

Corporate Parenting Panel

Date: Monday 28 November 2022

Time: 9.30 am

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Membership

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Chair)

Councillor Peter Gilbert

Councillor Caroline Phillips

Councillor Marian Humphreys

Councillor Penny-Anne O'Donnell

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse

Items on the agenda: -

1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

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7. Good News Stories

8. Any Other Business

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 16th January 2023 at 10am

Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

Disclaimers

Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election of appointment to the Council. Any changes to matters registered or new matters that require to be registered must be notified to the Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after they arise.

A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless they have a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if they have not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web
<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

COVID-19 Pandemic

Any member or officer of the Council or any person attending this meeting must inform Democratic Services if within a week of the meeting they discover they have COVID-19 or have been in close proximity to anyone found to have COVID-19.

Corporate Parenting Panel

Wednesday 12 October 2022

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Chair)

Councillor Peter Gilbert

Councillor Caroline Phillips

Officers

Ian Donnachie, Children in Care 14-18 years Apprentice

Marie Dionisi, Family Support Worker

Matiullah Hotak, Fostering Team Apprentice

Alisha Howe, Fostering Team Apprentice

Deborah McGarvey, Non Social Work Operational Team Leader

Deena Moorey, Virtual School Head

Isabelle Moorhouse, Democratic Services Officer

Sharon Shaw, Service Manager - Corporate Parenting Service

Umar Teerab, Family Support Worker

Others Present

Carla Elliot, Designated Nurse – Children in Care

Angela Richardson, Designated Nurse – Children in Care

1. General

(1) Apologies

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse

Councillor Marian Humphreys

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

(3) Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

2. Children in Care Council - Update

Refugee Celebration Week

Marie Dionisi informed the group that the celebration took part on the 20th June and it involved over 118 asylum seekers, young people, staff members and foster carers. There was a celebratory meal and awards ceremony and they learnt about a film being done on the asylum experience.

Deborah McGarvey said that on the 22nd June there was a film event for professionals; three films for WCC and its young people seeking asylum called "My experience of arriving in the UK", "My experience of the support I have received" and "My experiences settling into life in the UK". These were all shown to the group of professionals at the event, and they were put onto YouTube. They are available for staff training, and they were shared with the Home Office who said they would use them as part of their training resources. Sharon Shaw noted that these films were done with money from the West Midlands Migration Bid and these films are available for all West Midlands authorities and any others who want to use them.

The Chair said that he would like all members to watch these videos.

Staff Conference

Ian Donnachie informed the group that on the 15th July there was a staff conference and Voice Influence Change (VIC) had a slot; some who spoke from the team were care experienced members of staff. Liss Philipps and Alisha Howe spoke about young people in care, leaving care and some of the activities that they were doing. They spoke about how they were engaging and responding/listening to young people's voices. Umar Tareeb did crowd interaction around about being an asylum seeker, talking about refugees and things they were doing in that area. Ian Donnachie presented a video where he interviewed nine young people who were care experienced in Warwickshire and they gave some of their opinions like what could be improved in work practice and things that were done well. He spoke on what they were doing in VIC to help support young people. Ian Donnachie spoke on his personal experiences too. After showing a video they had two representatives from the Youth Council give a speech. Ian Donnachie praised everyone who took part in the event.

In response to the Chair, Ian Donnachie said that improvements were being made around engaging with the Children in Care Council. Sharon Shaw added that WCC's local offer paid for winter bills which was essential in this current climate with uncertainty around electricity and gas.

The video around participation shown at the conference was presented to the group

Bournemouth Trip

Marie Dionisi informed the group that on the 31st May there was a day trip to Bournemouth with 12 families, children and foster carers. The children were aged between 5-14; families and staff made sandcastles together and some young people went in the sea and played cricket on the beach. They had fish & chips and ice cream after.

Refugee Football Team

Umar Teerab informed the group that the football team met every Sunday, and it went well. Football was a universal sport so this helped everyone engage with each other even if they spoke little English. Covid-19 halted this, but this has since continued. They played against Warwickshire Police, and it went well so they are organising another match with them. They have a three-match set against Milton Keynes; Warwickshire won the first one and the second match will take place on the 16th October. Warwickshire came 2nd in a football tournament against other authorities; next year's tournament will take place in Northampton. Other authorities started doing football teams after Warwickshire started it and they have between 38-43 young people attending their meetups.

Sharon Shaw added that pre-Covid-19 they had 5-a-side teams playing other authorities and to continue this they were looking at supported accommodation for teams to use to make it easier for people to travel to Warwickshire and join local teams.

Housing Related Support

Alisha Howe informed the group that she was contacted by commissioning about coming up with mentimeter surveys for floating support/housing related support. This was for certain supported accommodations for young people to fill out. They attended one accommodation, spoke to parents and they potentially have a forth accommodation to attend. Alicia Howe was asked recently to contact more young people because more of them came forward about housing related support.

Care Leavers Forum

Liss Philipps informed the group that all the care leavers forum meetings were now face-to-face. They were looking to have them somewhere with a bigger kitchen then Myton to reduce costs with takeaways. They spoke about the options of life up to 25 and how this works in the process of leaving care and what support they receive during that time. They had young people come forward to say what would help them, what their transition out of support WCCs gives will be and their independence. In July 2022 they had mental health discussions which was popular as it is always a hot topic; showing support for mental health was important and they were told what support there was. Liss Philipps did her own research and formatted a leaflet that included all provided services. The forum was asked what could be done to improve services and these were taken back to the SLT to action. In September there was a welcome back social and Ian Donnachie did an activity which got them to look for clues to get sweets and the had fish & chips and games. They were now planning their Christmas events to boost attendance.

