



Sufficiency Strategy

For Placements & Services for Children in Care,
Care Leavers and Disabled Children

2018-2020

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Reviewing this Strategy

This Strategy will ensure we develop sufficient placements to meet the needs of our children and young people in care and disabled children in Devon.

We will keep the engagement process for the strategy live throughout the year with young people, the workforce, providers and stakeholders. A formal refresh of the strategy will be published annually.

A Market Development Plan has informed this strategy and this action plan will continue to be developed and implemented with the impact of this reported twice a year and informing the refreshed plan for 2020.

If you have any comments about the Sufficiency Strategy, please send these through to the following mailbox:-
childrenscommissioningsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk



1. What Young People Tell Us

Our Vision for Participation & Engagement in Devon

Devon County Council want all children and young people being supported by Children's Services to feel motivated and encouraged to share their views and experiences because they know they will be listened to, respected and their views acted upon. We want this to be inclusive of the diverse community we serves and through listening effective we want to strengthen practice, and improve outcomes for children.

Examples of What Devon Children Have Told Us

- ◆ Support to feel happy in placements by having good carers, support needs met and being treated as individuals (2016, *Children in Care Council exploring experiences of placement stability*).
- ◆ To feel safe, feel at home and have fun (2017, *Children in Care Council exploring 'What do I want from my Placement?'*)
- ◆ The young person should be asked about what they like and don't like (food/activities/living environments), how much they want to share about their past, what they need for their faith or education. You do not need to be an expert, just be respectful and ask so you can understand them properly and don't make assumptions. Make it clear they don't have to tell you, it's a choice (2017, *engagement with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children to create 'Top Tips' resource for carers providing placements*).
- ◆ We need more training to prepare us for life after supported accommodation. Training needs to be at different levels so we can build on what we already know. We want to know what help we're entitled to from people like Job Centre Plus (*Children in Care/ Care Leavers aged 16 plus*).
- ◆ "I didn't know how to do anything . My foster carer listened to me.....I like I that she keeps in touch with me. Matching the placement with the person is really important ". (*Care Leavers, say.... about the Sufficiency Strategy, 2018*).
- ◆ "We agree with most of this but the carers need a lot of support and training to help this happen ". (*Care Leavers, say.... about the Sufficiency Strategy, 2018*).
- ◆ "Not everyone can support all of our needs all of the time but if they can get it as close as they can, then that's good enough". (*Care Leavers, say.... about the Sufficiency Strategy, 2018*).

The Pledge

Devon County Council have developed a pledge for our Children in Care. This summarises all of the promises we make to children in care in Devon based on what they have told us is important.

This includes promises concerned with placements, placement moves, safety, choice and involvement of the young person for instance.

Details of our pledge are published on the Stand Up Speak Up website.

<https://www.standupspeakup.org.uk/being-in-care-2/>



Useful web links :-

- ◆ <https://www.standupspeakup.org.uk/>
- ◆ <https://twitter.com/SusuDevon#>

What Went Well

- ◆ Children in and leaving care in Devon have worked in partnership with officers at DCC and NHS England to develop a programme of personal health and wellbeing budgets. They have been instrumental in influencing the shape of the national programme to empower children and young people to manage how to respond to and plan for their wellbeing needs.
- ◆ In 2016 our work involving children and young people in decision making met 6 of the 7 standards LILAC (Leading Improvements for Looked After Children) standards and our facilitation of young people in the Takeover Challenge in 2016 received a Gold Award from the Children's Commissioner.
- ◆ Devon have a Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forums to facilitate in hearing the voice of our Children in Care and Care Leavers. Children and young people in Devon can use apps such as MoMo and MoMo Express to tell us what they think about services and communicate with their social workers and the Stand Up Speak Up website to find information about rights and entitlements , how to have their say or get involved with the work of the Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forum.
- ◆ Opportunities have been made available to obtain views of disabled children and young people and their families to ensure services meet needs through the Local Offer Reference Group, Devon Parent Carer Voice, In Control and use of Healthwatch for example.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Refresh approach of Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forum working alongside commissioners and senior officers to ensure the voice and experiences of care received by young people is at the heart of future commissioning activity. In addition ensuring these forums are as effective as they can be and are well represented.
- ◆ Develop an Engagement & Participation Strategy and implement an action plan to continue to improve and systemize our approach to participation and engagement whilst ensuring outcomes inform strategic development and commissioning of services effectively.
- ◆ Continue to build a culture that values and supports the participation and engagement of children, young people and families.
- ◆ Refresh Devon's Pledge to Children in Care.

2. Our Aspirations

The ambition is for the majority of children in care to be placed in family settings, with a small minority needing residential placements for a time limited period to enable their complex needs to be met, usually with a view to a planned return into a family setting. Only a very few young people, usually because of the age they came into care and their more complex or risk-taking behaviours, may need to remain in residential care until a planned move onto semi-independence. We seek to ensure that young people leaving care are prepared well for independence by actively working to ensure care leavers are in suitable accommodation and positively addressing any risk of homelessness. This includes both ensuring young people are supported to develop practice skills required for independent living as well as being provided with appropriate support for their full range of physical, emotional and sexual needs and to engage in education, employment or training.

Planned practice improvements and system level change will facilitate the Council in being able to achieve its aspirations and commissioning intentions for our children in care and care leavers as described below. Planned practice improvements to be achieved currently include:- a new practice model to improve consistency and quality of care planning and the effectiveness of interventions through more outcome based approaches; a model of adolescent risk management to enable children and young people with risk taking behaviour to be better supported in the community; support and training to foster carers; a review of the Children in Care CAMHS pathway which was implemented to provide early screening for all children within the first few weeks of being in care; a more active approach to step children down from residential care to family based care at the right time and to improve our commissioning and quality assurance of placements including through work with Local Authorities across the Peninsula.

This sufficiency strategy seeks to support the delivery of our Corporate Parenting priorities by ensuring the following:-

Early Help

- ◆ Effective provision exists for children on the edge of care to support children and young people to remain at home or to return home, where ever possible.
- ◆ Strengthen approaches for adolescents on the edge of care to prevent them from needing care in a crisis and to enable them to return home from care safely and more quickly when it is needed.
- ◆ Secure joint funding and commission multi-disciplinary team capacity to support delivery of edge of care services.
- ◆ Support young people and families through intervention and mediation at an earlier point to prevent young people who are presenting a risk of homelessness.

Preparation for Adulthood

- ◆ Develop the 16 plus market to include high quality, flexible support options for young people as they transition to independence that build on existing resources.
- ◆ Ensure effective quality assurance of supported accommodation providers given the unregulated nature of this provision.

Improving Outcomes for Children in Care & Care Leavers

- ◆ Ensure they are supported to develop the skills and abilities to confidently move onto independence, with personalized support where needed.
- ◆ Ensure they are prepared for adulthood and independence.
- ◆ Influence care and placement .
- ◆ Increase local availability of high quality residential placements.
- ◆ Improve approaches to 'stepping down' children and young people from residential placements by working creatively with foster carers both in-house and from the independent sector (IFA) at an earlier point.



Improving Stability & Permanence

- ◆ Children and young people unable to safely remain at home or to return home from care are provided with placements that provide stability and permanence and help them build resilience.
- ◆ There is sufficient high quality local provision to cater for the needs of all children across all placement types.
- ◆ By increasing access to wrap around services.
- ◆ By increasing number of adoptive placements.

Increase in Access to Family Based Care

- ◆ Where this is consistent with their needs, children are brought up in families and provided with permanence, including through adoption and friends and family placements.
- ◆ Where children are unable to live in families, residential care is used in an outcome focused and time limited way, planning actively for a return to family life or independence.
- ◆ Increase friends and family fostering options to maintain family connections and create greater stability.
- ◆ Continue to increase sufficiency of in house fostering including through training to support carers to improve placement stability.
- ◆ Support for complex needs and emergency placements to reduce reliance on residential.

Reducing the Impact of Crisis Care

- ◆ Increase and make best use of high quality residential placements available locally and local services for children in crisis and/or with high risk behaviours.

Useful web links :-

<https://>

www.devonchildrenandfamiliespartnership.org.uk/



3. Purpose

As corporate parents, Devon County Council is committed to ensuring children and young people in care achieve the best possible outcomes and are well prepared and supported to step confidently into adulthood with the support they need. Key to this is that when they cannot remain within their family, children and young people are provided with permanence and stability in care in settings which meet their changing needs over time. We know from research that maintaining family ties, friendships and education, wherever possible, is crucial and significantly impacts on the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes for children and young people in care. Local provision also makes it easier to engage the full range of local partners in the multi-disciplinary arrangements that are essential to achieving good outcomes.

Sufficiency is approached in collaboration with our partners across the area, including our Peninsula Commissioning Partners and other bordering authorities, alongside our local response to national priorities that support different approaches to supporting children in care such as the NHS England demonstrator for children in care with mental health issues through Integrated Personal Commissioning (IPC).

Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 sets out a definition of sufficiency and describes a 'sufficiency' duty for Local Authorities (see Appendix 1 National Drivers).

This sufficiency strategy is informed by these principles and outlines :-

- ◆ How we will ensure that children and young people who need to be in care can grow up in high quality provision that is well matched to and effectively meets their immediate and long-term needs whilst providing stability and permanence at the earliest opportunity.
- ◆ Devon's ambitions and how we will achieve the best for our children and young people in care and care leavers in light of our understanding of their needs, now and in the future and of local provision
- ◆ Links to the Council's wider strategy for children in care, which also sets out Devon's Corporate Parenting arrangements

"In Devon, we seek to ensure that children are supported to remain with their families but that, when care is needed, children are safe, their health needs are met, they make appropriate progress with their learning and development, are developing the skills needed for independence, are prepared for being economically independent and are supported to make a positive contribution in their community".

4. National Context

The number of children in care has increased steadily over the last nine years and continues to increase nationally. Alongside this, the reduction in funding to local authorities means that value for money approaches are essential.

The DfE has commissioned reviews of both residential care (2016) and fostering (2018), both led by Sir Martin Narey, which made a number of recommendations designed to improve sufficiency, quality and use of residential and foster care. Key messages from these reviews included the need to ensure access to high quality foster care for the majority of children in care and to ensure the provision of high quality specialist residential care for a small number of children whose needs cannot be met in a family setting at a particular time.

Useful web links :-
National Drivers Narey Reports:-

- ◆ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-residential-care-in-england>
- ◆ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foster-care-in-england>

At March 2017, there were 72,670 Children in Care nationally, an increase of 3% on 2016.

