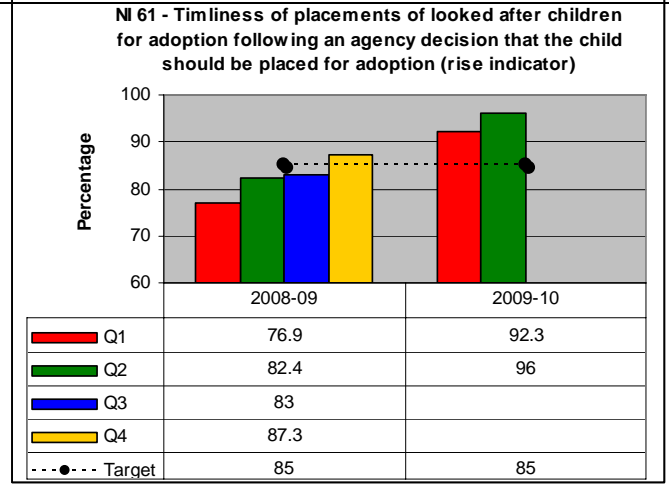
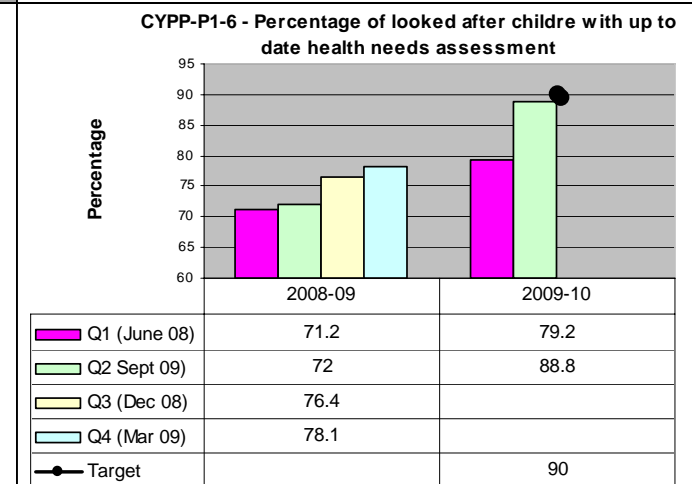




Why is this a priority

Improving the outcomes for looked after children has been highlighted as a key issue in recent evaluations and through the Joint Area Review. Looked after children in Leeds are more likely to be: underachievers in school, absent or excluded from school, not in education post 16, offenders and/or exhibit other risk taking behaviour. They are also more likely to have a higher rate of teenage conceptions and are more likely to experience mental health difficulties. Therefore a strong, sustained focus on these children is needed to narrow the gap.



Overall Progress to date and outcomes achieved 1st April – 30th September 2009

Overall Summary

There has been significant additional investment in improving outcomes for looked after children, including through the Primary Care Trust, and the Children Leeds Innovations Fund. The secondment of an Education Leeds head teacher to the Leeds virtual school has added significant leadership and management capacity, and has also provided a champion for improvements in care, well-being and educational progress. There have also been improvements in the rigour of information and data. The virtual school has raised expectations and developed a more strategic approach to improving outcomes, prioritising continued improvements in achievement, attendance and behaviour. Whilst the overall rating remains red because some key indicators are underperforming, there are clear signs that current strategies for improvement are having an impact on the every child matters outcomes for looked after children and care leavers, hence the positive direction of travel assessment.

Achievements since the last report

- The fostering inspection found good ratings across 4 of the 5 ECM outcomes and noted 'significant progress made to improving service delivery and the capacity within the senior management team to bring about change within the fostering service is having an impact'. The key improvement was the reduction in large foster care households.
- The Leeds Extended School (LEXS) and Stepping Stones provide specific out of hours educational programmes to meet the needs of looked after children including: 1-to-1 tuition; Saturday activities for carers and looked after children at Leeds University and Leeds Met; Homework Clubs/Study Support supervised by undergraduates which are well attended; Mentoring by undergraduates which has a measurable impact on outcomes; Dowry funding is available to schools to support primary age pupils at risk of exclusion; Targeted financial support for Y11 pupils; Individual education support for young people who are disengaged from education.
- Staffing for the Leeds Extended School is being remodelled to allow for termly monitoring of all LAC in schools and outcomes are now analysed by demography and other factors to identify needs across the cohort
- Extended Services clusters are piloting access grants to lower barriers to participation in out of hours activities
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) receive tailored support for education and youth service
- Outcomes of looked after children are improving (provisional outcomes Oct. 2009):
 - Percentage achieving a good level of achievement Early Years Foundation Stage rose from 11% to 21% between 2008 and 2009;