BBQ and Mental Health Training

Matiullah 'Matty' Hotak informed the group that the BBQ and mental health training took place on the 9th August. The BBQ was held for WCC's young people seeking asylum who live in the select care accommodation in Birmingham. Around 440 people attended the BBQ and after, 22 people attended the mental health support session focusing on achieving good quality sleep. This was important because some asylum seekers suffered trauma and had difficult journeys to the UK, so this session was to help them overcome this.

Harry Potter Studios

Deborah McGarvey informed the group that they had two group trips to the Harry Potter Studios on the 31st August and 2nd September. The 31st trip was for younger children in care; they took 16 young people aged 10-15. On the 2nd September they took 12 care experienced young people aged 16-25. Both trips went well, and they tried to target children that might have siblings they do not live with, so there were a few sibling groups together. It was a good bonding experience between staff and children in care.

Jamie's Farm

Sharon Shaw informed the group that within the safeguarding support and children in care team, there were three residential trips in the summer for the children. Staff went away with young people on three occasions to Jamie's Farm which is a therapeutic farm where children do farm work and work with animals etc. Other things done were zip wiring and wall climbing. The children who went were aged 12-17.

Resolved:

- 1.1 That the Panel note the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Care Leavers Forum (CLF) and the Voice, Influence and Change Team (Participation).
- 1.2 That the Panel acknowledge the work that continues to take place with young people.

3. Performance Data (to include update from SWFT)

Sharon Shaw informed the group that there were now 819 children in care and central government recently told local authorities that everyone had to increase the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. Therefore, WCC had to take on an extra 30 unaccompanied asylum seekers, so Warwickshire now has 110. They were coping with this increase by bringing in more staff, especially with the new supported accommodation in Leamington.

Not including the number of asylum-seeking young people, WCC had the lowest number of children in care since November 2021. This was because of the early interventions in place and the wrap around support to get children back home was working well. All the data was on Power BI and it showed there was a drop in young people entering care but there were a few teenagers entering it. One of the reasons for this was children being placed on SGOs (special guardianship order) instead of going into care. Refugee families waiting in hotels was a strain on the health and education services. The number of young males in care in Warwickshire was likely to rise because of the increase of unaccompanied asylum seekers. 26.4% of children in care are in minority ethnic groups, this was also increasing because of the asylum seekers. Most young people in care were aged between 10-15 followed by 17-16 year olds. They were working on short-term placement stability after five teenagers had to keep being moved because they did not have any placements; this was a national issue. Cambian informed WCC that they will be closing a lot of their residential units because they were not financially viable.

In response to Councillor Caroline Philipps, Sharon Shaw said that the unaccompanied asylum seekers were coming from Sudan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Albania. All of them are placed in hotels because there is no other accommodation available. It was believed that there was an increase from children from Albania because they were being trafficked because they disappear from the hotels they are in.

Deena Moorey noted that the virtual school was taking in more unaccompanied asylum seekers because finding school places was difficult; some were having to travel out of their borough to go to school. There was a long waiting list for these young people to enrol onto courses that taught English as a second language.

In response to the Chair, Sharon Shaw said that short-term placements was a problem in Warwickshire because there were a shortage of placements and children would need one as soon as they were put into care. If one young person was being challenging in a placement, then they could be made the leave by the place holder and another child would move in immediately. This was a problem in Warwickshire because they did not have their own children's homes before, so they were always relying on commissioned services. Some carers struggled to meet the young people's needs due to criminal exploitation.

Following another question from the Chair, Sharon Shaw said that 30% of Warwickshire's care leavers were not in education, employment, or training (EET) compared to the 42% national average. She agreed to double check this figure as it did not match the report's number.

Following a supplementary from Councillor Phillips, Sharon Shaw said that ideally all care leavers should be in EET however, some of them would be disabled, sick or pregnant etc. so it would be more difficult for them to be in EET. They had drop-in groups every week in Birmingham, Coventry, Nuneaton, and South Warwickshire for these young people to support them to get back into EET.

In response to the Chair, Sharon Shaw said that Warwickshire was inline with its regional neighbours in regard to missing episodes of children in care. A missing episode would be counted even if a child was missing for a couple of hours. 19/32 children had multiple missing episodes, they are normally young males who were or had been involved in criminal activity. Others were unaccompanied asylum seekers, but WCC would try and find them if they were paced in Warwickshire. They improved the system that was in place for these, and this reduced the length of periods of time children would go missing for.

Following a supplementary from Councillor Phillips, Sharon Shaw said that if a child purposely went missing in Warwickshire and then something happened then this would need a case review. All protocols would be followed with CSE and the other teams, but teenagers who wanted to leave a care placement could not be physically restrained to stop them leaving. They would need to be placed somewhere where trust could be built, and they would want to stay. Last choice scenario would be secure placements but there were no available placements in the country.