5. Local Context

Stability and permanence in family care is seen as the key vehicle to achieving these aims. As such, areas we have identified and need to focus on have been summarised below:-

- ◆ Ensuring that we are consistently 'doing the right thing at the right time' before children and young people come into our care, whilst they are in our care and when we are looking to return them to families or support them into permanence or independence.
- ◆ Making sure the right children are in care by preventing some children from coming into care or getting them home more quickly when care is needed for a short period.
- ◆ Enabling more children to be looked after in family settings when they do come into care, including older children and children with more complex needs.
- ◆ Placement decisions based on good assessments that focus on needs, strengths and risks, inform high quality care plans, inform effective placement planning and support which enables a child's needs to be met and for permanence to be secured at an early point.
- ◆ Using residential placements in a more planned and outcome focused way to bring about permanence and stability in response to a child's identified needs.
- ◆ Improving the commissioning and brokerage of placements to ensure provision is high quality and value for money.

6. Devon Needs Analysis

Children in Care

Devon is a large rural county with a population of around 780,000. Around 163,800 are children and young people aged 0-19 years.

At March 2018 there were 697 children in care. Devon's children in care rate per 10,000 population for this period was 48.55. This was lower than the rate per 10,000 population recorded for local authorities who are our statistical neighbours, the South West and England during this period respectively. Of these children in care 58% were male and 42% female. Devon also have a high proportion of children in care aged 11 years plus.

182 of our children in care were aged 16 and 17 years. In 2017, Devon had a higher number of children in care compared to their statistic neighbours. On average numbers of children in care have continued to increase from 2012-2017 across England, the South West and local authorities representing our statistical neighbours.

88% of Children Looked After during this period were White British. Figure 2 provides an ethnicity profile for the remaining 12% of children in care at March 2018.

Figure 2:- Ethnicity Profile for Devon Children in Care at March 2018 , excluding White British

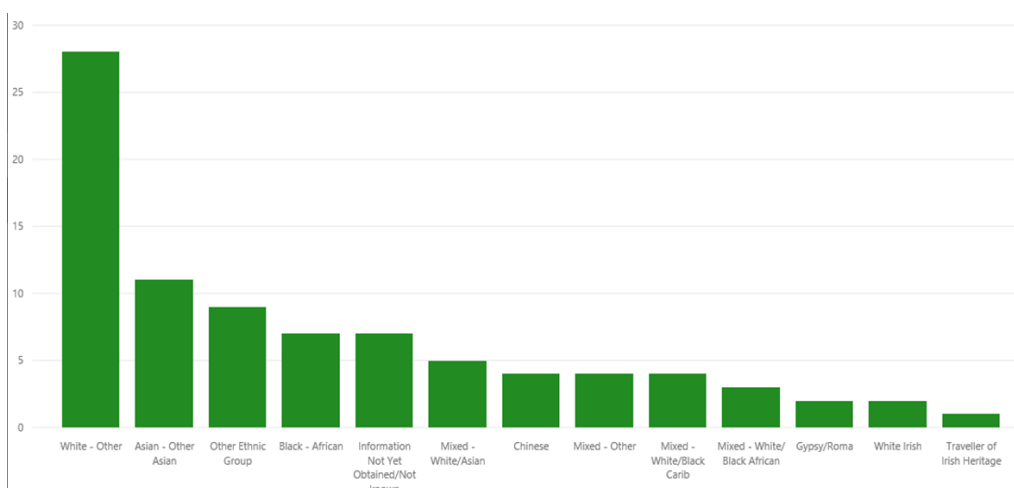
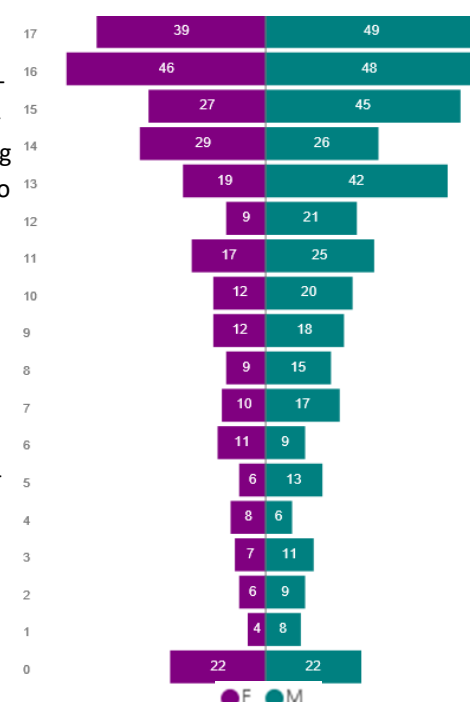


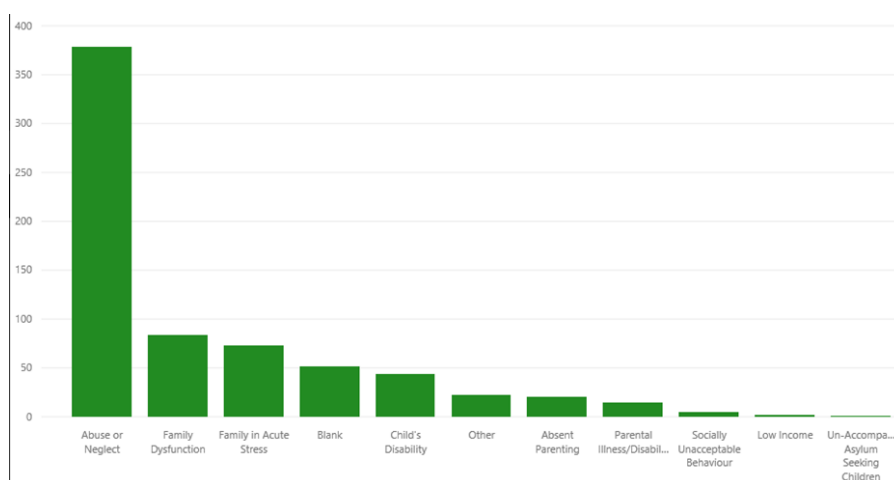
Figure 1:- Age and Gender Profile for Devon Children in Care at March 2018



“Devon’s statistical neighbours had an average of 551 Children in Care in 2017”.

Figure 3:- Need Profile for Devon Children in Care at March 2018

At March 2018, the top three categories of need for Devon children in care were abuse or neglect (54%), family dysfunction (12%) and family in acute stress (10%). Other categories of need for our children in care during this period includes child's disability, absent parenting, parental illness or disability, socially unacceptable behaviour and low income.



6. Devon Needs Analysis

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

Under the National Transfer Scheme there is a voluntary agreement that local authorities could accept UASC totalling up to 0.07% of its total child population. Within Devon this could amount to approximately 100 UAS children and young people.

At April 2018 Devon had 38 UAS children and young people in their care. The current age of UAS children and young people in Devon ranges from 15 to 19. The majority of Devon's UAS children and young people are male with a smaller proportion of females.

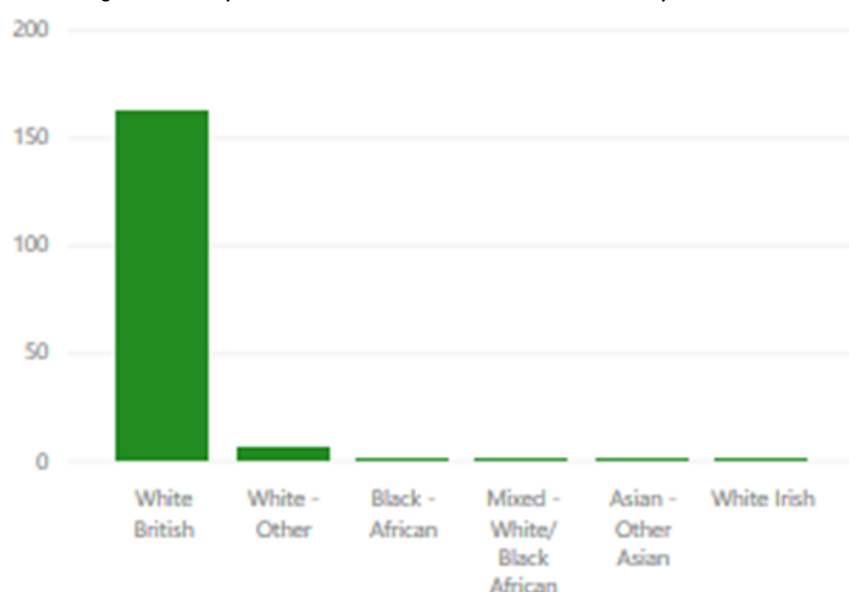
Disabled Children

At March 2018 of the 697 Children Looked After, 175 were reported to have a disability. This represents 25% of the children in care cohort at March 2018. Of the 172 children in care with a disability a higher proportion are male. 76 (44%) of the children in care with a disability were aged between 11-15 years, 60(34%) were aged between 16-17 years and 39(22%) were aged between 0-10 years.

Types of disability and need recorded included:-children and young people diagnosed with autism or Asperger's syndrome, behavioural difficulties including ADHD, communication difficulties, seizures, sensory needs including visual or hearing impairment, incontinence, learning disabilities / special educational needs and disabilities , mobility needs or other needs identified under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005).

93% of our children in care with a disability were White British. Figure 4 provides an overview of ethnicity **for the remaining 7% of our children in care with a disability.**

Figure 4:- Ethnicity Profile for Devon Children in Care who have a disability at March 2018 .



In 2017, 36.5% of Devon's children in care had a Statement of SEN or EHCP. This was higher than the average recorded for and when compared with local authorities who are our statistical neighbours who had on average of 31.4% of their children in care with a Statement of SEN or EHCP and national figures for England suggesting an average of 26.7% of children in care had a Statement of SEN or EHCP.

Useful web links

For the needs profile for Devon's Disabled Children who are Children in Need refer to :-

- ♦ Devon's SEND Strategy which can be accessed on our Local offer here:- <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>
- ♦ Devon County Council's Strategic Review Report of Special Educational Needs Provision 2017/18 which can be accessed here:- <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2134&Ver=4>

6. Devon Needs Analysis

Care Leavers

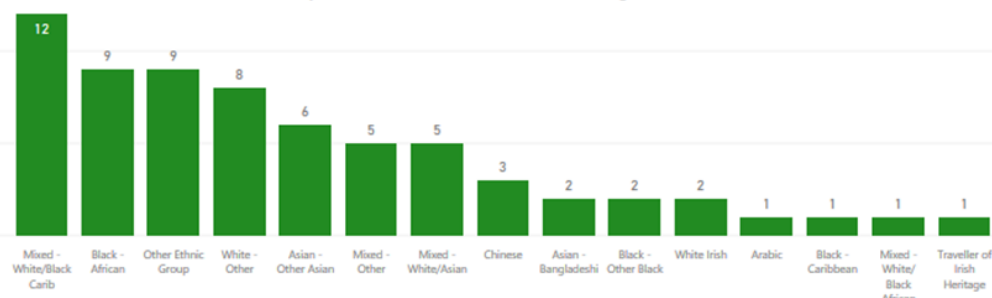
At 6th September 2018, there were 528 Devon care leavers. 51% of our care leavers were male and 49% were female. The majority of Devon's care leavers are aged between 18 and 21 years. 22 Devon care leavers were aged 16 and 17 years, and 37 care leavers were aged between 23 and 24 years.

