

Sufficiency Plan 2020/21

The plan to ensure sufficient range of accommodation to meet the needs of children who are looked after

**Children and Young People’s Services**

**Revised April 2020**

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# About the Sufficiency Duty1

* 1. Under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989, local authorities have a duty to take steps which secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the local authority’s area that meet the needs of children looked after by the local authority, and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the local authority’s area.
  2. The overall aim of this duty, and of this plan, is to improve outcomes for children looked after.
  3. There are a number of specific duties that are related to this overarching duty:
     + Section 17(1) of the Children Act 1989 (the 1989 Act) provides that it is the general duty of a local authority to provide a range and level of services to children in need (as defined in section 17(10) of the 1989 Act) and their families in the local area which are appropriate to their needs.
     + Section 20 of the 1989 Act requires local authorities to provide accommodation for children in need within their area who appear to them to require accommodation in accordance with the provisions of that section.
     + Section 21 of the 1989 Act requires local authorities to accommodate certain children who are either removed or kept away from home under Part V of the 1989 Act or who are subject to a criminal court order.
     + Section 22C (5) requires local authorities to place children in the most appropriate placement available. In determining the most appropriate placement for a child. Section 22C (7) requires local authorities to take into account a number of factors (such as the duties to safeguard and promote welfare; promote educational achievement; ascertain the wishes of the child and family, and give due consideration to religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural background).

1 This section mainly taken from the Department for Children, Schools and Families statutory guidance on Sufficiency (DCSF, 2010).

* + - In determining the most appropriate placement for a child section 22C (a) also requires the local authority to give preference to a placement with a relative, friend of other person connected with the child and who is also a local authority foster parent.
    - Section 22C sets out the additional factors (in no order of priority) which the local authority must take into consideration when deciding the most appropriate placement:
      * Allowing the child to live near his/her home;
      * Not disrupting the child’s education or training;
      * Enabling the child and a looked after sibling to live together;
      * Meeting the particular needs of disabled children; and
      * Providing accommodation within the local authority’s area, unless that is not reasonably practicable.
    - Section 23(1) (a) requires a local authority to provide accommodation for a child who is in their care (by virtue of a care order).
  1. The sufficiency duty applies to those children who are ‘looked after’ under the Children Act 1989 definition:
     + Those subject to care orders or interim care orders (under sections 31 and 38 of the 1989 Act);
     + Those children who have been placed, or who are authorised to be placed, with prospective adopters by a local authority (section 18(3) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002);
     + Those who are accommodated voluntarily under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Where children are accommodated under this provision, parental responsibility remains with the parents; and
     + Those who are subject to court orders with residence requirements (for example secure remand or remand to local authority accommodation) in accordance with section 21 of the Children Act 1989.
     + *Eligible young people a*re aged 16 or 17 that have been Looked After for a period, or periods, for at least a total of 13 weeks starting after their 14th birthday and are still in care. (This total does not include a series of pre-planned short-term placements of up to four weeks where the young person has returned to a parent.) There is a duty to support these young people up to the age of 25, wherever they are living.

Unaccompanied asylum seekers aged 16 and 17 are always deemed to be looked after until they are aged 18 and are therefore 'eligible' under the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

* + - *A Relevant Child* is a young person aged 16 or 17 years who is no longer Looked After, having previously been in the category of Eligible Young Person when in care. However, if after leaving care, a young person returns home for a period of 6 months or more to be cared for by a parent and the return home has been formally agreed as successful, he or she will no longer be regarded as a "Relevant Young Person".
* A young person is also "Relevant" if, having been in care for three months or more, is then detained after their 16th birthday in a hospital, remand centre, young offenders' institution or secure training centre. There is a duty to support Relevant Young People up to the age of 25, wherever they are living.
  1. Calderdale Council’s action to meet this sufficiency duty will also include work with children who are not looked after, where this will have an impact on the demands under this duty, particularly:
     + Children on the edge of care (to reduce the number of children who are becoming looked after);
     + Adopted children (to reduce post-adoption breakdown leading to children returning to care); and
     + Children who have just left care, including transition support in the immediate period after care.