4. Warwickshire Adoption Report & ACE Report

Sharon Shaw informed the group that in Warwickshire, the number of children who were adopted increased to 34. However, the number of children who been placed with adopters decreased from 28 to 18 so this implied that there would be a lot less children adopted next year. There were no adoption disruptions and there were 22 placement orders in the last year; this number was decreasing each year. This was because there were more SGOs, or children placed with connected persons. 2016-17 had the most adoptions with 70 and there were 26 SGOs; in 2022 there were 46 SGOs. The number of placement orders in 2016-17 was 49. This decrease in numbers was not bad because it showed that children were being placed with their families and adoption was not right for the child.

All but three adoption cases were placed with ACE adopters, two of these were for sibling groups. Most children adopted were boys aged between 1-4 and White British. They focused on 'foster to adoption' which is when children who are fostered become adopted by their foster parents; this happened on six occasions in 2021.

Next year they intended to focus on the time gap between a child being placed in care and adoption orders being granted. They will also focus on family time work with adopters (making sure they have clear plans if siblings are being separated or if parents or grandparents want to and can see the child that they do). Life story improvement was also planned so the children would know why/how they were adopted, and they wanted to increase fostering to adoption.

In response to the Chair, Sharon Shaw stated that they were falling behind on when a child came into care to the adoption order being granted. This was caused by the courts being closed during the pandemic, but these were now progressing through as courts reopened. There were difficulties in some cases where it took three years for the adoption order to be granted.

In response to Councillor Philipps, Sharon Shaw clarified that an adoption disruption was when after a child formally moved in and their placement fell apart or did not work before the adoption order was granted. This meant the child being placed back into care. If this happens after the order is granted, then it classifies as a family breakdown.

Following a question from the Chair, Sharon Shaw said that some local authorities had longer timescales than WCC and this impacted ACE's figures but not Warwickshire's. Warwickshire had a good adoption service before joining ACE.

5. Warwickshire Children in Care Health Service

Carla Elliot informed the group that she started her role in August 2021, and it was a difficult period. There was a complete turnover of nursing, administrative and senior management staff. This created a backlog of health assessments being offered and this was exacerbated by Covid-19.

Carla Elliot wrote a recovery plan, and this was worked through to get staffing levels to increase after a recruitment drive and team building.

They were able to meet the needs of the children's health assessments and achieving their KPIs by doing them in 20 working days. They were continuing to do allocation meetings whereby they risk assess and RAG rating all their HRO requests to book them in priority order. They continued reviewing audit health assessments that were done by other professionals and out of area. They now had Angela Richardson from the CCG as the Designated Children in Care Nurse and they would continue to develop and support the team with the recruitment plan because they were looking at developmental roles within the team. They want to assist the ICB with updating the service specification because it was last written in 2019. The Health and Looked After Children (HELAC) Operational Group started up again which will enable networking and collaborative working.

They were planning on updating and auditing the RAG rating service they used. They were also relooking at the KPI data they shared on the health assessments and the data they collected and triangulating as part of that health assessment and social care. They wanted to look at care leavers health passports for their future health needs, with up-to-date signposting and services. They were planning for this to be bespoke for each child and for them to have leaving care summaries and considering the different vulnerabilities of the different children.

In response to the Chair, Carla Elliott clarified that the 20 working days were from when they received the paperwork to the request from social care. The first step was to ensure the child gets the health assessment in a timely manner and the relevant paperwork needed to be completed by the local authority before they could proceed. They then need to book the appointment and there might be reasons why that is declined or there might be lots of different pathways they need to go through. This deadline was being met but two members of staff were off long-term sick which caused other things to be pushed back as health assessments needed to be prioritised.

Angela Richardson added that she would like to bring a report to the panel on governance on what they were doing in health. They had strategic HELAC and operational HELAC and they wanted to ensure it was reported to the panel appropriately. From a compliance point of view, everything needed to be as robust as possible.

6. Development of the Work Programme for 2022/2023

Governance for Child in Care – Angela Richardson to be added onto the work programme
Virtual School Autumn Report 2022 - Deena Moorey

7. Good News Stories

Leisure Centres

In response to Councillor Philipps, Sharon Shaw informed the group that most the gyms in Warwickshire were run by Everyone Active. Everyone Active were now providing free gym and swim membership to all children in care and all care leavers.

8. Any Other Business

None.

9. Date of Next Meeting

28th November 2022 at 9:30am

The meeting rose at 15:14

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Chair

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Corporate Parenting Panel

CiCC & Voice, Influence and Change Team Update

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the Panel note the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Care Leavers Forum (CLF) and the Voice, Influence and Change Team (Participation).
- 1.2 That the Panel acknowledge the work that continues to take place with young people.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This is a standing item on the Corporate Parenting Panel agenda which updates members on the work of the CiCC and CLF.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no significant financial implications to consider at this stage.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 There are no significant environmental implications to consider at this stage.

5. Supporting Information

This update covers the period from 18th September to 21st November 2022.

5.1 *Apprentice Appreciation Day – 6th October 2022:*

One of our care experienced apprentices planned and ran this event for all those young people who are currently on apprenticeships with Warwickshire County Council. The afternoon took place at Myton Park.

8 current apprentices attended along with members of the senior leadership team and the apprentice's supervisors. Awards were presented to recognise the achievements of each apprentice and everyone shared in food and drinks together.