Many care leavers who have accessed supported accommodated have multiple vulnerabilities and needs for which they require support in placements. Support needs identified include:- family breakdown, substance misuse, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, financial issues, at risk of harm from others, long term illness, mental health issues, impact of parental substance misuse, mental health or domestic violence, alcohol issues, offender or at risk of offending and disabilities.

Figure 5:- Age and Gender Profile for Devon Care Leavers at 6th September 2018

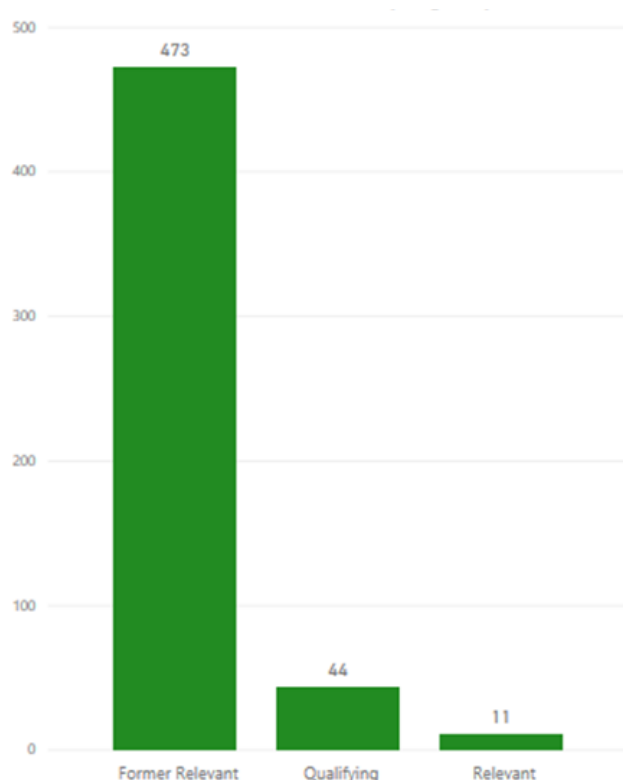


Figure 6:- Ethnicity Profile for Devon Care Leavers at 6th September 2018, excluding White British



At 6th September 2018, 87% of care leavers during this period were White British. **Figure 6 provides an ethnicity profile for the remaining 13% of care leavers at 6th September 2018.**

Figure 7:- Profile of Devon Care Leavers by Eligibility Status at September 2018



At 6th September 2018, the eligibility profile identifies 90% of Devon care leavers as former relevant care leavers; 8% as qualifying care leavers and 2% as relevant care leavers.

6. Devon Needs Analysis

Young people presenting as homeless

In 2017-18, 343 young people approached authorities for support from across the districts and a further 131 young people received ongoing support from the previous year. 66% (225) were aged between 16-17 years old, 33% (114) were Devon care leavers and for 1%(4) age and status of the young person was unspecified. Of the young people approaching the authorities for support in this period 45% were female, 54% were male and 1% identified as transgender. 92% of the young people supported in this period were White British. 42% of the young people presenting for support in 2017-18 identified wider needs relating to misuse issues; 50% identified wider needs relating to mental health and 20% identified other wider needs. Primary reasons for approaching the authorities for support included:- parents no longer / able to accommodate young people; extended family or friends no longer willing/ able to accommodate young people; non-violent and violent breakdown of relationships; other forms of violence; rent arrears; loss of rented or tiered accommodation; other reasons for loss of rented accommodation; left other institution or local authority care including from other local authorities or referred by care leavers team for housing options advice.

In 2017-18 of the young people approaching authorities for support a variety of action was undertaken this included:- undertaking initial housing assessments; case advice was provided; homelessness applications being completed; work being undertaken with young people by Homelessness Prevention Workers; and in a small number of cases referrals being made to Children's Services or other agencies.

Young people presenting as homeless or at risk of homelessness who go on to access support while in accommodation have illustrated multiple vulnerabilities and needs for which they need support in placements. Support needs identified include:- family breakdown, substance misuse, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, financial issues, at risk of harm from others, long term illness, mental health issues, impact of parental substance misuse, mental health or domestic violence, alcohol issues, offender or at risk of offending and disabilities.

"Family Conflict was the most common starting point for homelessness, regardless of age".

Ravenhill, M. (2000). Homeless and Vulnerable Young people. Centre for Analysis of School Exclusion, London School of Economics.

7. Review of Current Sufficiency

Overview of Placements

The ambition is for the majority of children in care to be placed in family settings with a small minority needing residential placements for a time limited period to enable their complex needs to be met, usually with a view to a planned return into a family setting.

Figure 8 provides a breakdown of all placements made across a whole year over a three year period. As such, data of placements across each whole year will include multiple entries for the same child in care who may have changed placement type or been discharged and re-admitted to care over the course of the year. Definitions of placement type are as defined by the DfE.

From April 2014 to March 2018:-

- It has been possible to secure foster placements for the majority of Devon's children in care (in the range of between 65%-74% of our children in care).
- 7-9% of Devon's children in care have required a placement within a children's home or residential special school.
- Between 5-7% of Devon's children in care have made use of supported accommodation options post 16 years.
- There has been a decline in the use of residential family centres for parent and child fostering assessment due to availability of better community based options.

A robust Ofsted inspection framework and structure is in place for some provision types including fostering, children's homes and residential special schools.

In addition, the quality of these placement types are monitored by Devon and in some cases in partnership with our Peninsula authority partners through quality assurance processes including site visiting. Further detail is provided at the end of the report.

Figure 8:-Total annual number of placement type provided for Devon's Children in Care from April 2014-March 2018.

| Financial Year | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Adoption (Placed for) | 68 | 85 | 78 |
| Fostering | 1231 | 1128 | 1034 |
| Children Homes (including Residential Special Schools which are dual registered as a CH). | 126 | 129 | 123 |
| Post 16 Supportive Lodgings | 82 | 104 | 98 |
| Secure Units | 15 | 9 | 6 |
| Placed with Parents | 41 | 42 | 51 |
| Independent Living | 38 | 18 | 23 |
| Residential Care Home** | 5 | 6 | * |
| NHS Medical or nursing care*** | 15 | 11 | 34 |
| Residential Family Centre | 23 | 24 | 10 |
| Young Offender Institution or Secure Training Centre | 5 | * | * |
| Residential Special School (except those dual registered as CH) | 9 | 6 | 11 |
| Other | 0 | * | 30 |
| Total | 1658 | 1569 | 1504 |

*Numbers below 5 cannot be reported.

** The DfE definition for this placement type includes residential care homes and nursing homes that fall within the scope of the Care Standards Act (2000) and the Children's Homes (England) Regulations (2015). The services they provide will normally include an element of personal care or nursing care. 'Personal care' in this instance generally means help with personal activities such as feeding or washing. This category does not include hospitals, or facilities provided by NHS/Health Trusts. Some older children about to transition to adulthood may be placed here if it meets their needs due to disability.

***The DfE definition for this placement type includes hospitals of all kinds when the child is placed there as part of a Care Plan or for other facilities provided by NHS/ Health Trusts. This definition is applied if the child has been admitted to hospital and the hospital raise safeguarding concerns then the child might be taken into care while they are still in hospital or if they are a new born baby in hospital at the point they are taken into care prior to the child being placed with foster parents or returning to their families or in some cases older children who have mental health issues admitted to hospital prior to being moved to a specialist hospital or placement.

Useful web links

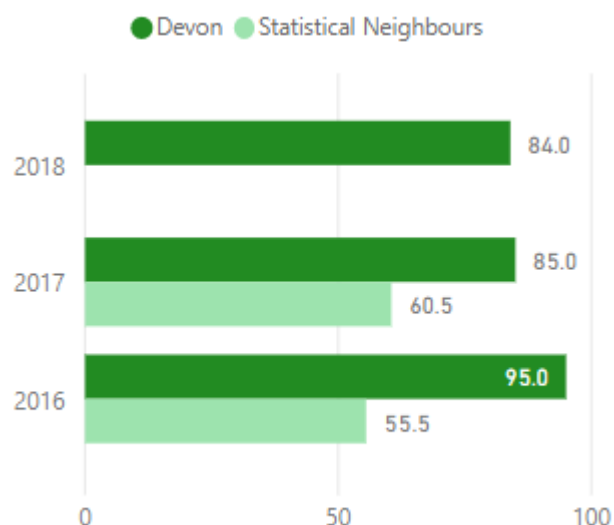
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2016-to-2017>

"To feel safe, feel at home and have fun".

Devon County Council Children in Care Council, exploring "What do I want from my placement?"

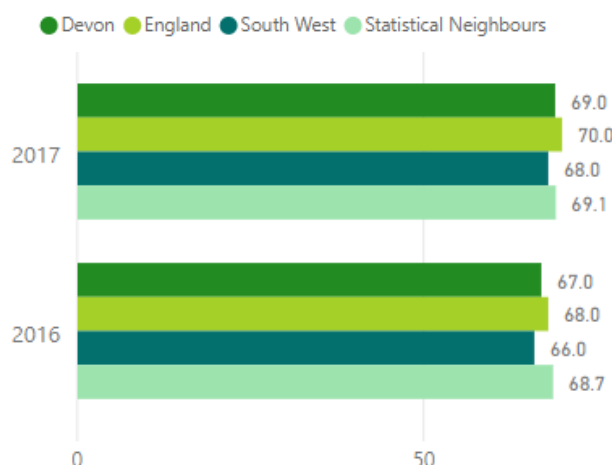
7. Review of Current Sufficiency

Figure 9- Number of Children in Care who had 3 or more placement moves by year



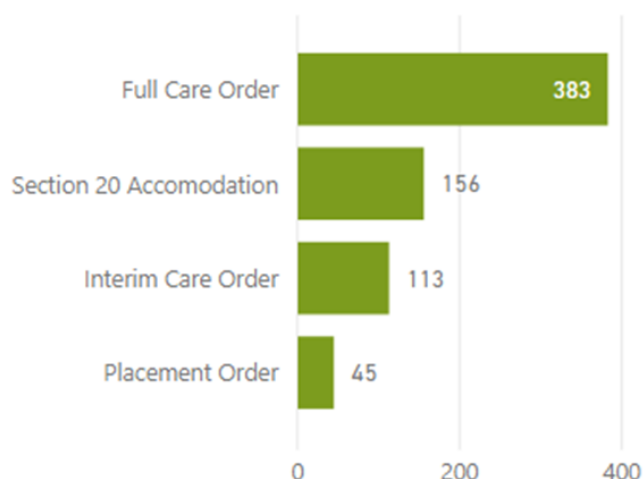
The number of Devon's children in care recording 3 or more placement moves has shown a gradual decline from 2015/16 to 2017/18. However, a higher number of Devon children in care record 3 or more placement moves when compared to other local authorities who represent our statistical neighbours. Placement stability and permanence is a priority for us and the development sections of this strategy set out how we will look to improve performance in this area.