# About Calderdale

# Local Strategic context

* 1. Our strategy for the children we look after is set out in the Children Looked After Strategy 2020– 2021. Our vision is that all children in Calderdale are happy, safe and successful, regardless of who is looking after them, and that children who are looked after by Calderdale Council will have everything that good parents want for their children.
  2. Our commitment to corporate parenting across the authority and with our partners is laid out in the Corporate Parent and Grandparent Strategy 2018 – 2021.

**Covid-19 context**

* 1. The National Lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic commenced on 23rd March 2020 when the Prime Minister addressed the nation and stated that people must stay at home. Calderdale MBC ensured that Government guidance was adhered to with all service areas being required to submit risk assessment and management action plans to the Director of Children and Young People’s Services.
  2. Recruitment of foster carers has been moved exceptionally quickly to online engagement sessions. Training for potential foster carers and approved foster carers has been addressed by a comprehensive online provision. Colleagues at One Adoption West Yorkshire moved equally quickly to continue with the recruitment of adopters and assessment through digital means.
  3. Fostering online presence has been increased, recognizing there will be an increased online usage with the public.
  4. The Council’s plans to open another residential children’s home but the refurbishment has been put on hold to allow the service to have a robust contingency plan in place during this time. The building will allow for young people to have some time out and provides additional resource should the service require the building to be a home during this period. The refurbishment will remain under close review during the pandemic to ensure plans progress as and when appropriate as this is an important element of the Sufficiency Strategy.
  5. The Service has considered The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 issued on 21st April 2020 and will be using them as appropriate, keeping them under review.
  6. Increased check in and support for employees emotional well being are being put in place.
  7. Multi-agency meetings such as child protection strategy meetings and permanency planning meetings will continue through digital engagement, similarly with the Foster Care Panel and Annual Reviews of foster carers.
  8. Child Protection Conferences and Children Looked After reviews have been held remotely using a range of different virtual means to promote participation.
  9. The Council has been clear that children will be seen on a face to face basis when it is important to protect children, families have been engaged with Covid-19 risk assessments and children seen in open spaces to reduce risk of infection. Advice on visiting was issued at the start of the lockdown and has been reviewed regularly and updated.
  10. Work has been undertaken with foster carers and residential child care colleagues to help children understand the concept of lockdown which may mean not being able to have face to face contact with family or significant people. Our practitioners in Calderdale Therapeutic Services are amassing resources to help foster carers and keyworkers keep children engaged in positive activities.

**Local Context**

2.11 Calderdale comprises of the towns of Halifax, Elland, Brighouse, Sowerby Bridge, Hebden Bridge and Todmorden as well as a number of villages. It is one of the smallest metropolitan districts in terms of population, but one of the largest in terms of area. Calderdale’s topography is a mix of both urban and rural areas. Although the majority (four fifths) of Calderdale is described as rural (according to ONS Census 2011), over three quarters of the Calderdale population live in the urban areas of the borough.

2.12 There are 210,100 people in Calderdale according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2018 Mid-Year population estimates. According to the latest national projections the population in Calderdale will increase to 213,277 by 2028 (ONS 2018 Sub national population projections). The number of children aged under 10 is predicted to decrease by 14% by 2028, and the number aged 10 to 19 years is expected to increase by 7%.