There was then a session where the apprentices were able to feedback their views and opinions on the apprenticeship to the Apprentice and Placement Practitioner and ways that it could be improved for future cohorts.

5.2 **Children in Care Council**

Re-Launch – 13th October 2022

The children in care council was officially re-launched on 13th October. 13 children aged 11-17 attended. Senior leaders were in attendance and were able to join in with the young people with their activities and listen to what is important to them.

Activities on offer included:

- circus skills provided by 'Juggling Jim'
- arts and crafts including rock painting
- glitter tattoos and face painting
- scavenger hunt
- candy floss machine

Areas of importance to young people raised at the re-launch included:

- more support with self-harm
- more family time (including with brothers and sisters)
- meeting carers before being placed in their homes
- more support from schools
- more support with regards to LGBT+
- more opportunities to make friendships
- being treated like one of the family
- help with understanding transitions i.e. what happens when you go to college/university

These areas will be put on the agendas for future meetings and professionals invited to talk and discuss when these topics are in their areas.

Feedback from a foster carer:

"I just wanted to thank you for what must have been a fantastic night relaunch. B and T have come home full of how great it was and have asked if they can go every month. Of course they can. 😊"

"Thank you again for all the hard work your team put into tonight. And thanks for bringing them home."



CiCC Meetings

10th November – Developing better relationships

12 young people in attendance. During the November CiCC meeting, the discussion theme was around 'Developing better relationships with your carers or foster carers'. The Placement Hub Operations Manager was in attendance to lead on the discussion.

The discussion produced much positive feedback from those young people who feel a part of the family with many shared experiences among them. There were also some concerns raised about communication to the young person, largely in regard to the length of stay in a particular home.

The Placement Hub Operations Manager would like to work with a small group of the children in care council create a Foster Carer profile looking at what makes a good foster carer. This will then be used to support with future recruitment.

5.3 CLF Updates

The following items were discussed at the October and November CLF meetings:

4th October – Rights and Entitlements

7 young people in attendance. As part of our audit of the Local Offer, all aspects of Warwickshire's local offer were discussed with the young people and their feedback recorded to be considered in the updates. This included talking about aspects of the regional local offer that Warwickshire doesn't currently provide, and all the additional support that Warwickshire give on top of the regional local offer.

15th November – Opinions and ideas for 2023 CLF Meetings

6 young people in attendance. Young people were asked their opinions and views in order to shape future meetings of the Care Leavers Forum in 2023.

Areas the young people were asked for ideas included:

- Topics to be discussed
- Activities during the meetings
- Large trips and activities
- Home cooked meals
- Takeaway meals
- People to invite to meetings

5.4 Care Experience Week Celebration Event – 28th October

On 28th October, two fun filled activity sessions were held for our care experienced children and young people. From 11am til 1pm there was a family fun session for children up to 14 years with their carers and families they live with, then from 3pm til 5pm there was another session for young people aged 14+. These were held at Myton Park offices.

Activities and stalls on offer across both sessions included:

- Bouncy Castle
- Gladiator Jousting
- Surf Simulator
- Soft Archery
- Splat the rat
- Arts and Crafts
- Hook a duck
- Lucky Dip
- Where's the treasure?
- Sweet table
- Cake stall
- Photo booth
- Chocolate Tombola
- Glitter tattoos/face painting/Henna art
- Book corner
- Soft Play
- Quiet room

Food and drinks were also provided at both sessions.

The event was supported by Child Friendly Warwickshire with donations sought for prizes from the Network of Friends. In total, including both events, there were around 120 young people with their carers/PAs who attended.



5.5 *Refugee Football*

Football continues to take place every Sunday at Sidney Stringer school in Coventry. Around 30 young people come to play together, travelling from Birmingham, Leamington, Warwick and Kenilworth.

Football Match against Milton Keynes – 16th October

On 16th October, a team of 12 young people travelled to Milton Keynes to take part in a friendly match. Unfortunately, on this occasion Warwickshire lost, but the young people enjoyed playing and seeing each other again. Milton Keynes provided pizza at the end of the match to share together.



5.6 RSE and Citizenship & Human Rights Workshops

A series of workshops have been delivered by a care experienced staff member on Relationships and Sex Education and Citizenship & Human Rights. The workshops have been delivered in two different languages at each session including Sudanese, Eritrean, Kurdish and Afghan.

11th October – Relationships and Sex Education – 4 young people

10th November – Citizenship and Human Rights – 19 young people

11th November – Citizenship and Human Rights – 13 young people

The purpose of the workshops is to encourage young asylum seekers to explore different cultural norms and to help educate them in regard to their rights and life in the UK.

5.7 Breakaway Camp – 2nd-4th November

In early November 9 young people who are not in education, employment, or training took part in a 2-night breakaway camp at Ackers Adventure. This was an opportunity for young people to do lots of fun and courageous activities and have informative career sessions about jobs and careers available.

Activities at Ackers included archery, tubing, skiing, disc golf and climbing. These activities were set up to increase awareness of their own skills and abilities, improve confidence and self-belief in own abilities and improve listening and communication.

There were multiple career sessions in the day to inform the young people of what is available to them and information of how to get to where they want to be. Many individuals left with ideas of their future career paths and confidence. One individual wants to explore an apprenticeship at Ackers Adventure!