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- Percentage achieving level 2 or above in Key Stage 1 Reading and Writing has risen by 2% and 9%, respectively since 2008. Though the percentage achieving level 2 in Maths has fallen by 5% since 2008 there is an upward trend that has seen Maths rise from 49% in 2007 to 61% in 2009;
- Percentage achieving level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 English and Maths has risen by 16% and 14%, respectively since 2008 with the percentage achieving Level 4+ in both subjects rising by 13%;
- Percentage sitting for one or more qualifications in Year 11 has risen to 92%, the percentage gaining 5+A*-G (or equivalent) has risen to 62%, the percentage achieving 5A*-C or equivalent is stable at 16% (and when English and Maths are included the percentage has risen to 5%). Only 11% of this year group of looked after children were not on the special needs register.
- Primary school attendance by looked after children remains 1.2% higher than that of non-looked after children at 95.3%. Persistent Absence in primary school is 1.3% compared to 3.1% among non-looked after children (data currently available for terms 1 – 4 of the 2008-2009 academic year only).
- Secondary school attendance remains lower than that of non-looked after children but has improved by 0.9% against a 0.2% fall among non-looked after children since 2008. Persistent absence among looked after children in secondary school remains higher but has decreased from 16.2 to 13.6% (data currently available for terms 1 – 4 of the 2008-2009 academic year only).
- The number of days that looked after children lost to exclusion continued to fall, from 1064 in 2006-2007 to 665.5 in 2008-2009.
- Those young people doing well in Key Stage 4 continue to progress successfully to further and higher education.
- Timeliness of placement for adoptions continues to perform well and the most recent results of an Internal Audit review have indicated that we have previously taken too conservative a view
- A significant improvement took place in terms of the percentage of looked after children with up to date health needs assessment in the last quarter as a result of work undertaken by the PCT. These changes should deliver a continued trajectory of improvement to the year end and achievement of the annual target.

Challenges/Risks

- There is a strong correlation between stable long term foster care and positive outcomes in education and a major challenge is to improve the outcomes of those older children who come into care after they leave primary school and those whose needs foster care does not meet. Schools and support services must continue to work hard to improve the consistency of outcomes irrespective of the age a child enters care or the nature and location of their care placement.
- The quality of Personal Education Planning remains inconsistent but the new regulations on the role the statutory Designated Teacher for looked after children in school will provide an opportunity to improve those plans.
- The ability of the Leeds Extended School to provide 1-to1 tuition outside the school day to support the learning of looked after children is secure through the current financial year but the pressure on social care budgets may put it at risk in 2009-2010.
- The quality of the support available to looked after children placed outside Leeds is good if they have a statement of special educational needs but, for the majority who do not, support is less consistent.
- Recent investigations into business processes have indicated that the current functioning of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) needs to be reviewed in order to facilitate a more streamlined system which ensures that they are undertaking their arms length responsibilities appropriately.
- Commissioned Children's Rights Service to develop a more young person centred approach to involving them in their reviews.
- Although provision of dental services for looked after children has increased significantly the percentage of children with an up to date dental check is still below target. Improved capacity to monitor compliance will be used to identify hot spots at an area level and support targeted improvement work.

Council / Partnership Groups

Approved by (*Accountable Officer*)

Jackie Wilson

Date

11/11/09

Approved by (*Accountable Director*)

Rosemary Archer

Date

11/11/09

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Key actions for the next 6 months				
	Action (Desired Achievements)	Contributory Officer / Partner	Milestone / Actions	Timescale
1	Develop an integrated Looked After Children's Service by bringing together all the social care functions for looked after children and care leavers along with those from Health and Education	Jackie Wilson	Create the Head of Service post and agree the job description Commence the recruitment process	
2	Complete the agreed implementation of the re-modelled virtual school staffing to allow for further and deeper engagement with schools.. This will continue to improve personal education planning and the personalisation of educational support to looked after children.	Alun Rees	Regular meetings with school designated teachers in both primary and secondary phases to monitor.	Meetings through the Autumn terms
3	Secure the virtual school budget to ensure looked after children have access to the personal education allowances funded through Care Matter which allow 1-to-1 tuition, and other interventions to support looked after children's attainment and progress, to continue.	Jackie Wilson	Needs assessment based on the current education outcomes for looked after children is fed into the budget cycle	November 2009 onwards
4	Implementation of the outcomes of the business process review as they apply to the Independent Reviewing service including revision of the Care Planning arrangements and the provision of more consistent monitoring and feedback on the quality of all aspects of care planning.	Joanne Hopkins (Keith Watson)	Regular and appropriate feedback on the quality of care, and related education and health, planning that will lead to improvement	December 2009
5	Work with young people and the Children's Rights service on developing more creative means through which children and young people can become more involved in decisions about their care.	Joanne Hopkins	Project plan from Children's Rights with subsequent implementation	December – May 2009
6	Utilise the increasing capacity of the CYPSC Performance Team to investigate whether there are patterns that link those children and young people failing to take up appointments for dental checks.	Joanne Hopkins (Siobhan Brady)	Having identified any common factors plan to address the key cohorts of children and young people	January 2010
7	Implementation of the specialist Connexions service commissioned by IYSS	Gerry Hudson (IYSS)	The commissioning process is nearing its end point with the new specialist Connexions service being implemented	Spring/Summer 2010