* 1. Calderdale’s employment rate is currently lower than both the average for Yorkshire and Humber and for England and has fallen in the last year. In December 2019 the employment rate was 72.1%, which is a 4.9% decrease from 77% in December 2018. This overall picture masks pockets of high multiple deprivation in some wards, particularly in central, north and east Halifax. There are also smaller pockets of rural deprivation within the borough.
  2. The number of people claiming benefits who are looking for work has increased steadily since late 2017. In the last two years it has moved from 3.2% in March 2018 to 3.7% in March 2020. Calderdale’s rate for these benefits is higher than sub-regional and national averages, which have stayed at a steady level. This is likely to rise further owing to the financial challenges associated with the pandemic.
  3. The number of premature deaths (deaths occurring before 75 years old) has increased slightly in Calderdale in recent years and was 2,149 in 2016-18. Calderdale is now ranked 98 out of 148 local authorities. The average life expectancy for females in 2016-18 was 82.2 in Calderdale (compared with 83.2 for England) and 78.3 for males (79.3 for England). There was a slight improvement in female life expectancy compared with the average for 2015-17, and a slight fall in male life expectancy for the same period.
  4. In addition, life expectancy for those living in the most deprived areas of the borough is significantly lower than for those living in the least deprived areas, with a difference of 8.7 years for males and 9.8 years for females (based on 2013-15 data).
  5. The percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception for 2018/19 is 70.5% in Calderdale. This is a higher figure than for Yorkshire and Humber (70.0%) and lower figure for England (71.8%), though all three figures have risen slightly, year on year, for the last three years.
  6. Calderdale’s Progress 8 score for 2019 is average (0.03), which is in line with England

**Calderdale’s children and young people**

* Calderdale is home to 50,460 children and young people aged 0 - 19 years old. They make up 24% of residents.
* Around 1,500 children have a long-term condition or disability that affects their day-to-day activities.
* Around 2,000 are known to have a learning disability.
* Across Calderdale 23% of children live in poverty. This rises to 50% in Park ward, near the centre of Halifax.
* 78% of babies are breastfed at birth. Just half of these are still breastfed by 6 – 8 weeks.
* In Reception, 23% of children are overweight or obese. By Year 6, this rises to 34%.
* 70% children are ‘school ready’ by the end of Reception.
* Teenage conception rates are highest in Ovenden, Illingworth and Mixenden and Elland wards.
* In primary school 61% of boys and 50% of girls exercise every day. In secondary school, 20% of pupils do strenuous physical activity every day.
* 1 in 5 school pupils have 5 or more unhealthy snacks per day
* 1 in 2 secondary school students have tried alcohol.
* 1 in 11 secondary school students have tried drugs.
  1. Some of the challenges facing local partners working with families include:
* Pressures from the demand for Calderdale Early Intervention services. This partnership approach has been successful in bringing down numbers of children becoming looked after by successfully supporting families;
* Reduction in funding to key partners working with families and children due to pressures on health budgets;
* Challenge of a small local authority with limited critical mass for providers to establish and run provision within the borough.
  1. For children looked after services in particular, there are also challenges around:
* The numbers of older teenagers being looked after, as it is often harder to find this cohort the right fostering placement;
* Fostering recruitment, as there is a competitive market in foster carer recruitment, and the independent sector.
* Anecdotal evidence of children coming into care at higher levels of need; this is related to the success of our local early intervention model but puts pressure on more intensive services.

# About our Children Looked After

3.1 **Number** of children looked after by Calderdale

At end of March 2020, there were 334 children looked after by Calderdale Council. Children looked after numbers increased from April 2018 to summer 2019, reflecting national and regional trends. In terms of children looked after per 10,000 of the population, Calderdale was 73 compared to the regional rate of 74 at the end of March 2020.

3.2Ethnicity of children looked after by Calderdale

The ethnicity of children looked after by Calderdale is similar to the ethnicity of the population as a whole aged from 0-24. Most of our children looked after are from a white British background (81.4%) compared to around 81% of the general under-25 population in the 2011 Census).

There appear to be fewer children looked after from Asian and Asian British backgrounds, particularly those from Pakistani backgrounds than in the overall under 25 population, although that may be because some children from these backgrounds are recorded under ‘Any Other Ethnic Group’ and Mixed. We have a higher number of children from Mixed backgrounds than in the general population, and this is similar to patterns nationally.

