding of their own responses to emotional trauma. Children learn and develop appropriate responses to their feelings of anxiety or stress. This has brought about a significant reduction in unacceptable or anti-social behaviour and, as a result, physical restraint has not been used. This creates a safer, calmer environment for children.

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

The registered manager and the senior staff member are both currently away from work. This has resulted in instability and led to shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home. The current manager has been in post for two weeks.

Leaders and managers do not have effective monitoring systems. This means that they do not have sufficient oversight of the progress of the home or areas of strength or development. The registered manager completed a review of the quality of care provided by the home. However, this did not demonstrate the impact of the care provided on the experiences and progress of children. This means that leaders and managers do not always have insight into how to develop the service.

The registered manager does not ensure that they have the most up-to-date care plans for children. There is no evidence of consistent challenge to the local authority or escalation when this has been unsuccessful. This means that plans for the care of children may not be up to date or focused on their current needs.

The manager has not reviewed arrangements for restricting children's access to some areas of the home. Where it has previously been necessary to prevent access to the living room and kitchen at night, these safeguards have not been lifted despite no longer being necessary. This prevents children from moving freely around their home and impacts on their experiences of living there.

The registered manager did not inform Ofsted of two serious incidents involving children, although other relevant agencies were informed. This prevents the **regulator's independent scrutiny of any** actions taken to safeguard children.



Leaders and managers did not make or retain an adequate recording of an investigation into allegations made against a member of staff. Procedures were not followed, and leaders could not evidence that concerns were fully addressed.

Staff report that they are well supported in their roles and that they receive regular supervision. Supervision records demonstrate a focus on the progress of children and the impact that staff have on that progress. There is a review of staff training needs and plans in place to address shortfalls. This supports staff development and practice.



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>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))</p>	29 July 2021
<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>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>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(d))</p>	29 July 2021
<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>	29 July 2021

<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>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p>	29 July 2021
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and</p> <p>sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b))</p>	29 July 2021

In particular, that accurate records are kept of any investigation into allegations of abuse or neglect.	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))</p>	29 July 2021
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))</p>	29 July 2021

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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 address: Hartlepool Borough Council, Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool, Durham TS24 8AY

Responsible individual: Jane Young

Registered manager: Patricia Adams

Inspector

Deb Duffy, Social Care Inspector



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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

7 September 2021



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

Subject: FOSTERING SERVICE INTERIM REPORT
1st April 2021 – 30th June 2021

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

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 first quarter of 2021. 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 June 2021)

- 4.1 The fostering team continues to recruit and assess prospective Foster Carers to limit the Authority's dependence upon more costly, external provision for children. In this quarter, the number of children requiring an independent agency placement has remained at 36, the same as at 31.3.21 and indeed at 31.3.20. Of concern, however, is that there has been a slight increase in the number of young people moving to a residential setting, going from 26 as at 31.3.21 to 29 as at 30.6.21. Children's Services needs to establish whether this is for reason of individual need or due to the 'saturation' of external foster care provision.
- 4.2 The number of Foster Carers fluctuates considerably due to the temporary nature of those approved via Regulation 24 who are Foster Carers, though not yet formally approved via Fostering Panel and Agency Decision Maker (ADM). To ensure that reporting is as accurate as it can be for this new financial year, information on Foster Care numbers will be taken from tacit knowledge of the Fostering Service, supported with information from the Local Authority's data team. There are 161 Foster Carers (which is the same number as reported in the Fostering Annual Report as at 31st March 2021) of these 60 are approved as Connected Carers, 38 via Panel and ADM and a further 22 subject to Regulation 24 and in the process of being assessed as Connected Carers. These Carers provide placements for 204 children and young people in total, (which is 2 more than at 31.3.21) 149 of those are in 'Mainstream' provision and 55 children/young people are with Connected Foster Carers. There are 15 young people in Staying Put placements, which is for post 18 care leavers.
- 4.3 Of the 161 approved Fostering households, there were 15 which were 'on hold' due to, either, the individual circumstances of the Carers, including some who were shielding. This equated to 17 placements. There are a small number of placements that cannot be used due to the specific matching needs of the children/young people already in that foster placement.
- 4.4 The service has continued to retain Carers during this quarter, with no 'mainstream' Foster Carer resignations. Connected Carers have left the service by virtue of securing an alternative order such as Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order, in keeping with the plan for the

child. Retention of Carers has therefore been good, despite the pressures upon them to continue to cope with the vagaries brought by the pandemic.

- 4.5 In April 2021, there was an uplift of 1.5% to the age related allowance and to the Banded payments received by Hartlepool Carers. Whilst financial support is only one element of the 'offer' to Carers, the aim of which is to ensure they feel valued and therefore wish to remain with the council, it is important that the level of remuneration is at least equal to others in the region. Hartlepool continues to compare favourably and this is underlined by interest shown by independent Foster Carers, enquiring to transfer to Hartlepool.
- 4.6 The Service aims to recruit 20 Foster Carers in the year 2021/22 and, following a meeting with the Marketing and Media Team in April, the Service used Fostering Fortnight (10th to 23rd May) as a springboard for getting the message out to the community of our continued need for Carers. **Please see Appendix 1.**
- 4.7 In the year 2019/2020 there were 316 children cared for, which increased to 346 in 2020/2021, showing an increase of 9.4%. The first quarter of 2021/22 is showing a slight reduction in the numbers at 332 (as at 30.6.21) which represents a decrease of 4.05%. The Fostering Service has recognised that several of the children who required care in this period are older and there continues to be a need for Carers to offer space for brothers and sisters to be together and for parents with their baby. There will, therefore, always be a need to grow and broaden our Foster Care Resource.
- 4.8 The table below provides details of the impact of the recruitment activity which has taken place in first quarter of 2021.