Follow up session – 25th November



5.8 Visit from Children's Commissioner – 7th November

On 7th November the Children's Commissioner visited Warwick to meet with some of our Care Experienced Apprentices and those that have moved onto to full time employment. She was keen to learn about their journey through the care system, how they progressed into an apprenticeship and what their hopes and aspirations are for the future.

Comments from the Children's Commissioner:

"I was so inspired by their thoughtfulness and determination."

"I was delighted to hear what Warwickshire County Council are doing with their local offer to care experienced young people, including ring fencing places up to 10 apprentices."

"I would like to thank all the young people for all that they shared with me – they are the real experts in what support young people value the most, and it is vital that those making decisions take the time to listen to them."



5.9 Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 8th November

On 8th November, the Voice, Influence and Change team presented a report to the Overview and Scrutiny panel detailing the work of the team in the last 14 months. As part of the presentation, young people from each area of the team's work were asked to talk about their role and contributions.

Young people were present and represented from:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| -Care Leavers Forum | -Youth Council |
| -Children in Care Council | -UASC |
| -Impact (SEND forum) | |

All young people took part in planning meetings leading up to the panel and worked with staff to put together their part of the presentation which included the good things happening in their areas and also things that can be improved.

5.10 *Interviews for Assistant Director of Education – 9th November*

Interviews for the Assistant Director of Education took place on 9th November of which part of the process for candidates involved being interviewed by a youth panel.

Representatives on the youth panel:

- Children in Care Council
- Care Leaver's Forum
- Impact (SEND Forum)
- Youth Council

In preparation for the panel, the young people met on two occasions in order to put together the interview questions that they would like to ask the candidates. They also asked for a short presentation on the School Inclusion Charter.

Feedback from candidates on the day was that the youth panel was their most rewarding and engaging part of the interview process.

5.11 *Appointment of Police and Youth Justice position*

After interviewing on the 4th of November, the team have successfully appointed to the new role of Police and Youth Justice Participation Worker. This role is due to commence on 2nd January 2023.

6. **Timescales associated with the decision and next steps**

6.1 An update report to be presented to the next Corporate Parenting Panel.

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Deborah McGarvey	deborahmcgarvey@warwickshire.gov.uk 077990 400006
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Lead Member	Jeff Morgan	jeffmorgan@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): none

Other members: none

824
Children in Care

An increase of
8 Children in Care
since September 2022

Children in Care Placement Type

WCC Foster Carer (inc Family and Friends carers)
318 children (38.6%); which is a decrease of 2 children on the previous month end.

Placed for Adoption
22 children (2.7%) of all CiC at 31 October; an increase of 2 on the previous month end.

Agency Foster Carer
186 CiC (22.6%); a decrease of 6 children since 30/09/2022

Residential Establishment
78 children (9.5%); a decrease of 3 children since 30/09/2022

No. Children in Care - Monthly trend

	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22
ALL CiC (Including Asylum Seekers)	820	+1	-2	-5	+2	+8 824
ALL CiC (Excluding Asylum Seekers)	729	+1	-0	-8	-13	+3 711

At 31 October 2022, Warwickshire's Children in Care population increased by 8 to 824, whilst the no. of CiC excluding asylum seekers increased by 3 to 711.

670 CiC target for 2022/23 **670**

Legal Status of Children in Care as at 31 October 2022

52.7% (434) of CiC are on a **Full Care Order**; this is an increase of 7 children since 30/09/2022

13.2% (109) of CiC are on an **Interim Care Order**; this is a decrease of 6 children as the previous month end.

4.7% (39) of CiC are on a **Placement Order**; this is a decrease of 1 child since 30/09/2022.

29.0% (239) of CiC are subject to **S20 Accommodation**; this is an increase of 6 children since 30th September 2022.

Leaving Care Activity Status

As at 31 October 2022, of those Relevant and Former Relevant Care Leavers (aged 16 - 21) ...

- 87.2%** had a contact within the last 8 weeks
- 82.4%** were in suitable accommodation
- 56.1%** were in EET (Employment, Education & Training)

CiC out of county as at 30th September 2022

21.3% (174) of CiC were placed outside the LA boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live

NB. Please note that this is a quarterly measure

CiC 'Missing' or 'Away from placement without authorisation'

31 children in care were missing (102 missing episodes)

During October 2022 there were **102 episodes** of a child missing or away from their placement without authorisation. This related to **31 individual children** with **19 children** having multiple missing episodes during the month.

Gender

60.8% (501) Male

39.0% (321) Female

2 'Indeterminate'

Ethnicity

1/4 (26.3%) of Children in Care (Including Asylum Seekers) are **Minority Ethnic (217)**;

73.7% (607) are of White ethnicity

Allocated Team

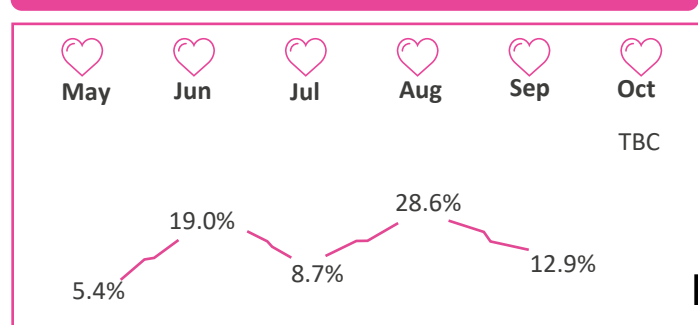
13.7% (113) of Children in Care are Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers

7.5% (62) are allocated to the Children with Disability teams

23.5% (194) are allocated to the CiC 14-18 Years Team

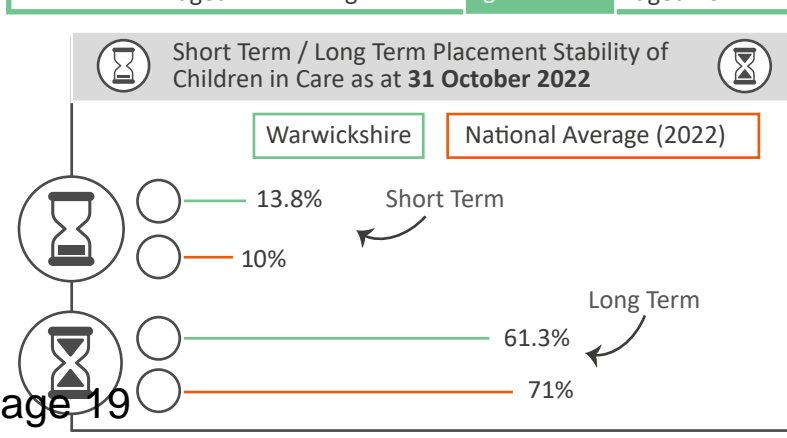
86.9% of Children in Care at 31 October 2022 have had a 'completed' health assessment in the last 12 months

% of CiC accommodated during the month (who remained accommodated) and who had their IHA within 20 working days (Monthly trend)



Age breakdown of the 817 children

Age Group	Percentage	Count
0 years old	2.9%	24
aged 1 - 4	14.8%	122
aged 5 - 9	16.9%	139
aged 10 - 15	34.2%	282
aged 16 - 17	31.2%	257



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Warwickshire Virtual School

Autumn 2022 Report For the period April – August 2022



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* Warwickshire uses the term Children in Care in preference to the DfE term Looked After Children, so the acronym CiC will be used throughout this report.



1.1 Current Context

The West Midlands Virtual School Conference took place in Birmingham, with teams having the opportunity to network and share ideas. Representatives from the DfE, Ofsted and NAVSH were in attendance for the day, and gave updates on the national picture. Following this, (1) Warwickshire was invited to Walsall to share good practice to help them develop their service and (2) Warwickshire is leading on establishing a Virtual School Deputies' Network to grow expertise, promote future leaders and develop Virtual School policy and practice.



After seven years of having the same providers, it was time to renew the contracts for PEPs (Personal Education Plan) and attendance monitoring. Much development work has taken place in these areas over the past few years, and the tender process attracted some very strong bids. Reporting tools in particular have improved and will facilitate better tracking and monitoring. New contracts and systems will be in place for 2023.



DfE funding for additional tuition was utilised and many CiC benefitted within their settings. For 2022-23, the Virtual School has commissioned tuition for all children in Years 1-11 from a specialist tuition agency. This is to ensure that extra tuition is in place on top of the support provided by schools and via Pupil Premium Plus (PP+). The extra level of support will facilitate closing attainment gaps and promoting engagement.

Support for young people who were NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in the summer term focussed on ensuring they had comprehensive PEP reviews. The Post 16 Education Officer supported social workers and young people to attend PEPs. Clear planning and capturing aspirations are crucial to being able to re-engage with EET (Education, Employment and Training).

With a focus on bringing together designated teachers and safeguarding leads, the training event 'Understanding Children with a Social Worker' proved overwhelmingly popular. The interactive nature and creative way of disseminating key knowledge and provoking reflection had a huge impact. Many headteachers attended and expressed interest in engaging in wider staff training. One attendee commented:

The best session that I have ever attended. Very informative, engaging and interesting.

The Virtual School has already commissioned two further sessions, primarily focussed on the Bedworth consortia. Work is in progress with schools in The Nuneaton Alliance to have the sessions delivered for their staff.

Transition planning was a key aspect of Virtual School work in the summer term. Following two years of Covid disruption, extra funding was allocated to Year 11 CiC to provide bespoke transition support.

DfE work around PP+ for Post 16 is continuing and Warwickshire were invited to participate in the extension of the study from September 2022, based on the Expression of Interest submitted by the VSH in summer 2021. An attendance monitoring contract has been set up to enable the Virtual School and providers to identify concerns as they start to arise. Monitoring visits will be extended to Post 16 providers and a wider CPD programme will be on offer with the aim of ensuring CiC are supported to maintain their places on courses.



In addition, summer term projects included:

- The VSH leading a secondary to Post 16 transitions workstream, focussing on developing best practice guidance for young people with SEND and EHCPs, as part of the SEND and Inclusion Change Programme.
- Developing comprehensive documentation for the procurement of PEPs and attendance monitoring.
- Supporting the Education Service response to the government White and Green papers.
- Making links with the Children and Families Academy to develop a more comprehensive social worker training offer.
- Developing an SLA with the Warwickshire Attendance Service. The SLA is to provide information and advice to social workers of children with CIN and CP plans, as well as some bespoke support for social workers and carers of CiC.