Figure 10:- Percentage of Children in Care in the same placement for at least 2 years or are placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement



In 2016/17, 69% of Devon's children in care were in the same placement for at least two years. This includes children who are placed for adoption or where their adoptive placement together with their previous placement has lasted for at least 2 years. Our achievements here compares well with other local authorities representing Devon's statistical neighbours, from across the South West and England nationally.

Figure 11:- Legal Status of Devon's Children in Care at March 2018



At March 2018, 55% of Devon's children in care were in the care of the local authority under a full care order. A further 22% were in the care of the local authority under Section 20 and 23% were in the care of the local authority under an interim care order or placement order.

Figure 12:- Time spent in Care for Devon's Children in Care at March 2018



At March 2018 a high proportion of Devon's children in care had been in the care of the authority for 3 years or more. A much smaller proportion had been in the care of the local authority for less than 6 months or 6 weeks.

8. Fostering- Devon Fostering Service

Fostering Devon

Devon
County Council

Devon's in-house fostering service– Fostering Devon, aims to provide high quality, therapeutic care in family based placements in communities for Devon's children and young people in care.

At March 2018, 529 (75%) of Devon's 697 children in care were placed in fostering arrangements and 358 (67%) in fostering arrangements placed in in-house resources. This is in line with the national average.

Figure 13:- Children in Care in Fostering Placements at March 2018

| Fostering Type | Number of Children | % of CIC in fostering placements | % of all Children in Care |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| DCC In-House Fostering | 317 | 67% | 51% |
| Of the In-House Fostering Placements number with 'family and friends' carers | 56 | | |
| Devon Young People's Accommodation Service | 30 | | |
| Internal Parent and Child Placement | 11 | | |
| Independent Fostering Agency | 168 | 33% | 25% |
| External Parent and Child Placement | * | | |
| Total Number of Foster placements | 529 | 100% | 75% |

Figure 14:- Households approved to provide fostering placements for Devon Children in Care

| Approval Numbers | Households with this approval | Maximum Placements |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 74 | 74 |
| 2 | 89 | 178 |
| 3 | 35 | 105 |
| 1 (2 if sibs) | 41 | 82 |
| 1 (3 if sibs) | * | * |
| 2 (3 if sibs) | 21 | 63 |
| Grand Total | 261 | 505 |

* Numbers below 5 cannot be reported.

261 households can offer up to 505 placements, including many approved for sibling groups to be placed together. There is currently a reasonable spread of foster carers across the County. The service have been increasing their capacity to support older children and this is reflected in current profile. In 2016/17 Devon had a higher number of approved foster placements (excluding short breaks) when compared with the average number of approved foster placements for local authorities representing Devon's statistical neighbours.

Of the 30 children in care accessing the Devon Young People's Accommodation Service 12 were male and 18 were female, 12 were aged 16 years and 18 were aged 17 years. Of the 11 children in care in internal parent and child placements 9 were aged under 1 years, and the majority were male.

Figure 15:- Age of Children in Care in In- House Fostering Placements at March 2018 excluding those in Devon Young People's Accommodation Service and Internal Parent & Child placements.

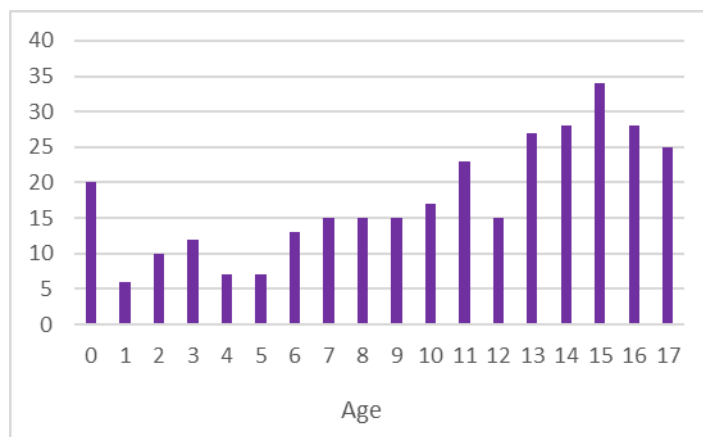
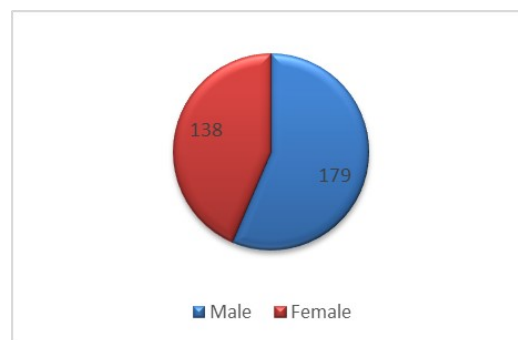


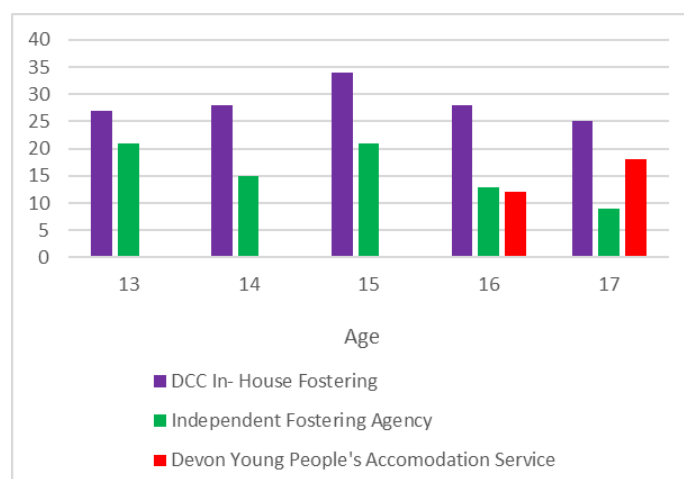
Figure 16- Gender of Children in Care in In- House Fostering Placements at March 2018 excluding those in Devon Young People's Accommodation Service and Internal Parent & Child placements.



Adolescent Placements

At March 18, of the 317 children in care placed within in-house foster placements, 45% (142) of Devon's children in care were aged between 13-17 years. This represents an increasing number of adolescents being placed with in-house foster carers. At March 18 of the 168 children in care being placed with foster carers from Independent Fostering Agencies, 47% (79) were aged between 13-17 years.

Figure 17:- Number of Children in Care aged 13-17 years by fostering placement type.



8. Fostering- Devon Fostering Service

Workforce

Training and support has been being provided to enable more carers to be able to meet the needs of adolescents.

The most significant reasons for carers leaving the service are reported to be:-

- ◆ Permanency for the child in care
- ◆ Personal circumstances for example ill health

There will continue to be a risk related to turnover of foster carers in 2018/19, particularly due to the ageing profile of current carers.

During 2017/18, active recruitment has been undertaken with the intention to address turnover of foster carers across the service .

“10% of the foster care workforce retire or leave each year”.
Fostering Network

Placement Support

The Devon County Council Placement Support Team provides support to all in-house foster carers, IFA carers and Special Guardians who are looking after children and young people with additional complex needs and where placement stability is under threat. Support is provided in the form of crisis intervention or planned therapeutic intervention.

The team aims to support placement stability and longevity not by aiming to change behaviour but by responding to behaviour in an appropriate way. As such, support provided is informed by Dyadic Developmental Practice: Psychotherapy and Parenting (DDP), a framework for therapy and trauma attachment for parenting Developmentally Traumatized Children who are fostered or adopted.

In 2017/18 the Placement Support Team received a total of 332 referrals for support and intervention. Of these referrals received 71% were for support for carers of children and young people in fostering placements; 18% were for support for carers of children and young people in adoptive placements and 11% were for support for special guardians with children and young people with Special Guardianship Orders in place. In addition, 10% of the referrals received to support fostering placements involved support for IFA carers with children and young people in placements with them.

In 2017/18 support and intervention provided by the Placement Support Team achieved placement stability for 68% of cases/ referrals for support received by the service. Furthermore, involvement of the Placement Support team facilitated in achieving fewer placement breakdowns in 2017/18 (35% reduction).

The Placement Support Team can also provide support and stability to children and young people while suitable placements are being secured as part of planned placement moves.

What is Working Well

- ◆ A good proportion of Devon children in care are placed with in-house foster carers.
- ◆ Support and training to carers is enabling more adolescents to be placed with foster carers.
- ◆ Other Local Authorities who are seeking to provide therapeutic parenting support have approached Devon for information about the model being adopted by the Placement Support Team.
- ◆ 100% of carers and professionals who have provided feedback to the Placement Support Team have rated the service as good or exceptional.
- ◆ Support being offered through the Placement Support Team is increasing placement stability and decreasing occurrence of placement breakdown resulting in a 35% reduction.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Continue undertaking active recruitment to manage current age profile and expected turnover of carers to manage sufficiency of in house foster placements.
- ◆ Continue to increase access to placement support team to further improve stability of placements.
- ◆ Active recruitment of foster carers to provide fostering placements for disabled children .
- ◆ To introduce a 6 week Nurturing Attachment course for new carers to promote placement stability and help prevent likelihood of placement breakdown.
- ◆ There is a vision to implement a monthly multi-agency drop-in clinic.
- ◆ To increase preventative work, measures and intervention to reduce likelihood of placement breakdown and prevent the need for crisis intervention measures to stabilize placements for children and young people.

Useful web links

- ◆ <https://www.fosteringindevon.org.uk/>
- ◆ <https://www.fosteringindevon.org.uk/guide/resources/childrens-placement-support-team/>

“There were 53,420 children in foster care in England at end of March 2017, 67% placed with local authority carers and 33% with Independent Fostering Agency carers”.

Foster Care in England:- A review for the Department for Education by Sir Martin Narey & Mark Owers , February 2018.

9.Independent Fostering Agencies

The quality of the independent fostering market is good, with most agencies maintaining a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' Ofsted grading. The Peninsula Board has facilitated closer collaborative working with providers and local authorities. This has been particularly important in promoting placement stability, the take up of special guardianship and other permanence options.