Initial Enquiries	12
Information packs sent	7
Initial Visits	7
Preparation Group	Skills to Foster was run in June 2021 with 5 households
How many prospective Carers are in the assessment process?	12 Connected Carers 5 Mainstream' Carers

5. FOSTERING PANEL

- 5.1 In this quarter, the Fostering Panel has met on six occasions (once more than in the same quarter last year) and made recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker on the following fostering matters:
- Two 'mainstream' Foster Carer approvals (one the partner of an approved Carer, the other an update as a newly single Carer)

- Eight Connected Carer approvals
 - The match for permanence of a little girl with HBC Foster Carers
 - Three 'best interest' decisions
 - Five Foster Care reviews
 - No Foster Care Resignations.
- 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 5 working days of the Panel meeting taking place.

6. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 In this quarter (from April 2021) two team members have returned from their year's maternity leave and another has gone on maternity leave, again for a year, returning in April 2022. This temporary maternity cover post was recruited to and an experienced member of staff from one of our safeguarding teams joined us in May. The Fostering Team is now at full establishment and we have an additional worker whose role is to develop the 'offer' to those who are Special Guardian Carers in the town. The SGO Lead (Laura Jeffreys) will also meet with Foster Carers, Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers about children and young people who may benefit from becoming subject to a Special Guardianship order, rather than continue to be cared for when this is no longer necessary.
- 6.2 The Fostering Team retains the role of a designated 'Family Finder' who drives the search for permanent placements for those children and young people in for whom Long Term Foster Care is the agreed plan. In this quarter the number of children who have had agreed (via Panel) a best interest decision for permanence via Foster Carer is three. The Family Finder (Emma Howarth) will commence the process for identifying the right family for them, as she did for the 39 children whose plan for permanence was agreed in 2020/21.

7. SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

- 7.1 The Foster Care annual conference took place virtually, via 'Teams' on 13th May 2021 (during Foster Care fortnight) the Key speaker being Joan Hunt who has lead on the roll out of the Secure Base Model to staff and now our Foster Carers. The Conference had a session on LGBTQA and was very well attended (57 Carers) with evaluations being 100% positive;
- ***Great conference thanks to guest speakers, both very informative and also thanks to all behind the scenes who helped this happen, great job all around.***
 - ***Thanks for the brilliant conference, absolutely brilliant from both speakers, well done to all involved.***
 - ***Enjoyed the conference today, very interesting and got the grey cells working 😊 Thank you all.***

- ***Thank you for today, found it very useful.***
- ***Great conference, very informative. Made a great change to actually hear everything that's being said without other conversations going on in the background. This is the way forward this type of training.***
- ***Learnt a lot today, really enjoyed it and the time flew by.***
- ***Was lovely being able to hear everything that was said without interruptions***
- ***Great conference today. Very interesting, thanks for organising.***
- ***Great conference today enjoyed both topics, thank you.***
- ***A very informative, thought provoking and well-presented conference. Thanks to both presenters and also to organisers.***
- ***Thanks for the lovely conference, enjoyed it 😊***

7.2 The review of all Fostering policies and procedures commenced in this quarter, Social Worker Alison Bousfield having agreed to undertake the work following her return from maternity leave. A small group of Foster Carers has been involved in this work, providing a 'sounding board' to the Service around each aspect of service delivery and the plan is to have all in place by September 2021 and placed on the Council's intranet for transparency and ease of access.

7.3 The participation officer Kim Butler has led on the following pieces of work with Foster Carers

- Placement evaluation documents
- Pocket money and savings policy
- Development of the Foster Care Training offer
- Foster Care annual consultation/survey drafted up
- Renewal of Active Cards

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Increasing demand and the implication this has for Hartlepool being able to care for its own children and young people continues to be a risk. This would also put greater pressure on budgets should the impact mean an increased use of independent provision. This would be mitigated by increasing capacity in terms of staffing (beyond solely the return to work of those on maternity leave) which means greater 'availability' to carers who need the best support possible to keep our children safe and stable.

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 make contact with them regularly. Their views are heard and responded to. Foster Carers were asked what they wanted to be offered in terms of their annual schedule of training for 2021/22 and their ideas have been incorporated. The Foster Care Survey for 2021/22 has been developed and will be distributed – via e-mail and survey monkey - in the second quarter of the year. The responses will assist us in the identification of priorities and development of the Service for 2022/23.

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. This year's Foster Care Conference included a session around the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, questioning, intersex and Asexual community. Foster Carer feedback was universally positive and the intention is that their enhanced understanding will ensure a positive and proactive response to our children and young people who are exploring their identity.

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 looked after 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 2020/21

19. CONTACT OFFICERS

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**Hartlepool Borough Council**

Published by Nicola Hunt · 20 hrs ·



There is no such thing as a 'typical' foster carer.

We need carers from a variety of backgrounds to meet the needs of children and young people in our care.

Read more → <https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/fostering>



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**Anyone can be a
Foster Carer**

**1,253**

People reached

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Engagements

Boost Unavailable



Hartlepool Borough Council

Published by Nicola Hunt · 18 May at 11:25 ·



As Foster Care Fortnight continues, it's important to understand the support available to you if you are considering becoming a foster carer.

All foster carers have an allocated Social Worker from the Fostering team known as a Supervising Social Worker plus additional support is also available to you.

For more information visit: <https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/support-for-foster-carers>



- Mentoring scheme for new foster carers
- Monthly support group evenings with guest speakers
- Monthly coffee mornings for foster carers
- Bespoke Foster carer training courses




1,416

People reached

16

Engagements



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Engagements

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