**Table 1 Ethnicity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnicity** | **Number of children** | **%** |
| **White - British** | 270 | 82% |
| **White - Irish** | 2 | 1% |
| **Gypsy/Roma** | 2 | 1% |
| **Any Other White Background** | 2 | 1% |
| **Asian/Asian British - Pakistani** | 9 | 3% |
| **Asian/Asian British - Any Other Asian Background** | 3 | 1% |
| **Mixed - White And Asian** | 9 | 3% |
| **Mixed - White And Black Caribbean** | 7 | 2% |
| **Mixed - White And Black African** | 1 | 0% |
| **Any Other Mixed Background** | 8 | 2% |
| **Black/Black British - African** | 1 | 0% |
| **Any Other Ethnic Group** | 16 | 5% |
| **Information not yet obtained** | 1 | 0% |
| **Total** | 330 | 100.0% |

3.3 **Age** of children looked after by Calderdale

**Table 2 Age s**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age Band** | **Number of children** | **%** |
| Under 1 | 17 | 5% |
| 1 - 4 years | 60 | 18% |
| 5 - 9 years | 65 | 20% |
| 10 - 15 years | 117 | 35% |
| Age 16 or over | 71 | 22% |
| **Total** | 330 | 100% |

**Table 3 new children looked after age summary**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age Band** | **2018/19** | | **2019/20** | | **2018/19 minus UASC** | | **2019/20 minus UASC** | |
| **Number** | **%** | **Number** | **%** | **Number** | **%** | **Number** | **%** |
| Under 1 | 23 | 20% | 28 | 26% | 23 | 21% | 28 | 27% |
| 1 - 4 years | 38 | 32% | 24 | 22% | 38 | 35% | 24 | 23% |
| 5 - 9 years | 24 | 21% | 19 | 18% | 24 | 22% | 19 | 18% |
| 10 - 15 years | 20 | 17% | 21 | 20% | 20 | 19% | 21 | 20% |
| Age 16 or over | 12 | 10% | 15 | 14% | 3 | 3% | 11 | 11% |
| **Total** | 117 | 100% | 107 | 100% | 108 | 100% | 103 | 100% |

3.4 **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)** **and children looked after by Calderdale**

There are difficulties in establishing national and local figures for SEND. There are different definitions used across partners and sectors, with no consistent way of recording additional needs, SEN or impairments. Diagnosis and assessment may happen at different age for different areas too.

The figures we have for Calderdale suggest that we have a slightly lower than average number of children with a disability amongst our children looked after, but this must be treated with caution because of the general issues about how disability is defined and recorded.

Of the 221 school age children (R to Yr11) 80 of those are SEN K and 38 have EHCP resulting in children looked after with a SEN need being 53%.

There are 64 Post 16 (Yr12&13) of which 15 are SEN K and 16 have an EHCP resulting in this year group with a SEN need being 48%.

Overall the year groups, there are 54 children looked after who have a EHC plan.

**Table 4 Disability**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Disability** | **Number of children** | **%** |
| No | 301 | 91% |
| Yes | 29 | 9% |
| **Total** | **334** | **100%** |

# Placement stability

**Table 5: Percentage of children looked after with 3 or more placements during the year**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Three or more placements** | **2017/18 (%)** | **2018/19 (%)** | **2019/20 (%)** | **Sep 2020 snapshot** |
| % of children | 8.8 | 6.9 | 12 | 1.2 |
| Target | 9 | 9 | 9 |  |
| Target achieved | Yes | Yes | No |  |

**Table 6:  Length of placement**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Length of placement | **2017/18 (%)** | **2018/19 (%)** | **2019/20 (%)** | **Sep 2020 snapshot** |
| % of children who have been looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years | 60.0 | 67.7 | 68.5 | 71.2 |

Explanatory Notes:

Table 5 looking at short term placement stability within one year. Over time the number of children/young people experiencing more than 3 placement within one year has been increasing. However the snapshot of data collected from 1st April – 31st August shows an improving picture. It must be noted that during the period from 1st April to present date, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restriction on movement of children between homes has likely influenced the positive figure. Further analysis needs to be undertaken to ascertain if, post Covid-19 once restrictions are lifted the number begins to increase. While comparative data for the year 19/20 is not yet available, from the previous year 18/19 short term placement stability in Yorkshire & Humber was 11% and in England 10%.

Table 6 looking at long term stability which is an improving picture over the last three years. Comparative data for 18/19 was similar in all regions.