At March 2018, 168 of Devon's Children in Care were placed with foster carers from Independent Fostering Agencies, this represented 25% of all children in care at March 2018. At March 2018 a higher proportion of placements with Independent Fostering Agencies were being provided for children in care who were male.

A Peninsula Framework Agreement for fostering placements with IFA's has been operating since April 2013. This agreement recently reached its end date. So a further Peninsula Framework agreement was re-commissioned and successfully awarded. The latest Peninsula framework agreement (commissioned by Devon, Torbay, Plymouth and Somerset) has been operating since April 2018. There are 16 IFA's operating on the Framework Agreement offering a combination of or only standard fostering placements, enhanced fostering placements and parent and child fostering placements. Of the 16 IFA's operating on the agreement 15 IFA's can provide standard fostering placements, 13 IFA's can provide enhanced fostering placements and 13 IFA's can provide parent and child fostering placements. IFA's operating on the agreement includes a range of large national providers, smaller local and specialist foster agencies. The Peninsula Framework Agreement offers a potential capacity of up to 498 fostering households offering a potential of 1,036 fostering placements across the Peninsula.

Figure 18:- Age of Children in Care in Fostering Placements with Independent Fostering Agencies at March 2018 excluding external Parent & Child placements .

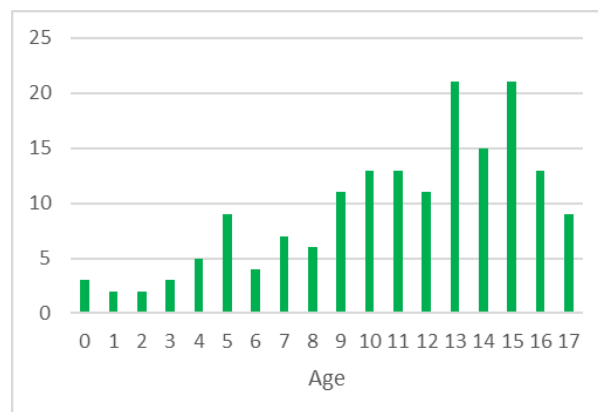
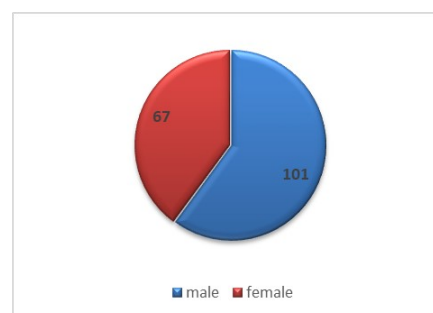


Figure 19:- Gender of Children in Care in Fostering Placements with Independent Fostering Agencies at March 2018 excluding external Parent & Child placements .



What is Working Well

- ◆ There are 'sufficient' numbers of placements with Independent Fostering Agencies for children in care in Devon.
- ◆ The provision of placements is of good quality.

"The Peninsula has been commended on positive and supportive relationships in the recent NAFP Survey".

Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) 2018.

"As of 31st August 2017, 91% of Independent Fostering Agencies were judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding' a proportion which has been increasing".

Foster Care in England:- A review for the Department for Education by Sir Martin Narey & Mark Owers , February 2018.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ To improve sufficiency in placements for older children, those with more complex support needs and emergency placements, to reduce lead into a reliance on residential provision.
- ◆ For those children in residential provision, there is a need to improve step-down arrangements to allow a move towards family-based care and long-term stability .
- ◆ To use contract monitoring mechanisms to support IFA's on the Peninsula Framework Agreement who are required to develop in the following areas:-
 - * Commitment to permanence including their ability to support long term fostering matches, staying put arrangements and opportunities for special guardianship orders.
 - * Active recruitment of foster carers aiming to achieve a 10% growth annually.
 - * Development and training opportunities for IFA foster carers including specialist training to facilitate supporting children with complex needs in foster placements and parent and child carers.
 - * Quality of assessments for parent and child fostering placements.
 - * Model of service delivery for those providing enhanced fostering placements to build resilience and interface for step-down with residential providers.

10. Special Guardianship Orders

Special guardianship orders help to provide local authorities with greater choice over permanence options for children in care if adoption is not the plan and as an alternative to long term care.

Figure 20 illustrates Devon's performance with regard to Special Guardianship orders. Improving performance in this area continues to be a priority for the Local Authority.

Factors Impacting on Sufficiency

- ◆ Providing permanence to children in care in the form of a special guardianship order requires a great commitment from special guardians.

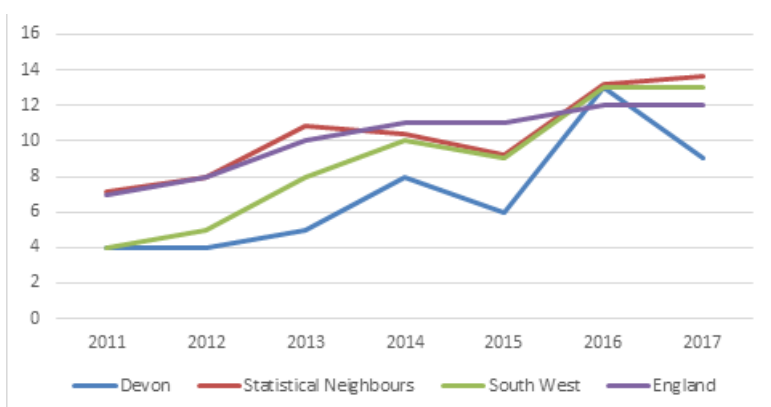
What is Working Well

- ◆ The number of special guardianship orders granted to Devon County Council children continues to grow year on year with increasing numbers being granted for babies and toddlers and an increasing number of assessments being undertaken year on year. Devon County Council have designated, skilled workers to assess and support Devon special guardians.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Children and young people unable to safely remain at home or to return home from care are provided with placements that provide stability and permanence and help them build resilience.
- ◆ Continue to increase up take of special guardianship orders where this is in the best interests of children and young people.

Figure 20:- Percentage of Children in Care in year leaving care due to Special Guardianship Order



Around a third of Special Guardianship Orders granted in Devon are deemed to be 'private applications' and would be in addition to the figures presented above. In these circumstances a child hasn't been in the care of the local authority but may have been living with a relative or friend for a significant period and they make an application to court for a special guardianship order or the child goes straight from their birth parents to the special guardian during court proceedings.

"The majority of SGOs are made to carers who have an existing relationship with the child and who, with some appropriate support, intend to and will be able to care for the child until 18.

There were 3,520 SGOs awarded in 2014-15, up from 2,150 in 2011-12".

Department for Education, Special Guardianship Review:- Report on Findings. Government Consultation Response, December 2015

Useful web links

- ◆ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/656593/Special_guardianship_statutory_guidance.pdf
- ◆ <https://www.devonadoption.org.uk/home/special-guardianship/>
- ◆ <https://www.grandparentsplus.org.uk/>

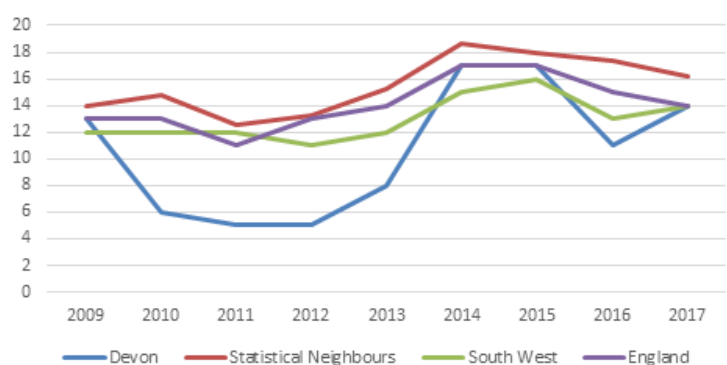
11. Adoption and Regional Adoption Agency

Adoption represents one choice for Local Authorities in achieving permanence and stability for their Children Looked After as part of loving families and as an alternative to long term care.

On average the number of adoptive matches being achieved for Devon's children in care has steadily increased over time. Of Devon's children in care, in 2015 –16, 11% (45) left care having been adopted, in 2016-17, 14% (50) left care having been adopted and in 2017-18, 20% (60) left care having been adopted. Figure 21 illustrates our performance over time in comparison with other local authorities representing our statistical neighbours and authorities across the South West region and England nationally. In 2016-17 Devon's performance was comparable to that being achieved on average for children in care across the South West and across England nationally.

76% of the adoptive matches made for Devon's children in care in 2017-18, were made for children aged between 0-3 years, 22% were aged 4-7 years and 2% of matches were for children aged 8 years.

Figure 21:- Percentage of Children Looked After being Adopted in Year



Useful web links

- ◆ <https://raa.adoptsouthwest.org.uk/>

Regional Adoption Agency

Devon, Plymouth, Torbay and Somerset adoption services will become a single regional adoption service under the banner 'Adopt South West' from October 2018. This is in response to the Department of Education publication 'Regionalising Adoption' in 2015 and the Education & Adoption Act (2016).

Regional Adoption Agencies are designed to increase the pool of adoption-ready adopters and children, ensuring quicker matching, providing better support for adopters and birth families and enabling more children to remain within their area, supported by the services which already know them.

Children from across the local authorities can currently wait on average anywhere from six months to longer for adoption. The new regional adoption service will enable the four participating local authorities to achieve adoption in a reduced time frame and facilitate in sharing and developing good practice whilst ensuring all adoptive parents across the region receive high levels of quality support from professionals.

Regional Adoption Agency
Adoption South West



What is Working Well

- ◆ Devon is achieving an increasing number of adoptive matches for its children in care.
- ◆ A regional adoption agency under the banner Adopt South West is being developed and implemented for Devon, Plymouth, Torbay and Somerset.
- ◆ Opportunities are being made available to obtain adopters views and feedback. Insights and experiences are valued and will help to influence the regional adoption service being implemented.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Increasing the number of adoptive placements in Devon and across the region of South West.
- ◆ Continue with development and implementation of Regional Adoption Service throughout 2018.

"The RAA is the right step for the region. We have a lot of good practice to draw upon that when shared will improve the service such that children will wait less time to be adopted and parents will receive the same high standard of support."

Cllr James McInnes, DDC Cabinet Member with responsibility for Council's adoption service



12. Alternative Provision for High Risk & Complex Children

Devon County Council have a significant number of children and young people with complex needs and engaging in high risk behaviours including self-harm, sexualized behaviour and aggression. This group of children and young people require highly resilient and therapeutic care delivered by skilled residential staff. The independent sector have indicated a willingness to develop provision to meet the needs of this cohort for children and young people. However, their capacity to undertake this work is constrained by finance and the factors described in section 11 concerning the workforce and quality. As such Devon County Council are developing a business case to explore the option of developing in-house services to meet the needs of these children and young people more readily.

