

Children's Trust – Children and Young People's Plan Report Cards Q3 2012-13

Meeting: Children's Trust Board - 1 February 2013

Population: All children and young people in Leeds

Outcome 1: Children and Young People are safe from harm

Priority 1: **Obsession** Help children to live in safe and supportive families

LCC lead: Steve Walker

CTB lead: Jane Held and Bridget Emery

Why is this a priority: Outcomes for children are better when they are able to live safely within their own family and community. The high numbers of children looked after in Leeds affects the resources available to provide preventative services to support children to live safely within their families.

Amber
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Indicator RAG: Children looked after numbers decreasing; still high **Partnership DOT:** Improved joint preventative working helping to reduce number of children entering care

Story behind the baseline

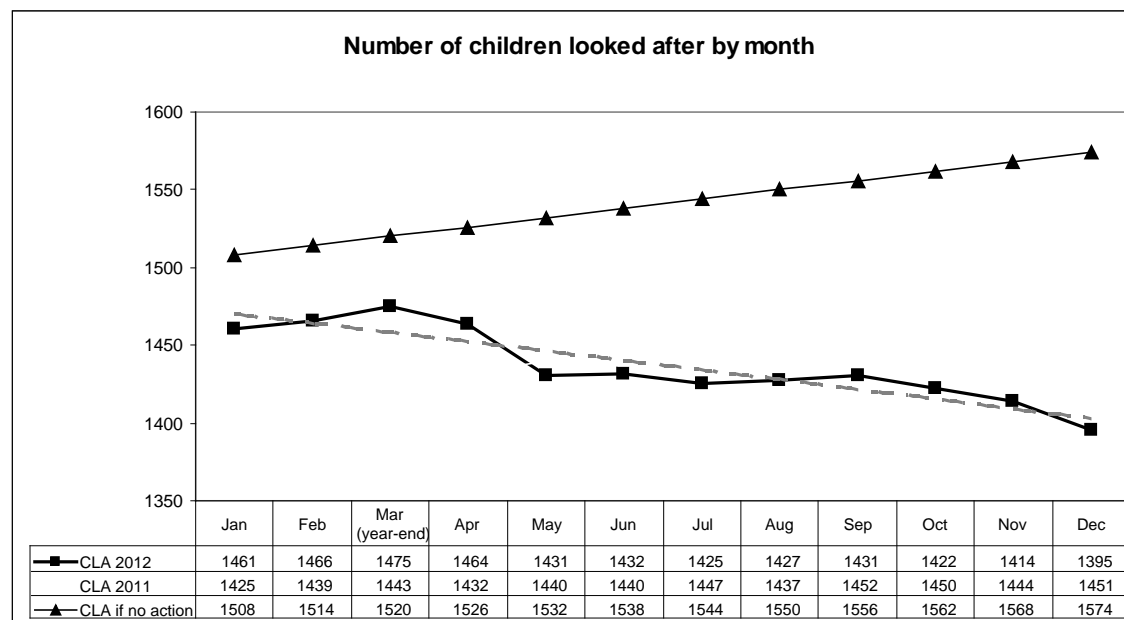
The number of children looked after has decreased by 80 (5.4%) since the end of the 2011-12 financial year, with December's figure 56 (3.9%) lower than the same month last year. Current children looked after numbers are at a 30-month low.

Fewer children are becoming looked after, and the focus on achieving permanence - children returning to their parents, being adopted, or becoming subject to a special guardianship order - has positively impacted on children looked after numbers.

Following the implementation of the front door project, professional callers now discuss their concerns with an experienced social worker in the Duty and Advice Team. This has led to an increase in confidence within clusters, and as a result, contact with the Duty and Advice Team has increased by 9.5% (2,153) when comparing the April to December 2012 period with the same period 12 months ago. However, as these discussions enable concerns to be clarified and support arrangements to be agreed, the number of referrals in the April to December 2012 period has decreased by 20.3% (2,156) compared to the same period 12 months ago. This has helped to ensure that the Social Work Service is focused on children with greatest levels of need, supporting the reduction in children looked after.

Leeds' children looked after rate per 10,000 remains above comparator averages, and although the curve has been turned and numbers are dropping, the focus will remain on trying to safely achieve permanence for children looked after.

Curve: Reduce the number of children looked after



What do children and young people think The Children's Social Work Service is working with Barnardo's to explore how the voice and influence of children looked after can be strengthened across the service.