# Meeting our Sufficiency Duty

4.1 Requests for placements are monitored at a weekly placement resources group. Placement resources group is made up of operational managers in children’s social care, finance, commissioning, virtual school and is chaired by the service manager for children looked after. The group has an over view of:

* Placement Referrals for Short Term Placements
* Current Vacancies in internal fostering and residential resources
* Upcoming Vacancies (including on Assessment)
* Notice – Unplanned Endings
* Planned Moves
* Review of External Placements , including residential , fostering and leaving care placements

**Tab****le 7: Types of placements at March 2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Placement** | **In house** | **External** | **Total** |
| Placed for adoption | **7** | **4** | **11** |
| Fostering for adoption | **2** | **n/a** | **2** |
| Residential placement | **8** | **30** | **37** |
| Connected carers | **65** | **n/a** | **65** |
| Long term foster care | **41** | **17** | **58** |
| Short term foster care | **73** | **23** | **96** |
| Placement with parents | **30** | **n/a** | **30** |
| Supported living |  |  | **0** |
| Independent living | **4** | **21** | **25** |
| Temporary periods in hospital | **0** | **1** | **1** |
| Young offenders institution or prison | **0** | **1** | **1** |
| Other placements | **0** | **4** | **4** |
| **Total** | **229** | **101** | **330** |

There has been an increase in the number of children being placed in external residential as sourcing foster carers for older children either internally of externally has become more challenging.

**Residential Care**

* 1. The residential offer in Calderdale comprises a 5 bedded unit, a 3 bedded unit and a short breaks disability service.
  2. There are plans to open a new residential unit in December 2020. This will be a 4/5 bed home and replaces the Edge of Care service, Sleep On It (SOI) that will now be community based.
  3. The internal provision is well occupied, but there are times that we may need to commission an appropriate external bed, even if there is a vacancy. This is either to meet the particular needs of the young person and their unique circumstances or to ensure the stability and safety of other young people in the home.

4.5 Two of the Internal provisions are rated as outstanding.

4.6 Calderdale Council has a commissioned contract with Inspire Ltd for 5 residential placements. This has recently been renewed for a further 2 years. This ensures a supply of placements for Calderdale children within Calderdale, and we have established positive working relationships with the provider.

* 1. Externally residential care is commissioned through a Yorkshire and Humber agreement, the White Rose framework. This is a list of providers working across the region, coordinated through Leeds as the lead commissioner. Placements are commissioned on an individual basis, as and when needed, based on the individual needs of the child as agreed in their Care Plan. This framework aims to provide choice and flexibility to meet the needs of children looked after and to give the Council access to a wider range of providers.
  2. As of the end of March 2020, there were 26 purchased residential beds.

**Table 8: Current placements with external providers March 2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **On framework** | **Off framework** | **Block contract** | **Total** |
| 11 | 10 | 5 | 26 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Placements within Calderdale** | **Placements outside Calderdale** |
| 11 | 15 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Average Weekly Cost on Framework** | **Average Weekly Cost off Framework** | **Weekly Cost of Block Contract** | **Average Weekly Cost overall** |
| £4,225.92 | £3,790.86 | £2,950.00 | £3,805.53 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of Providers** | 11 |
| **Number of Homes** | 22 |
| **Outstanding** | 4 |
| **Good** | 20 |
| **Requires Improvement** | 2 |
| **Inadequate** | 0 |
| **Not Yet Inspected** | 0 |

* 1. It is Calderdale Council policy to place young people in provision that is judged to be either good or outstanding. Where we are presented with challenges, we do consider requires improvement in exceptional circumstances but review and challenge the Ofsted action plan and ensure rigourous checks and enquiries are made about the provision.
  2. As the residential market and the Framework remains fluid, the Sufficiency Strategy will be refreshed annually.

**Key actions 2020-2021**

1. Work with our regional colleagues and elected members to regular review the regional framework.
2. Open new residential unit and work with Councils Asset Management Service (CAFM) to consider the development of 2 smaller bedded units.
3. Involve children looked after in development of future service provision, including consultation and active engagement with existing participation services.
4. Reduce the budgetary pressures on the external placement budget by increasing internal provision.
5. Increase edge of care and Outreach services with a renewed focus on supporting adolescents.
6. Revisit the option of a ‘staying close’ bed within the Foyer project to support transition from residential care.
7. Invite independent fostering providers to long term fostering events when restrictions lifted in order to promote Calderdale’s need for permanent foster placements for children looked after.