Limitations of the current response to meet the needs of these children and young people has also resulted in the development of a strategic workstream under the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Plan (STP) for Devon. This plan aims to transform health and care services for local people so they are fit for the future. The strategic workstream is focused upon crisis care through our Transforming Care Partnership work.

Joint Commissioning Intentions & Multi-Agency Response for High Risk and Complex Children

Under the STP Devon County Council are working jointly with health partners from across NEW Devon and South Devon & Torbay CCG to:-

- ◆ Develop a tool to identify when needs and high risk behaviours are escalating to prevent the need for crisis care where possible.
- ◆ Develop a Devon wide working protocol to ensure the right services are provided to support children and young people in crisis at the right time.
- ◆ Promote children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health as a priority under the STP. Adopting the THRIVE framework across commissioned services will personalise support. An important group to be supported across the framework includes those requiring risk support encompassing risk management and crisis response (see figure X below).
- ◆ Develop capacity to reduce the number of Devon's complex children being supported by tier 4 provision and acute hospital pediatric wards.
- ◆ Secure joint funding and commission multi-disciplinary capacity to support delivery of edge of care services.

<https://www.newdevonccg.nhs.uk/about-us/sustainability-and-transformation-partnership-stp-102102>

Figure 22:- THRIVE Framework



Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Consider models of therapeutic care found in residential settings nationally for children and young people.
- ◆ Explore opportunities to work collaboratively with independent sector providers and neighboring authorities to develop residential childrens homes locally with specialisms or in-house residential childrens homes locally with specialisms. The development of such provision would adopt a therapeutic model of care that meets the needs of our most complex and high risk children and young people in care.

13. Welfare Secure

The Atkinson Welfare Secure Children's Home is situated within Devon. The operation of this provision is overseen by Devon County Council. The service offers a care environment alongside a multi-disciplinary therapeutic team with day to day care informed by Dyadic Development Psychotherapy and therapeutic parenting model PACE. A school is also employed directly and available to children and young people placed within the Atkinson Welfare Secure Children's Home. There are 12 beds available within the Atkinson Welfare Secure Children's Home. In 2017-18 average occupancy was 76% across 10 beds. Due to workforce challenge and staffing pressures occupancy is currently 50% of 12 beds.

Health Services

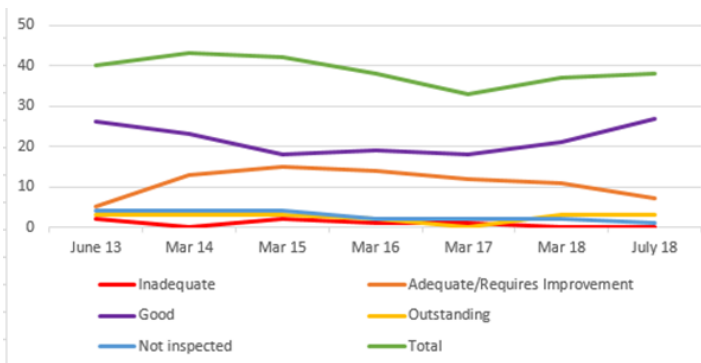
Section 10 funding from NHS England currently funds the provision of different health services available to children and young people placed within the Atkinson Welfare Secure Children's Home. Assessments will be undertaken and support and intervention agreed depending on the needs of each child or young person. Funded health services currently includes some input from CAMHS services, an advanced mental health practitioner, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a school nurse, YSMART and sessions from a GP.

14. Residential Children's Homes

Devon County Council currently source residential placements for children in care from the independent sector. There are currently 89 beds available across independent sector children's homes in Devon. These beds are provided across 35 different children's homes in Devon and these children's homes are operated by 12 different independent sector organisations.

The quality of the independent sector children's homes operating across Devon is presented below. This illustrates that the quality of Devon's children's homes has gradually increased over time with more homes being rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and a decreasing number being rated as 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate' by Ofsted. At July 2018, 79% of Devon's children's homes had been rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, 18% were judged as 'Requires Improvement' and 3% of Devon's children's homes were yet to be inspected, 0% had been rated as 'Inadequate'.

Figure 23:-Ofsted Grading for Devon Children's Homes from 2013-2018



Between 40 and 43 childrens homes were operating in Devon across the independent sector between June 2013 and March 2015. From March 2016 to July 2018 there has been a slight decrease in the number of childrens homes operating in Devon to between 33 and 38 childrens homes.

Market Specialism

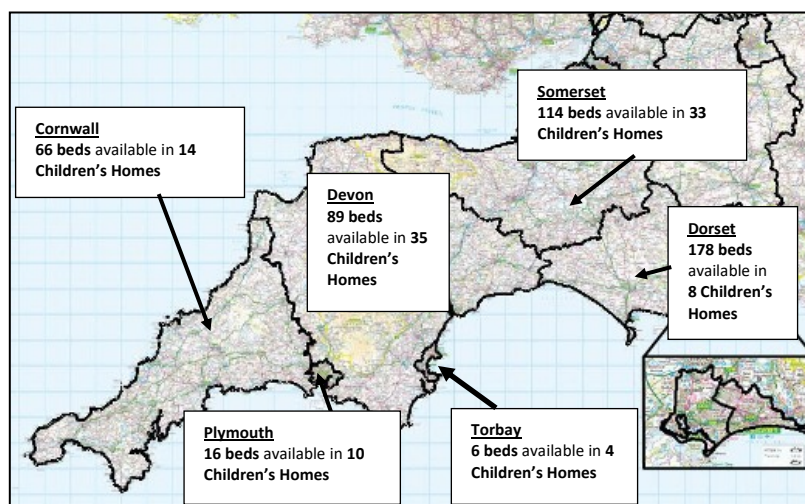
There are 6 providers (11%) who describe their residential placements as having a specialism . This identified:-

- ◆ 12 beds for CSE,
- ◆ 3 beds for Mental health,
- ◆ 2 beds for emergency placements and
- ◆ 3 beds listed for Learning disability.

Geographically Close Provision

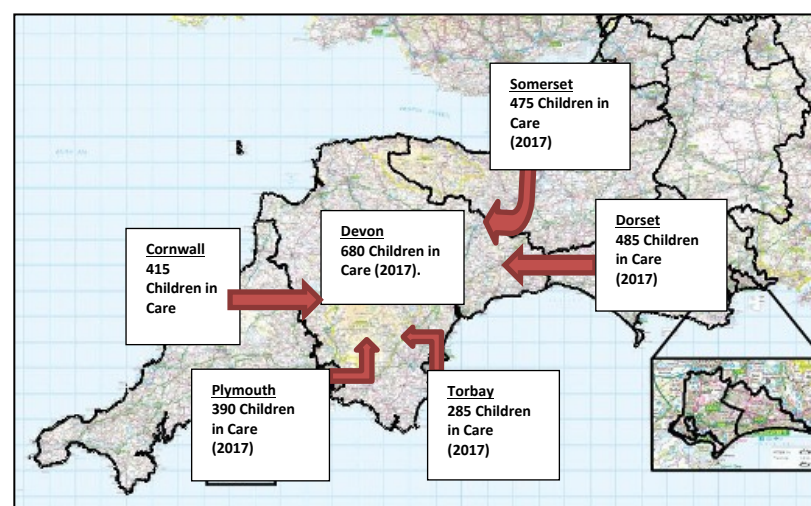
A snapshot survey undertaken in February 2018 revealed 45% of possible residential placements in Devon were being used by placing authorities other than Devon County Council, there was a 15% vacancy and 6% were unusable at the time of the survey.

Figure 24:- Number of residential beds in Childrens Homes across neighbouring authorities.



*Note figures for Dorset and Cornwall include residential placements for provision of short breaks and within residential schools.

Figure 25:- Number of Children in Care across neighbouring authorities. In 2017



14. Residential Children's Homes

Factors currently impacting upon residential sufficiency in Devon includes:-

- ◆ Competition with neighbouring authorities as demand for residential placements in the South West continues to rise and other local authorities placing at distance.
- ◆ Quality of the market. A higher proportion of children's homes in the South West are being rated as 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate' by Ofsted. This creates a commercial risk for independent providers in this market.
- ◆ Workforce. Children's home providers across the independent sector report challenges in recruitment and retention of high quality, experienced managers and care home staff. This impacts upon their ability to respond to the placement needs of young people across the local authority.
- ◆ Matching issues.

Useful weblinks

What is Working Well

- ◆ Devon County Council have worked collaboratively with providers to encourage development of new children's homes in area to increase placement sufficiency .
- ◆ Many providers indicating a preference to accept placements from the local authority area the home is within. Devon County Council has developed good working relationships with providers across this sector to enable us to work collaboratively with providers to continue to develop placement sufficiency and quality of provisions.
- ◆ Devon County Council are exploring commissioning approaches that would aim to improve and retain local placement sufficiency for Devon children in care who require placements within a residential children's home.
- ◆ The quality of Devon's childrens homes has increased from 2013 to July 2018. Devon County Council oversee a quality assurance and monitoring process that has contributed towards improving, supporting and overseeing quality of provisions where Devon children are placed across the independent sector.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Continue to work collaboratively with independent sector providers to sustain and improve quality of residential children's homes in the area.
- ◆ Promote peer support, shared training and development opportunities across the market.
- ◆ Continue to work collaboratively with independent sector providers to develop , improve and manage risk surrounding workforce. This could include capitalizing on opportunities linked to apprenticeship levy for instance.
- ◆ Achieve greater connection to the *Proud to Care Campaign*.
- ◆ Continue to work in partnership with neighboring authorities in approaches taken.
- ◆ Engagement and collaborative working with independent sector providers in response to a market development plan ensuring needs of more Devon young people can be met locally.
- ◆ Increase availability of residential beds available locally to 130 to meet demand and needs of Devon children and children being placed by neighboring authorities.
- ◆ Increase the number of Devon children placed in Devon placements.

On average, nationally , 81% of Children's Homes are being judged as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.

15. Supported Living Options for Children in Care & Care Leavers aged 16 plus

Care leavers in Devon benefit from access to a wide range of suitable accommodation. A range of housing options are available including:- foster care, supported and semi supported accommodation, supported lodgings and independent accommodation. Young people are helped to prepare for having their own tenancy through the support, with a focus on achieving successful transition to independent living.

There are a number of young people in Devon who benefit from arrangements such as 'Staying Put' within their foster placements and in some cases young people benefit from a similar arrangement within supported accommodation.

In addition to housing options commissioned through the provider market, Devon operate internal services to aid in the provision of services for young people aged 16 and 17 years. This includes 'Devon Young People's Accommodation Service'.

Up until March 2019 supported accommodation placements for children in care & eligible care leavers aged 16 plus are contracted through a Framework agreement with Peninsula Authorities. This type of support is available for young people who are ready to live in an environment where they require support but not care.