<p>What we have done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a recruitment exercise in late 2012, a new Head of Service - Looked After Children, Rob Murray, has been appointed, with a start date of 14 January. • A Celebrating Social Work conference was held in December, allowing staff to reflect on the achievements in 2012, and to look forward to what the service will be doing in 2013. Future activities include Family Group Conferencing; improving our early help offer through Targeted Services, Children’s Centres and the Family Nurse Partnership; strengthening social work practice; working with Professor Mike Stein and Nina Beihal on care planning; and the replacement system for the ESCR. • The DfE released ‘adoption scorecards’ in November 2012, which show how swiftly children in need of adoption are placed for adoption, in each local authority area. Leeds performed above the thresholds (better than ‘required’) on the two headline indicators in the most recent release. The continued focus on adoption as a permanency option in Leeds should be reflected in the next scorecard, due for release in just under 12 months. • A 9-Point Plan has been developed, which sets out how the service works with partners to further improve support for families, strengthen social work and deliver improved outcomes for children. The Plan sits with the overall context and framework of the Leeds Children and Young People’s Plan, and sets out our priorities for the next 18 months in nine key areas. • The Youth Service has worked closely with a number of the Council’s children’s homes, providing both bespoke programmes and, in others, information and support for young people in care to attend local youth clubs. • Herd Farm Activity Centre (Youth Service) ran a Saturday morning eight-week progressive cycle skills course for children looked after, covering road safety, technical riding skills, basic cycle maintenance, route planning, and offsite riding in and around the Harewood Estate. Four of the participants gained accredited Leeds Youth Awards. 	<p>New actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A weekly referral review meeting scrutinises where decision-making on matters where there are concerns that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. This weekly meeting has brought about improved safeguarding practice. The lead safeguarding nurse recently attended the meeting, with Health requests for service and referrals being discussed. • The service has agreed to take part in a pilot ‘children looked after and care leavers’ Ofsted inspection in February 2013, which will help gauge the current standards of the service, see what is done well, and where improvements can be made. • Doctor Mark Peel, of Leicester University, has agreed to work with Leeds to determine how the role of principal social worker, advocated by the Munro Review, could be implemented in Leeds • Leeds will pilot a Care Proceedings initiative, which aims to address the causes of delay by implementation of a number of concurrent activities, all designed to play their part in different but complementary ways. Leeds will be the first authority to implement the approach and a joint funded project manager will be appointed with Cafcass (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service). • A large event is being planned at the Lazer centre (WNW Leeds) during the February half term specifically for young people in foster care. They will be invited to attend a youth work taster session doing range of exciting activities and to find out more about what local youth provision run near to where they live.
<p>What works locally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing numbers of children leaving care through better focus on adoption, Special Guardianship Orders, supporting older children into independence, and re-visiting plans for children looked after under voluntary agreements with parents. 	<p>Data development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Partners with a role to play Children and young people, parents, schools, health visitors, family outreach workers, police, voluntary, faith, and community sectors, childcare services, youth offending services, drug and alcohol services, probation, adult services, housing, media, business, general practitioners, transport services, mental health services (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).</p>	

Meeting: Children's Trust Board - 1 February 2013

Population: Pupils in Leeds schools (Years 1-11)

Outcome 2: Children and young people do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life

Priority 3a: **Obsession** Improve behaviour, attendance and achievement

LCC lead: Paul Brennan

CTB lead: Keith Gilert and Matthew Ward

Why is this an obsession There are strong links between attendance, attainment, being NEET and youth offending. Particular pupil groups who experience multiple poor outcomes are more likely to have poor attendance, e.g., those living in deprived areas; looked after children; pupils eligible for free school meals; pupils with special education needs and some BME groups.

Primary: Green

Secondary: Amber



RAG: Improving ratings against national and statistical neighbour averages

Direction of travel: Local efforts embedding with evidence of impact

Story behind the baseline

Curve: School attendance rates¹

As there is no new comparative national data since the previous report card, this quarter will highlight some of the attendance issues for various pupil groups.