**Impact measures 2020/21**

1. Reduce the number of young people placed in external residential provision .
2. Safely reduce the number of looked after children and young people looked after with a specific focus on adolescents.
3. Reduce the expenditure on external placements.

**Fostering**

# 4.11 As at 31st March 2020, 179 children were in placed in our in house fostering households, from a total of 334 children looked after. 115 of these were in mainstream and 64 with connected carers.

# 4.12 It is anticipated in this financial year that we will approve and reach a target of 15 mainstream households which will be an increase on the previous year of 9.

4.13 As of March 2020, we had 18 Staying Put arrangements.

# 

# 4.14 Prior to March 2017, Calderdale Council paid carers a remuneration whether they had a child in placement, or not. Furthermore, those vacancies were often in the younger age range and there was a shortage of carers to meet the assessed needs of older children.

# 4.15 In order to recruit both new carers and approved carers from other sectors, Calderdale Council has taken a number of initiatives over the last few years:

* The introduction of a robust skills based payment scheme;
* The development of a communications team producting attractive recruitment materials;
* A consistent and timely response to applicants has been put in place;
* Increased the Calderdale’s fostering social media presence;
* Reconfigure of the fostering team to undertake the assessment of mainstream applications;
* Reviewed its training and support offer to foster carers which is regularly refreshed.

# External commissioning of foster placements

# Whilst the majority of placements are made internally, arrangements for independent foster carers are again undertaken through the White Rose Framework This framework was recently renewed for a two year period through to March 2020 and has been extended.

**Table 10: Current external placements**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **On framework** | **Off framework** | **Total** |
| 40 | 2 | 42 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Placements within Calderdale** | **Placements outside Calderdale** |
| 9 | 33 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Average Weekly Cost on Framework** | **Average Weekly Cost off Framework** | **Average Weekly Cost overall** |
| £793.60 | £851.53 | £796.36 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of Providers** | 14 |
| **Outstanding** | 26 |
| **Good** | 16 |
| **Requires Improvement** | 0 |
| **Inadequate** | 0 |
| **Not Yet Inspected** | 0 |

**Key actions 2020-21**

1. On going recruitment locally and a review of the service to ensure sufficient resource for impact. To ensure that we are recruiting carers who can meet the needs of a diverse population including children with disabilities, sibling groups and teenagers.
2. Continue to refresh the training and support offer to foster carers including additional online resources.
3. .
4. To engage more robustly with the local market and learn from models implemented elsewhere.
5. Review roles within the Fostering service ensuring we have a clear focus on marketing and recruitment and work in partnership with the council’s communication team.

**Impact measures 2020-21**

1. Placement stability rates improve and the number of children and young people who experience more than three placement moves reduces.
2. Placement stability for children in long term placements continues to improve.
3. Increase in mainstream foster carer recruitment with a target of 15 new households per year.
4. Reduction in the number of independent agency placements utilized.
5. Reduction in the number of children placed outside LA boundary and more than 20 miles or more from where they used to live.
6. Exploration of new commissioning arrangements.
7. Leaving care and Post 16 Arrangements to be reviewed.

# Leaving Care and Post 16 Arrangements

A young person ceases to be in care when he or she turns 18 years old, an adoption order is granted or their parents resume parental responsibility. The Children and Social Work Act (2017) extends the local authorities responsibilities to care leavers up to the age of 25.

4.17 The leaving care service “Pathways” is a commissioned service, delivered by Prospects, an independent provider. There are a range of accommodation options for young people via internal or commissioned resources. The service was recommissioned for a 5 year contract in January 2019 with the option to extend with 2yrs + 2yrs + 1yr to a maximum of 10 years.