At August 2018 there were 27 providers on the Peninsula framework agreement for the provision of supported accommodation with a potential capacity of around 756 placements. Of this potential capacity round 435 of these placements are located in Devon.

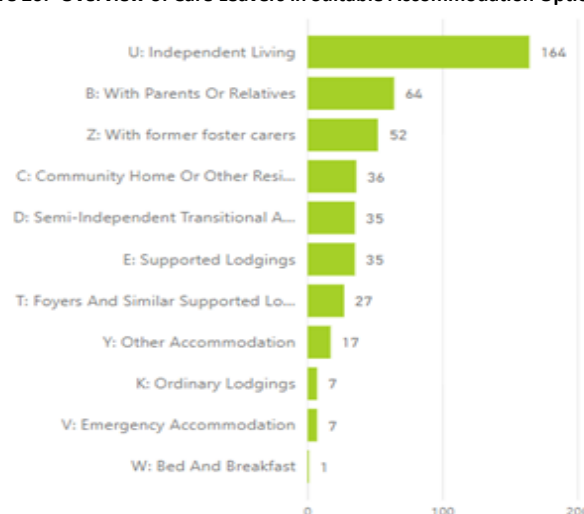
At August 2018, there were 59 young people aged 16 to 19 years who are children in care or care leavers placed in supported accommodation placements. 69% (42 young people) were living in Devon, 12% (7 young people) were placed outside of the Peninsula. In addition, 39 of Devon's children in care or care leavers were placed with Devon Young People's Accommodation Service and 52 care leavers were placed with former foster carers in 'Staying Put' arrangements.

Additional support is also commissioned for young people at risk of homelessness. In 2016/17, 288 young people aged 16 and 17 years received support hours while placed with a supported accommodation provider with a DCC contract. The accommodation is paid for through Housing Benefit or the young person's own means. These young people are not all children in care, some may be children in need or care leavers (see section 15).

Factors currently impacting upon sufficiency in Devon:-

There is oversupply in this area of the market, which has seen rapid growth in provision over the last four years. Through our robust quality assurance work and whole service safeguarding interventions in this unregulated market, we have established areas of whole market improvement. This has shaped our commissioning intentions, tender design for the future, our market development and individual provider strategic conversations.

Figure 26:- Overview of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation Options



What Went Well

The market is very diverse and some provision is achieving good outcomes for complex young people, offering flexible and bespoke support. Some providers work well to prepare young people for adulthood and independence. Feedback from young people shows this to be an area of development which has been strengthened in specifications and quality assurance framework (QAF) and therefore contract monitoring.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Devon County Council want to work with a market of providers skilled in meeting the needs of young people with multiple vulnerabilities and able to prepare them and support them to transition to independence.
- ◆ We have reviewed our QAF and will be implementing a refreshed QAF through tenders during this year. This will include:-
 - * Assessing the provider's ability to deliver a flexible and personalised approach to support in placement.
 - * Stepping down support, to enable young people to obtain the practical skills needed to live independently and participate within their local communities.
 - * Enable young people to seek education, employment or training opportunities.
- ◆ Devon County Council are developing a Local Offer for Care Leavers in line with statutory responsibilities. We will be engaging with young people about this. This will further shape commissioning intentions. Once published we will write to all care leavers and other 21-24 year olds to tell them about the support that they can access.

"We need more training to prepare us for life after supported accommodation. Training needs to be at different levels so we can build on what we already know. We want to know what help we're entitled to from people like Job Centre Plus".

Children in Care/ Care Leavers aged 16 plus.

16. Support for Young People Presenting as Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness

Devon County Council and Devon District Councils work within a joint protocol to agree appropriate accommodation and source support for eligible young people aged 16 and 17 years or care leavers at risk of homelessness. These young people often have a range of needs and are often vulnerable as described in section 6. Accommodation sourced is funded through housing benefit or rent contributions from the young people.

Devon County Council currently fund and commission a contract for 968 support hours per week, this can include support received within accommodation provided or as floating support.

In 2016/17, 288 young people accessed the support hours contract. The average time spent supporting a young person on this contract was 35 weeks.

Devon has a larger geographic boundary, these services are commissioned throughout and capacity is available across Mid, East, North and South Devon localities. Some providers bolster this further through the provision of community hubs to increase accessibility for support.

Through our engagement with young people as part of the commissioning process we have established areas of service re-design. This led to a focus on prevention of homelessness and working with the risks young people present to prevent onward vulnerability. This includes preparation for independence and adulthood.

Therefore, the contracted service from Autumn 18 will offer 900 support hours per week and in addition provide a service focused on supporting young people at risk of homelessness to return home and/or prevent homelessness through intervention and mediation with families.

Factors currently impacting upon sufficiency in Devon includes:-

- ◆ Affordability of accommodation for young people who want to move on to independent living after living in supported accommodation options. This is due to privately rented accommodation being expensive, difficulty engaging landlords to move young people into private rented accommodation, higher competition due to increased numbers seeking shared accommodation through housing benefit, differences in level of need to access supported accommodation as a child and as an adult.
- ◆ Affordability of supported accommodation places for young people who are receiving low wages, apprenticeship wages, employed on 0 hours contracts.
- ◆ Specialist providers of support hours for single young men limited to one provider in Exeter. 55.6% of support hours in Exeter have been with specialist providers for young women or young parents.

What Went Well

- ◆ In 2017 Devon County Council and the Devon District Councils agreed a joint working protocol to prevent homelessness for young people aged 16 and 17 years old with clearly defined pathways and processes for support both to prevent homelessness in families, where possible and to support young people who have become homeless to be supported to return home, to family or friends or through planned and supported access to a sustainable housing option to meet their needs.
- ◆ Support hours being funded currently by Devon County Council are being well utilised and services have not operated waiting lists.

Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Commission services for the provision of support hours to assist eligible young people at risk of homelessness to return home and/or prevent homelessness through intervention and mediation with families or to assist those living in supported accommodation to allow them to move on appropriately.
- ◆ Through contract monitoring and quality assurance framework (QAF) ensure that the service is delivered in line with service re-design from Autumn 2018. This includes:-
 - * Provision of personalised and early support through a multi-agency response.
 - * Providers with the right expertise to meet needs and vulnerabilities of young people.
 - * Enabling young people to return home or move on to suitable accommodation.
 - * Enabling young people to seek and attend employment, education or training opportunities.
 - * Enabling young people to live independently having been prepared for adulthood.
- ◆ Increase number of affordable accommodation options for young people to move onto. Including independent living after living in supported accommodation.
- ◆ Continue work with District Councils on implementing Council Tax discounts for Care Leavers.

Useful web links

<https://www.standupspeakup.org.uk/localoffer/>

17. Placements for Disabled Children and Short Breaks

Parents have told us they want for their children , care that is close to home, linked to their communities and that is personalised.

In addition, significant legislative and policy change concerning SEND and services for disabled children and the increasing demographics of disabled children both in terms of number and complexity of need is driving a review and in some cases re-design of services for disabled children and their families. With an increasing focus towards personalisation that provides families with greater choice, control and flexibility to purchase services and access support for disabled children to best meet their individual needs from their home or local communities. As part of this Integrated Personal Commissioning Approach , Devon are developing their offer of personal budgets across education, health and social care.

At January 2017 there were 99 children in residential school placements as a result of their more complex needs, including autism and challenging behaviours. 59 in maintained special schools, 44 of those are within county and 14 are out of county. 31 children were in Independent Schools and Colleges with a residential placement. Of these 31 only 10 were within Devon County Council, although many were located within the Peninsula area.

Many disabled children are placed within Devon and are able to attend local education provision. Devon currently has a range of overnight provision for disabled children, including:- residential short breaks & family based short breaks; 52 residential placements ; special school placements.

Factors currently impacting upon sufficiency in Devon includes:-

- ◆ Provision has struggled to sufficiently met the increasingly complex behaviours of disabled children. Particularly for children with autism at the more complex end of the spectrum.
- ◆ Expertise and knowledge base of workforce in meeting needs of disabled children displaying complex behaviours and difficulties in recruiting quality and experienced registered managers/ leadership has also impacted upon independent providers in the market.
- ◆ Parents have reported in the past a difficulty in knowing who to speak to, where to get information and how to access services.

Useful web links

- ◆ <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2134&Ver=4>
- ◆ <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>
- ◆ <https://www.newdevonccg.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people/how-people-have-influenced-services-103501>

What Went Well

- ◆ Devon County Council are working closely with partners, particularly in education and health, to develop more personalised, community-based provision which reduces the need for children to be cared for away from home and have engaged with disabled children and young people and their families to inform the design of systems of services and to co-design strategic visions and priorities contained within our SEND strategy, for instance.
- ◆ Devon continue to work with children, families and partners to develop the Local Offer promoting this as a key mechanism by which parents can gain information and advice and in accordance with SEND reforms.
- ◆ Development and monitoring of action plans where concerns are identified about the quality of provision and hosting Peninsula provider events to facilitate in improving and developing the workforce.
- ◆ Commissioning approach designed and adopted to make best use of resources and equipment providing a more streamlined service for disabled children.
- ◆ Devon have published Positive Behaviour Support guidance/ policy.



Opportunities for Development

- ◆ Work collaboratively with partners to develop provision of 52 week placements.
- ◆ Continuing to consult with young people, parents and families to develop and co-design sensory services to best meet sensory needs of children.
- ◆ Continue to develop community based offer/ services available to disabled children and young people.
- ◆ Continue to further develop and improve quality assurance framework and process monitoring for community based provision available to disabled children and young people complementing Integrated Personal Commissioning approaches.
- ◆ Develop short breaks statement that will be hosted on our Local Offer.

18. Commissioning Approach

Joint Commissioning

Devon Children and Families Partnership has high ambitions for all of Devon's children and young people. We believe that "Devon's future prosperity, success and ultimate sustainability depends upon the education, health and wellbeing of our children and young people today." The Devon Children and Families Partnership wants to ensure children and families can get the right support, in the right place at the right time.



#WeAreDevon – working together for families.

Northern, Eastern & Western Devon CCG, South Devon & Torbay CCG and Devon County Council are committed to making the experience of childhood and early adulthood a good one. By ensuring children and young people are given the best chance to reach their full potential, to do this we need to work together making sure the whole system is pulling in the same direction.

Partners are committed to working together wherever possible as this allows us to bring together knowledge, skills and ideas which gives us the greatest opportunity of commissioning services which are best able to meet the needs of children and their families and carers. The Children's Joint Commissioning Group will regularly meet and take responsibility for identifying priorities and actions for our commissioning teams, both individually and collectively. This could be recommissioning current contracts or identifying new opportunities in areas where we have identified services could be improved. This group will also want to hear directly from children and young people and their families through effective engagement and consultation, moving towards co-design of services wherever possible and appropriate.