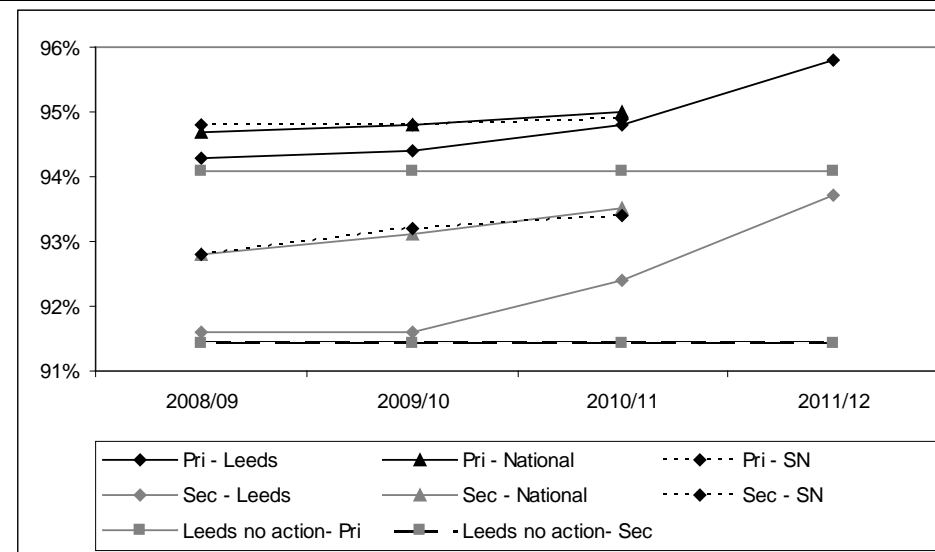
At both primary and secondary phases, attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) is lower than for pupils who are not eligible, although at both phases improvements have been greater for pupils eligible for FSMs and therefore the gap has closed slightly. Levels of primary persistent absence are more than three times higher than for pupils who aren't eligible for FSMs and at secondary they are almost four times higher. The level of primary persistent absence for FSM eligible pupils in Leeds has almost halved since 2009/10 and is now only marginally higher than persistent absence for FSM eligible pupils nationally.

Attendance of children looked after in Leeds primary schools improved in 2011/12 and remains higher than levels of attendance for all Leeds primary pupils. Levels of persistent absence are also low for children looked after in primary schools.

Attendance of children looked after in secondary schools also improved although it remains lower for children looked after than for all pupils in Leeds secondary schools.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) have lower levels of attendance and higher levels of persistent absence than those with no SEN at both primary and secondary phases, although improvements in attendance and persistent absence have been seen for all levels of SEN.

Pupils in primary schools that have English as an Additional Language (EAL) have lower levels of attendance and higher levels of persistent absence than pupils with English as their first language. Attendance for pupils with EAL in Leeds is lower than for the same group nationally and levels of persistent absence are higher. However pupils in Leeds secondary schools that have English as an additional language have higher levels of attendance and lower levels of persistent absence than pupils with English as a first language. This is the same pattern as seen nationally.



¹ Most recent data available is half-terms 1-5 2011/12. National comparative data for this period will be available in March 2013.

What do children and young people think As part of local research undertaken into the reasons for persistent absence, young people told us that the key factors in absence are: problems at home and with parents; issues with the curriculum and lessons; and bullying was also mentioned as a factor. Groups such as young carers had particular issues affecting their school attendance.

What we have done

- All clusters throughout the city now have targeted services leaders (TSLs) in place. TSLs have local targets set that will contribute to turning the curve against each of the obsessions.
- At the ‘4heads’ conference for primary heads in November 2012, work began on developing city-wide principles for all schools, that in a Child Friendly City the best place for a child to be in term-time is in school. This is part of a change in culture where any request to remove a child from school for whatever reason is considered “exceptional leave” and moves away from “holidays in term-time.” This message reinforces to families that it should not be expected that requests for term-time leave would be granted.
- A pathfinder project to allow schools to accept applications directly from parents for in-year admissions has been very successful and was rolled out city-wide in the second half of autumn 2012. This project is aimed at reducing the amount of time taken to find school places.
- The Families First Information Sharing Agreement has enabled a much wider discussion across agencies in respect of families and households causing concern, meaning that professionals working with families have access to high quality intelligence about a family’s needs.
- The Youth Service, in partnership with IGEN, delivered three area based summer programmes to support those young people moving from year 10 to year 11 who had been identified as likely to disengage in their final year. The programme focused on personal and social development, and addressing issues that may become barriers to their success in learning.