Ongoing Virtual School projects:

- Monitoring academic attainment and progress through termly Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- Monitoring attendance of all CiC
- Challenging suspensions
- Managing school stability
- University programme to raise aspirations and encourage participation in further and higher education
- Enriching arts and sports activities
- Trauma Informed Attachment Aware Schools
- Training
- Programme of school monitoring visits

ATTAINMENT OF CHILDREN IN CARE

NB 2021-22 data is the first recorded data since 2019.

Data included in this report is unvalidated and therefore subject to change.

Some measures, such as national comparators and Progress 8, are not yet available.

The Spring term 2023 report will contain validated data and information not available for this report.

Data headlines are for the statistical cohort.

2.1 Early Years Foundation Stage

Table A1

25% achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD).

All children expected to achieve a GLD did so. Outcomes overall are as predicted, lower than previous years. The cohort were subject to an increased level of bespoke, additional support and intervention.

Cohort overview: 20 CiC (includes 1 CiC in Scotland who is working at the expected standard but will not have an assessment outcome), 40% SEND, 4% EHCP, 25% attended more than one school during their reception year.

Virtual School organised tuition for this cohort will take place in the spring term, allowing children the chance to adapt to the curriculum and teaching differences in



Year 1. A secure phonics base and developing reading skills will be the focus of the tuition.



2.2 Year One Phonics

Table A2

57% achieved the expected standard in the phonics test.



Early indications suggest Warwickshire CiC achieved in line with national CiC.

Cohort overview: 21 CiC, 48% SEND, 14% EHCP, 10% disappplied, 38% attended more than one school during Year 1.



Virtual School organised tuition for this cohort will take place in the spring term, with the emphasis on developing phonics and improving reading.

2.2 Key Stage One

Table A3

35% achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths.

Early indications suggest Warwickshire CiC achieved in line with national CiC.

Cohort overview: 17 CiC (includes one CiC in Scotland who will not have an assessment outcome), 41% SEND, 12% EHCP, 24% working significantly below the level of the tests/expected standard.

CiC attainment by subject:

	Expected standard and above	Greater Depth
Reading	35%	24%
Writing	35%	0%
Maths	41%	6%

Virtual School organised tuition for this cohort will take place in the summer term, with the emphasis on improving reading to develop decoding skills, comprehension and vocabulary, which will then support improving writing skills.

2.3 Key Stage Two

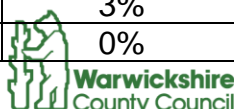
Table A4

25% achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths.

Early indications suggest that Warwickshire had significantly more CiC with EHCPs than national (20% more), but that achievement of Warwickshire CiC was not significantly lower than national CiC.

Cohort overview: 32 CiC, 72% SEND, 44% EHCP, 19% attend non-mainstream provision, 28% working significantly below the level of the tests/expected standard. CiC attainment by subject:

	Expected standard and above	Greater Depth
Reading	38%	9%
Writing	31%	3%
Maths	41%	0%





Virtual School organised tuition for this cohort will take place in the spring term, allowing one term to settle into secondary schools. Schools will determine whether tuition is needed in English or Maths, based on KS2 outcomes and early KS3 assessments.



2.4 Key Stage Four

Tables A5,6,7

22% achieved a standard pass in English and Maths.

15% achieved a strong pass in English and Maths.



Early indications suggest that Warwickshire achieved in line with national CiC for strong passes in the basics, and that Attainment 8 scores are potentially higher than national.



Cohort overview: 67 CiC, 54% had SEND, 30% EHCP, 27% attended non-mainstream provision, 23% working below GCSE curriculum.

CiC GCSE attainment by subject:

	Standard pass Grade 4+	Strong pass Grade 5+
English	28%	19%
Maths	31%	21%
English and Maths*	22%	15%
5 GCSEs	22%	15%

*The Basics

2.5 Post 16

Tables A8,9

All Year 11 CiC were supported and had identified Post 16 provisions prior to the GCSEs starting.

Levels of CiC who were NEET rose in Quarter 1. This was due to Year 12 numbers increasing – Year 13 CiC were more successful in identifying positive destinations.

The Virtual School is focussing on supporting colleges to improve retention rates for CiC. Unless starting college courses in the first half of the Autumn term, it is more difficult to remain in a positive destination. Most courses run to an academic year with just one entry point. Provisions such as the Prince's Trust are great for developing employability skills and supporting re-engagement, but are short term only, leaving large parts of the academic year with limited options. Working with Prospects and other careers advisers is crucial in such instances. The Virtual School promotes and prompts early identification and referral to the Prospects service.

THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

3.1 Cohort overview

Tables B1,2,3,4

Summer term numbers:

- School age: 501 in December, 500 in March, 525 in July
- Preschool: 72 in December, 80 in March, 96 in July
- Post 16: 201 in December, 174 in March, 138 in July





3.2 SEND

Tables B5,6

Numbers of CiC with recorded SEND and EHCPs rose in the summer term, both due to cohort mobility and ongoing assessments of need.



Statutory school age CiC with SEND rose by 2.5% but remained lower than national CiC:



National CiC with SEND*	56.3%
Warwickshire CiC with SEND	52.3%
Difference	-4.0%
All Warwickshire*	12.10%

*LAIT March 2021



Statutory school age CiC with EHCPs increased by 0.9%, bringing it closer to the national average:

National CiC with EHCP*	28.9%
Warwickshire CiC with EHCP	28.4%
Difference	-0.5%
All Warwickshire*	3.6%

*LAIT March 2021

Over half of the Warwickshire CiC with identified SEN have EHCPs (54.3%).

