

Sufficiency Report 2017/2018

Key Messages

Placement Information

As at end April 2018 there were 907 Children Looked After

92% of all CLA are placed in Hertfordshire or neighbouring authorities, a 2% rise since last year.

Below is a summary of placement types for Hertfordshire children and young people over the last year.

As at Dec 2017 placements types were as follows:

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- 573 in-house fostering plus family and friends placements (including 31 UASC)
- 24 in-house residential placement
- 172 Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) (including 22 UASC) plus 11 0-25 placements
- 49 Independent Residential Placements
- 100 semi- independent (including 36 UASC)
- 3 secure welfare
- 5 residential parenting assessments
- 4 in residential special schools. 3 of these are also education funded and one is over 18 and currently social care funded only.

Activity to Date 2017/18

- Robust contract management of 16+ semi-independent accommodation and support framework with a transparent pricing schedule to reduce the costs of placements.
- Ongoing reduction in the number of 16+ young people coming into care for the first time by launching the prevention of homelessness service run by Herts Young Homeless and YMCA providing intensive support to work with the young people and their families to enable them to return home.
- Providing 2 practice flats to enable the young people to develop their skills as they transition through from fostering, residential or semi-independent services to independent living.
- Providing quality accommodation for families that have no recourse to public funds and 18+ young people seeking asylum ensuring value for money is achieved.
- Support agencies have continued to contribute to reducing the number of children and young people coming into care by working with 197 children. Only 20 children in this cohort have become Looked After.

Activity to date 17/18

- Procurement of local placements for fostering through IFA's and providers offering support packages to work alongside families to stay together, with detailed pricing schedules to ensure value for money and transparency over cost
- Over 50 young people from the Young Commissioner programme being actively involved in commissioned activities, working cohesively with the Children in Care Council (CHICC) to shape service delivery (CLA and Safeguarding)
- Inside out-Successful Regional DFE bid-coaching programme to step down children in residential care.
- Credo Care-DFE bid to keep children with disabilities in local foster placements
- Commission of solo residential provision for children with complex needs
- New supported accommodation for 16 plus UASC

Key Findings

- The need for more local provision across fostering and residential.
- Intensive support packages into families have reduced the looked after population
- Teenagers are presenting with increasingly complex needs with common factors: ADHD/ASD, EHCP, History of neglect, presenting in crisis in A&E/136 suite, undiagnosed mental health disorder, known to multiple services, prolific self-harm and harmful sexual behaviours. Children coming late into the care system already disaffected and with extreme behaviours and mental health needs (this has been noted by all agencies and all local authorities).
- Rise in CSE leading to children moving to distant placements as disruption not effective enough to remove offenders in the short to medium term. 4 young people in the last 2 months have been moved at a distance to Herts
- Due to broader range of services and increased joint working with district councils has reduced the number of 16 plus requiring care for 3 years running.
- Cross regional residential commissioning is a good model
- The need for more specialist fostering provision for children with complex needs supported by CAMHS colleagues

Key Findings

- The need for an increased number of teenage foster placements
- There is a shortage of local emergency provision
- Short break provision at ARC has been successful in the prevention of care
- Practice in semi-independent provision has improved due to increased scrutiny and provider workshops.
- Teenagers with complex needs require a joint health and social care approach
- Supported shared provision for UASC has proved successful
- The need for increased specialist residential provision local to Hertfordshire.
- The need for access to emergency support to prevent care or placement breakdown
- The need for local provision for children with Autism and challenging behaviours
- Providers and in house services need to work to a standardised set of outcomes to ensure value for money and good quality care
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Commissioning Priorities 18/19

- Broaden the range of support available to children and their families
- Re-commission cross regional residential contract
- Monitor the delivery of the prevention of homelessness hub. We have a number of KPIs to measure the success of the service including the number of young people who returned home successfully and the number who accessed appropriate Accommodation and support
- Create 1-2 bed emergency residential provision
- Regional commission of 4 bed local residential provision
- Work with Credo care to deliver local specialist foster placements for children with disabilities.
- Implement Inside Out project in conjunction with regional partners
- Deliver the 18 plus accommodation tender

Commissioning Priorities 18/19

- Use the needs analysis tool to inform outcome based commissioning and value for money placements
- Staying close-exploration of post 18 provision for those in in house residential
- Work with CCRAAG partners to further develop the outcomes framework
- Meeting with 27 other LAs to look at children we place out of area-non Herts children placed in Herts-to be notified when these placements are freed up
- To develop and stimulate the home care provider market to increase the number of homecare providers to effectively meet the need of children and young people and their families as part of a wider package of care and support.
- Opening of local residential provision for children with Autism/challenging behaviour.
- Continue to develop the 0-25 pathway for disabled children to enhance and improve transition arrangements