New actions

- The new service specification that is being drafted for the provision of free early education entitlement requires that providers must maintain up to date records of attendance for children accessing free early education entitlement; and that providers must encourage and help parents to commit to regular attendance.
- Governor training on attendance is taking place in early 2013 and targeted services are represented at the governors’ conference marketplace.
- OPEN XS cluster are to undertake an investigation into the types of medical absence in schools across the cluster, to build upon the information-gathering exercise in Ardsley and Tingley cluster in 2011/12.
- TSLs are instrumental in co-ordinating the work of the Families First programme. The highest tariff families will have services co-ordinated at an area level through the Children Leeds Panels. For medium to lower need families, the TSLs are mapping what services are currently involved with these families and determining if a common assessment exists, if there is a lead professional, if a shared plan exists, etc, and putting all of these in place where there are gaps. Developments across Integrated Processes in Children’s Services have also supported earlier intervention as TSLs are now able to access more intensive family support services such as Multi-Systemic Therapy, Signpost, and the Family Intervention Service directly.
- The Youth Service is to take referrals through cluster guidance and support onto its Forward Steps programme in the Outer West area. This will involve providing a range of support on a one to one basis.

What works locally

As a means of early intervention, the common assessment is the primary tool for identifying needs and the most appropriate response. This has served to broaden the range of agencies and practitioners who are delivering interventions that will improve attendance, as opposed to a reliance on a single agency.

Data development

Staff working across nine clusters can now use Synergy Gateway to access and update child records. This model is being rolled out to the other clusters, meaning that practitioners can see which other services are engaged in work with children, and reducing the need to hold information about children in multiple locations.

Partners with a role to play

Children and young people, parents, schools, health visitors, family outreach workers, police, VCFS, childcare services, community groups, drug and alcohol services, probation, adult services, housing services, IAG providers, media, business, Chamber of Commerce, GPs, transport services.

Meeting: Children's Trust Board - 1 February 2013
Outcome 2: Children and young people do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life
LCC lead: Paul Brennan

Population: Young people of academic age 16, 17 and 18 (age on 31 Aug)
Priority 4a: **Obsession** Increase numbers in employment, education or training (EET)
CTB lead: Martin Fleetwood and Alison France

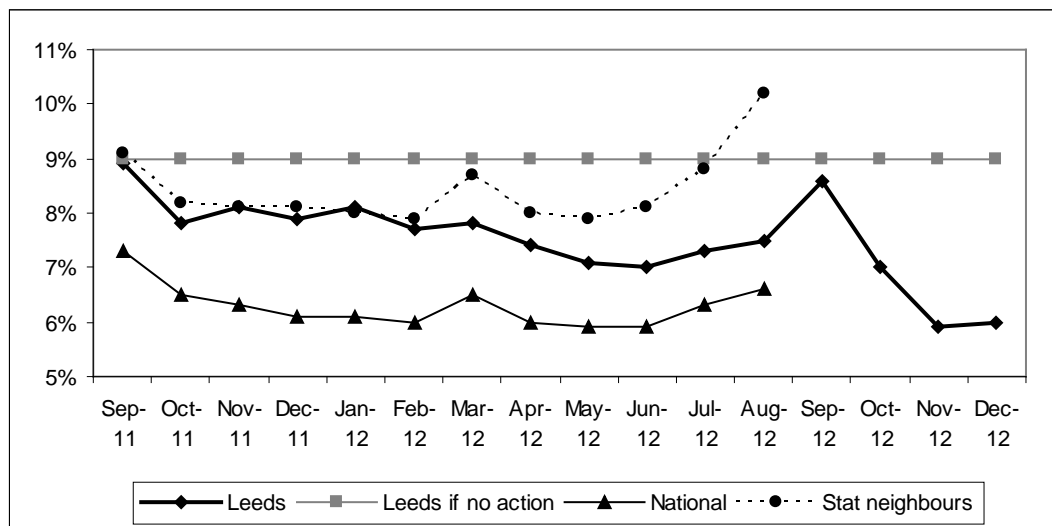
Why is this an obsession Being in EET increases young people's confidence, prospects and economic independence and therefore supports the city's overall economic performance. By targeting groups and areas where NEET is a particular challenge, we can raise aspirations and prospects for young people who often have multiple poor outcomes. The current economic downturn presents challenges for young people looking to enter the workplace for the first time.

Amber ↑

RAG: Third quartile performance nationally **Direction of travel:** Lowest ever NEET rate in Leeds in November 2012 (5.9%)

Story behind the baseline

Curve: Percentage of young people who are NEET (Sep 11 – Dec 12)
 At the end of December there were 1374 NEET young people in Leeds (6.0%). This is the "adjusted NEET" figure, including some young people whose actual status is not known, but who are assumed to be NEET. National comparative data (available up to August) shows that although NEET levels remain higher than national, the gap at this point had fallen to 0.9 percentage points, compared to 1.5 percentage points in August 2011. Leeds' position nationally in August was in the third quartile of all local authorities. The DfE use data from November, December and January each year to measure local authority performance. Data for both November and December 2012 show substantially lower NEET rates than 12 months previously.