In order to plan jointly for children in care with additional and complex needs partners apply the following principles:-

- ◆ We want to focus on the strengths that all families have and engage in different conversations which help us jointly identify what support will make a difference
- ◆ We want to strengthen our Early Help system to provide the right support at the right time and in the right place as this ensures the most efficient and fair use of the resources that we have.
- ◆ We want to ensure that all commissioned services are supported to focus on how we improve the experience of those who access their service.
- ◆ We want to ensure that there is a comprehensive offer of support which is responsive, flexible and accessible to children, young people and their families within their own communities wherever possible.

Our Joint Commissioning Approach for Children with SEND

Joint commissioning partners work together to ensure integrated services are available for children with SEND. This includes joint commissioning Community Health and wellbeing Services through the use of Section 75 arrangements. To strategically aligning services and creating the environment for co-operation. This happens at all levels of the system from the work of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) for children to the agreement of joint funding for individual care and support packages.

We can demonstrate our delivery of the duties contained within the SEND Code of Practice (2014) concerning how partners work together, provide services for children and young people from 0-25 years. This includes how we make arrangements for securing EHCP statements and secure provision set out in EHCP plans jointly as well as agreeing joint commissioning for personal budgets.

This is delivered through the strategic and operational commissioning of services. We have in place a Joint commissioning Group of the Devon Children and Families Partnership. This is responsible for the strategic commissioning and integration of services. This group has representation from CCG, Public Health, Communities, District Council, Office of the Police Crime Commissioner and Children's Services. In addition we have a range of multi-agency panels for complex care, EHCP's and decisions about resources where partners work together using agreed and published funding formula to determine packages of care and support for individual children. Where ever possible these resources are made available to children and families through personal budget and direct payments with a 7% increase in the take up of this from April 2017 to September 2018.

These panels continue to be under review to improve how we work together. All progress and action is being overseen by Devon's SEND Improvement Board.

Useful web links

- ◆ <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send-local-offer>

Appendix 1– National Drivers

There are a number of pieces of national legislation, guidance and regulatory requirements setting out the Local Authorities duties in securing placements of a high quality and diversity such that the needs of their children and young people can be appropriately met whilst remaining as close to home as is possible and practicable. These have been summarised below:-

| Legislation/ Guidance / Regulation | Relevance | Implications in practice |
|--|--|--|
| Section 22G Children Act (1989) | <p>Sufficiency duty– as far as is reasonably practicable to ensure there is sufficient accommodation for those children that meets their needs and is within their Local Authority area.</p> <p>Sufficiency guidance states :- Local Authorities should include in relevant commissioning strategies their plans for meeting the sufficiency duty (April 2010)</p> <p>Working with their partners, Local Authorities must be in a position to secure, where reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for Children Looked After in their Local Authority area (April 2011).</p> <p>Children Act (2008) defines sufficiency as, “a whole system approach which delivers early intervention and preventative work to help support children and their families where possible, as well as providing better services for children if they do become looked after. For those who are looked after, Local Authorities and their Children’s Trust partners should seek to secure a number of providers and a range of services, with the aim of meeting the wide-ranging needs of looked after children and young people within their local area.”</p> | Requirement for the Local Authority to work with others to ensure enough placements are available in the local area to meet the different needs of children and young people. |
| Ofsted inspections and regulations of children’s homes, special schools, fostering agencies and parent and child residential assessment centres. | Regulatory and inspection framework | <p>Set clear standards for delivery of different placement types to ensure quality and best possible outcomes can be achieved by child or young person in placement. Local authority specifications and arrangements will use the national regulations as key reference points.</p> <p>Ofsted inspections of individual providers used by Local Authority as part of quality assurance processes in place for placements commissioned.</p> |
| Southwark Judgment (2009) | Duty to take vulnerable young people aged 16 plus into the care of the Local Authority. | Housing, and Children’s Social Care must assess vulnerable homelessness young people to ensure they are offered the most appropriate service to meet their needs. If they are assessed as vulnerable they will be accommodated—placements will need to be made available to meet needs. |

Appendix 1 National Drivers

| Legislation/ Guidance / Regulation | Relevance | Implications in practice |
|---|---|---|
| Children & Families Act (2014) | Duty to support Staying Put placements | Introduced a legal duty for Local Authorities to support young people with option to stay with their former foster carers when they reach 18 years., as long as it is considered this is in the best interests of the young person. |
| Children & Families Act (2014) SEND Code of Practice (2014) | Duty to work with key partners in assessment, planning and provision of services | Education, health and social care professionals to work jointly to assess and make a plan for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities. From age of 0-25 years to meet their needs |
| Care Act (2014) | Duty to assess as part of transition arrangements for those with additional needs. | If it is likely a child will have needs and continue to require support when they are 18 years and over a 'child' needs assessment' will be required. |
| Children Act (1989) updated January 2015 (planning transition to adulthood for care leavers Volume 3) | Duty to support staying put placements | Local Authorities need to consider best means of achieving transition to adulthood for young people in care. This should be a graduated process. |
| Children Leaving Care Act (2000) | | |
| Adoption and Children Act (2002) | Legal frameworks | Linked to Local Authorities duties to provide adoption services and support services and permanence options for children in care as an alternative to long term care . |
| Special Guardianship Regulations (2005) | | |
| NHS England Transforming Care Building the Right Support (2015) | Sets out expectations for health related planning and support for children and young people diagnosed with autism, or who have learning disabilities or mental health conditions or those presenting challenging behaviour. | Planning to improve health and care services to enable young people to live in communities., in their local area accessing the right support. |
| NHS Planning Guidance (2015) Sustainability & Transformation Plans/ Partnerships | NHS England National Programme | Local authorities and health colleagues working on a 5 year plan to transform health and care services for local people so they are fit for the future. Devon's STP identifies 7 priority areas :- ill health prevention and early intervention, integrated care model, primary care, mental health and learning disabilities, acute hospital and specialist services, increasing service productivity and children and young people . |

Appendix 2 Glossary

Care Leaver: - This is a young person typically aged between 16-25 years who is currently or has previously been in the care of the Local Authority. There are four recognised groups of care leavers as identified in the Children Leaving Care Act (2000), these include eligible, relevant, former relevant and qualifying care leavers.

- ◆ Eligible Care Leavers include young people aged 16-17 years who are currently in care or have been in care for more than 13 weeks since they were 14.
- ◆ Relevant Care Leavers include young people aged 16-17 years who were previously eligible but have now left care.
- ◆ Former Relevant Care Leavers include young people aged 18 years plus who were previously eligible or relevant.
- ◆ Qualifying Care Leavers include young people who may have been privately fostered, or were recognised as a child in need, or aged 16-25 and was a child in care prior to a special guardianship order being made, or were 16 or 17-year olds who have spent less than 13 weeks in care since they were 14 but at least 24 hours in care as 16-17-year-old, or are aged 16-25 years and have been looked after in planned short break sessions.

Children Act:-Legislation which allocates duties to local authorities, courts, parents and other agencies in the United Kingdom, to ensure children and safeguarded and their welfare promoted.

Children in Care -This is a child or young person to whom the Local Authority provides accommodation and care on a continued basis and over a period of a time which is longer than 24 hours. According to the Childrens Act (1989) this could be as a result of: -

- ◆ The absence of any person with parental responsibility for them, or those children who have been lost or abandoned, or in the event the person who had been looking after them is no longer able to provide suitable care or accommodation (section 20).
- ◆ Children in police protection, detention or remand (section 21).
- ◆ A court order, interim order or order for the emergency protection of children (section 31, 38 and 44).
- ◆ Respite care which a child may be receiving which exceeds 75 days in a year whereby they are away from home in a residential placement .

Clinical Commissioning Groups:- Clinically led groups fulfilling statutory functions for the NHS, they are responsible for the planning and commissioning of health and care services available in local areas. Clinical commissioning groups replaced Primary Care Trusts after the publication of the Health and Social Care Act (2012). There are currently two clinical commissioning groups in Devon the Northern, Eastern and Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group and South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group.

Commissioning:- The process of assessing needs, planning prioritising, designing and then purchasing required services and then monitoring and evaluating quality of services being delivered and service model being adopted to ensure value for money and best possible outcomes to be achieved.

Devon Children and Families Partnership: - A multi-agency partnership made up of many organisations that set out and implement key priorities for children, young people and families in Devon.

Disabled Child or Young Person: -According to the Children Act (1989) ‘a child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed”.

Early Help: – Early Help refers to the practice of supporting families at an early stage or when stepping down from Children’s Social Work. The early help infrastructure is made up of service users, community resources, universal service providers and targeted services working together to enable families to manage their own dilemmas and solve their own problems, making whatever changes are necessary to secure the well-being of their children, enabling appropriate risk management in the community and a proportionate response to risk and need.

Neighbouring authority:- Local authorities which are on the Devon County Council boundary. Devon Council Council's neighbouring authorities include Cornwall, Torbay, Somerset, Plymouth, Torbay and Dorset.

Peninsula partners/ board/ authorities: A group of local authorities that Devon County Council work with to provide services for children across the local area. This group is made up of Torbay Council, Plymouth City Council, Somerset County Council, Devon County Council and previously Cornwall County Council.

Personal budgets: - Resources that can be used flexibly to support a child or young person with their education, health or care needs as identified in their care and support plan. This does not usually include universal services that all children and young people can access but may include support that needs to be put in place for a child or young person with SEN or a disability. This enables greater choice and control. Personal budgets can be allocated in different ways. Further information and definition can be accessed on the Devon County Council websites.

Quality Assurance Framework: - A structure setting out key performance indicators and quality monitoring procedure between the provider and Devon County Council including suspension protocols for delivery of this service.

Special Guardianship Order :- A private law order and forms part of the Adoption & Children Act (2002) that allows a child to remain within the family unit or another significant person offering an alternative to long-term foster placements or adoption for children who cannot live with their birth parents for whatever reason.

Statistical Neighbours:- Other local authorities that have similar characteristics to Devon County Council and can be referred to for purposes of comparison in ways that are more accurate and meaningful.

Supported Living Options: - Placement within a residence for an eligible young person aged 16 years plus, where there will be a continuum of support available to facilitate the young person on their journey to living independently and in their preparation for adult life.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC):- The Home Office describe as a child or young person who is less than 18 years old who has arrived in the UK without a responsible adult, is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has responsibility to do so, is separated from both parents and has applied for asylum in the United Kingdom in his/her own right. These children and young people can be provided care by the local authority as a child in care (see definition above) or in some cases a child in need as described in section 17 of the Childrens Act (1989).

Welfare Secure:-Involves a secure accommodation placement provided to children for the purposes of restricting their liberty under Section 25 of the Children Act (1989).