* 1. The White Rose Framework for Supported Accommodation for young people aged 16+ has been in place since 2014 providing accommodation in Calderdale which meet standards agreed by the consortium of local authorities. We have worked with Bradford and Wakefield to develop our own commissioning framework in order to develop a range of accommodation options that provide both quality and value for money.
  2. We recognize that there are challenges in this in terms of the consistency and quality assurance in unregulated settings. Internal permissions and placement checks have been introduced and will be reviewed ensuring a clear process.

**Table11 : Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation | Q1 April to June 2019 | Q2 July to Sept 2019 | Q3 Oct to Dec 2019 | Q4 Jan to March 2020 |
| Aged 17-18 | **73%** | **77%** | **93%** | **89%** |
| Aged 19-21 | **90%** | **80%** | **95%** | **96%** |

* 1. The range of accommodation as of March 2020 includes:
* Supported lodgings;
* Student halls;
* Residential children’s homes;
* Foster care;
* Semi independent accommodation via supported tenancies;
* Calderdale Foyer
* Shared lives for those young people with additional needs; and
* Staying Put arrangements.

**Key actions for 2020/21**

1. Review transitions between adult and children’s services for vulnerable young people to ensure they are based on a joint assessment of need.
2. Consider further commissioning arrangements post 16

**Impact measures**

1. Maintain the current level of care leavers in suitable accommodation.
2. The provision of commissioned 16 plus accommodation is responsive to need and offers best value.

**5 Related Services**

5.1 There are some key services which impact on our ability to meet our sufficiency duty or on the context in which we operate to meet this duty.

**Adoption**

* 1. Since April 1st 2017, the adoption service for Calderdale has become part of One Adoption West, the regional adoption agency. One Adoption West recruits adopters, provide post adoption support and family find for children with an adoption plan, Calderdale Council retains full responsibility and hold the regional adoption agency to account for the delivery of the adoption service in line with key performance indicators and the service specification . One of the drivers for regionalisation was to increase the pool of available adopters, thus reducing delay for children. The recruitment of adopters continues to be targeted on the following groups
* Early permanence adopters
* Sibling groups
* Older children
* Children with higher need

**Table 12: Children adopted**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Numbers adopted** | **Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after who were adopted in the year** |
| **2015/16** | **33** | **31%** |
| **2016/17** | **19** | **19%** |
| **2017/18** | **10** | **10%** |
| **2018/19** | **16** | **21%** |
| **2019/20** | **20** | **19%** |

**Edge of care provision**

* 1. The services include:
* Early intervention strategy
* New focused Outreach Team
* Range Street 24 hour support accommodation for 16-26 year olds; and
* Expansion of the Calderdale Foyer Service for 16 – 25 year olds.

Each service offers something slightly different, with tailored support to meet the young person’s individual needs.

**Key actions for 2020/21**

1. Continue to fund two placements at Range Street for care leavers. Consult and engage with young people using the service to learn from their experiences of the current service and aspirations for future support.
2. To ensure that robust joint assessments continue with the housing providers to identify need

**Impact measures**

1. That the need to accommodate young people due to homelessness maintains a primary focus on their welfare.

**6. Summary and conclusion**

* 1. An overall Council priority is to safely reduce the number of looked after children and to make efficiencies on the placement costs. There is an increasing demand for services and in order to address this we need to continue to provide the means for families to develop and maintain resilience through the early help offer and through our work with children and young people on the edge of care.
  2. There is a national shortage of residential placements and a reduction in the number of mainstream fostering households approved each year. As a smaller local authority we need to further develop partnerships with organisations offering low incident high cost placements, and to maintain a mixed estate of in house and commissioned services.
  3. We will develop a strategy based on up to date research and national development to respond to and manage the demands associated with working with adolescents.
  4. As a result of pressures on sufficiency we are developing or delivering a range of further responses
* Opening a new 4/5 bed residential provision
* Continually reviewing our placement support offer to foster carers to reduce placement disruption.
* Specialised training to support the placement of more teenagers within in-house provision by Increasing our pool of level 4 carers with a clear focus on caring for older children
* Developing alternative models of delivery to children and young people on the edge of care.