Nationally NEET levels tend to spike each September as this is when Year 11 leavers join the Year 12 to Year 14 cohort and some learners have not yet at that point secured a place in further learning. This issue was further complicated in 2012 by the additional dialogue with colleges to move young people affected by the GCSE English grading issue onto appropriate provision.

The latest (December 2012) proportion of young people in this age group whose status is not known is 10.9%, or 2506 young people. This is slightly lower than in December 2011.

Some young people are statistically more likely to be NEET, e.g. some BME groups, those with learning difficulties and disabilities, care leavers, young offenders, poor school attenders, those attending the BESD SILC, PRUs or off-site learning, young parents, young carers, pregnant young women, homeless young people and those living away from their family. NEET rates also vary significantly across the city. Targeted and specialist support for young people in these groups, delivered by Prospects, igen and voluntary, community and faith sector partners, provides support for the most vulnerable young people from these groups who have specific barriers to engagement in EET that require specialist knowledge and/or interventions.

<p>What do children and young people think At the inaugural meeting of the Leeds Education Challenge Learners’ Board in November 2012 (a board consisting of students from across the city), young people voted on the issues that they would most like to focus on. They agreed that improving careers information, advice and guidance in secondary schools was the most important issue for secondary pupils. Young people have previously come up with suggestions as to how schools could improve careers education, including: starting careers education earlier; linking the knowledge and skills developed in lessons to how they can be used in work or living independently; and organising visits from A-level students or university students for younger pupils.</p>	
<p>What we have done</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Apprenticeship Training Agency was launched in November 2012, which will create career opportunities for young people to take up apprenticeships in small and medium sized businesses. • The INPartners employer engagement scheme for schools has been launched to enable schools to access high quality support from businesses across every sector. Taking part in activities that involve employers while at school is a positive way to raise young people’s awareness and aspirations about the world of work. • An Enterprise Exchange Event was held in November 2012. These events enable schools to learn about how the Education Business Partnership and employers can help prepare young people for entering the workplace. • An Expression of Interest around exploring the potential for the development of University Technical Colleges (UTCs) in Leeds was submitted to the DfE in November 2012. UTCs could enhance the range of learning opportunities available to young people in Leeds, and further develop the relationship between education and business in the city. • Data has been received from UCAS that confirms the HE destination of around 3000 young people in the Year 14 cohort. 	<p>New actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication work is taking place with governors to raise their awareness about Raising the Participation Age, with a suggestion that secondary schools allocate a governor to lead on monitoring the progress of young people currently accessing offsite Key Stage 4 provision. Fewer school leavers who were offsite learners at Key Stage 4 tend to progress into further learning or work, compared to all school leavers. • The new targeted IAG service is being commissioned to begin in April 2013. This service brings together existing arrangements for the delivery of targeted and specialist progression services for vulnerable young people. The commissioning process included a panel of young people who evaluated bidders on presentations and interviews. • Connexions providers are using Welfare Call, a client follow up contact centre service, to call young people whose status is not known to obtain information about their current activity. This should reduce the number of young people whose current status is not known and means that resources can be more effectively targeted at young people most in need of support from Connexions providers. • The Inner South Area Committee has made NEET reduction a priority in the locality and an OBA event is being organised for February.
<p>What works locally</p> <p>The Youth Service, igen and a number of other organisations working with young people, facilitate NEET/Not Known sweeps across the city. Home visits are made, during which as well as being able to identify the present destination of those young people, all receive appropriate guidance and support regarding where they could go for help with EET issues.</p>	<p>Data development</p> <p>The DfE are proposing a change to the adjusted NEET calculation when they publish the 2012 NEET figures (November 2012 –January 2013) in April 2013. This changes how young people whose status is not known are included in the adjustment and would have the impact in Leeds of substantially increasing the NEET cohort. This is not yet confirmed and the next report card will contain an updated position on this proposal.</p>
<p>Partners with a role to play Schools and FE colleges, IAG providers, housing services, young people, parents and family, employers, Jobcentre Plus, offsite providers, adult social care, the youth service, Prospects, igen and voluntary, community and faith sector partners</p>	