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Performance Indicators										
Performance indicators aligned to the Improvement Priority										
Reference	Title	Owner	Frequency & Measure	Rise or Fall	Baseline	2008/09 Result	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Quarter 2	Current Predicted Full Year Result	Data Quality
CYPP-P1-1	Increase Key Stage 2 to 4 Contextual Value Added scores for looked after children (percentage point difference between estimated and actual performance for five A*-C)	Ed Leeds	Annual Percentage Point (pp)	Fall	-9.1% pp 07/08 ac yr	-9.1% pp 07/08 ac yr	- 6.8 pp 08/09 ac yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
CYPP-P1-2	Reduce the persistent absence rate for looked after children in secondary schools	Ed Leeds	Annual Percentage	Fall	16.2% 07/08 ac yr	16.2% 07/08 ac yr	15.8% 08/09 ac yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
CYPP-P1-3	Reduce fixed term exclusions from school for looked after children	Ed Leeds	Annual rate per 1,000	Fall	429.1 per 1,000 pupils 07/08 ac yr	429.1 per 1,000 pupils 07/08 ac yr	310 per 1,000 pupils 08/09 ac yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
CYPP-P1-4	Reduce permanent exclusions from school for looked after children	Ed Leeds	Annual Number	Fall	1 exclusion 07/08 ac yr	1 exclusion 07/08 ac yr	0 exclusions 08/09 ac yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
NI 99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	Ed Leeds	Annual Percentage	Rise	40% 06/07 ac yr	43% 07/08 ac yr	56% 08/09 ac yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
NI 100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in maths at Key Stage 2	Ed Leeds	Annual Percentage	Rise	30% 06/07 ac yr	41% 07/08 ac yr	56% 08/09 yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
NI 101	Looked after children achieving five A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including maths and English)	Ed Leeds	Annual Percentage	Rise	5% 06/07 ac yr	4% 07/08 ac yr	17% ¹ 08/09 ac yr	Annual PI reported at Q4		No concerns
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	C&YPSC	Quarterly Percentage	Rise	81.4%	87.3%	85.0%	96.0%	96.0%	Some concerns in year but subject to data validation at Q4
NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	C&YPSC	Quarterly Percentage	Rise	70.5% (Dec 07)	71.3%	75%	72.5%	72.5%	Some concerns in year but subject to data validation at Q4
NI 66	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescale	C&YPSC	Quarterly Percentage	Rise	66.3%	78.3%	90%	84.6%	84.6%	Some concerns in year but subject to data validation at Q4

¹ Targets for 2009/10 are based on value added predictions of pupils

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Performance Indicators										
Performance indicators aligned to the Improvement Priority										
Reference	Title	Owner	Frequency & Measure	Rise or Fall	Baseline	2008/09 Result	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Quarter 2	Current Predicted Full Year Result	Data Quality
CYPP-P1-5	Percentage of looked after children who participated in their review	C&YPSC	Quarterly Percentage	Rise	81.1%	New PI 09/10	95%	88.3%	88.3%	Some concerns in year but subject to data validation at Q4
CYPP-P1-6	Percentage of looked after children with up to date health needs assessment	C&YPSC	Quarterly Percentage	Rise	72% 07/08	84.1%	90%	88.8%	90%	Some concerns in year but subject to data validation at Q4
CYPP-P1-7	Percentage of looked after children with up to date dental check	C&YPSC	Quarterly Percentage	Rise	78%	78.3%	90%	67.4%	68%	Some concerns in year but subject to data validation at Q4
NI 58	NI 58 - Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children	PCT	Annual Number	Fall	New PI for 08-09	15	TBD ²	Annual PI reported at Q4		To be reviewed at Q4

² The first period of collection for this indicator is 08-09. Questionnaires were only available for half the cohort. The intention is to get a more complete picture in 09/10 and use that as the baseline. Targets cannot be set until baseline properly established.