3.3 Enrichment

Table C1

Spring term enrichment activities are detailed in table C1.

The newly appointed West Midlands Arts Co-ordinator resigned but was replaced. Activities are largely planned for the year and smooth transition of post holders was well co-ordinated.

A firm offer for sports across the West Midlands has been established. ActiveNow will be leading on this across cluster areas. The Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull cluster has yet to confirm their service level agreement, which has been hindered by capacity and staff changes.

3.4 Training

Designated teacher network meetings again proved popular. A safe space is provided for sharing good practice and supporting others where concerns arise.

Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service delivered four face-to-face sessions, covering attachment, trauma, emotion coaching and resilience. The sessions ensure designated teachers can advocate and support wider school staff, as well as providing the opportunity for staff in schools that have been involved in the Trauma Informed Attachment Aware School (TIAAS) project to top up professional development over staffing changes.

A session in June to promote the TIAAS project was well attended, and most attendees were able to apply to be part of the project for 2022-23. Termly network meetings to ensure schools stay up to date with developments and can share experiences are set to continue throughout 2022-23.



Training sessions took place with staff from the Warwickshire College Group and the positive feedback has ensured that interest in further development is positive. Some secondary schools engaged in training sessions, which is a very positive step. Again, positive feedback and word of mouth is supporting a wider roll-out across wider groups of staff and more settings.



3.5 Staffing

Table C2

The Virtual School again saw staffing changes:

- Education Adviser started maternity leave at end of June; replacement started in September.
- Early Years Education Officer left mid-July; replacement started September. Hours for this role were reduced.
- Data and Finance Officer retired at end of July; replacement started September.



The team worked hard to ensure that a high-quality service remained in place throughout the transition process.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

4.1 Ofsted Grading

Table D1

In the summer term 84.9% of Warwickshire CiC attended Outstanding or Good schools compared to 83% nationally.

Virtual School policy remains that when moving schools Outstanding and Good schools are always prioritised. No CiC were placed in Inadequate schools during the summer term.

4.2 Attendance and suspensions

Tables D2,3,4

Overall attendance for the year was 88.2%. This is potentially lower than national CiC – the absence rate for 2021-22 is not yet confirmed but was 9% in 2020-21. Attendance for primary school CiC was 94.7% compared to 83.5% for secondary.

Attendance for year groups Reception to Year 7 was above 90%. Attendance for Years 9 and 11 was under 80%. Return to school following the pandemic remained a concern for some CiC, relating to increased SEMH needs. Attendance remains a high priority within Education Services and work is being done to address the updated DfE policy ahead of its statutory timescale of September 2023.

12.9% of the whole cohort received at least one suspension:

- 81 CiC suspended on 212 occasions
- 48 boys, 33 girls
- 72 secondary age, 9 primary
- 9 from specialist settings

Of the CiC receiving suspensions:

- 12% were new to care
- 54% received multiple suspensions
- 17% were not in care at the end of the year

Suspensions remain a priority for the Virtual School.





4.3 Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

The Virtual School worked hard to ensure all CiC had termly PEP reviews to support their educational development. The PEP review rate for the summer term was 100%. PEPs continue to improve in quality due to the work of Virtual School officers.



4.4 Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

Table D7,8

The average amount of PP+ claimed via PEPs stabilised in the summer term. The Virtual School closely monitors PP+ spend and impact to facilitate bespoke support and intervention and promote the best outcomes.



CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY IN CARE

5.1 Revised duties

Referrals for support across all key stages remained high throughout the summer term and key themes included transition, emotionally based school avoidance, SEND and pupil premium plus spending.

Virtual School advice was sought by adoptive parents, special guardians, maintained and independent schools, EYFS settings and a wide variety of professionals, including post adoption and special guardianship social workers, early help colleagues, clinical psychologists, youth workers and colleagues working within SEND.

Complex referrals, including colleagues and parents returning for additional support, continued to be received, these included support in relation to:

- Emotionally based school avoidance, with multi-agencies working together to provide support both at home and strategies to support school staff.
- Complex social, emotional, mental health and SEND with agencies working together to utilise funds available to best support the young person.
- Enhanced transition planning to ensure a smooth transition from primary to secondary education.

Children With a Social Worker

6.1 Extended duties

Revised guidance was published in June 2022. This remains a non-statutory duty, but Warwickshire Virtual School is keen to support this cohort of children.

The revised guidance identifies the cohort of children as those who have or have had a social worker in the last six years. Some basic data has been collated to start to identify the main characteristics of the cohort for future work.

The guidance makes it clear that Virtual Schools are not to provide direct intervention, help or support for individual children, but instead work with stakeholders to:

- Make disadvantages visible and enhance partnerships to help agencies hold high aspirations
- Promote practice that supports engagement in education
- Level up outcomes and narrow the attainment gap

Work for 2202-23 will focus on identification of characteristics of the cohort, such as free school meals and SEND, alongside gathering attendance data to inform planning.

Deena Moorey

For questions or further information email: deenamoorey@warwickshire.gov.uk

Useful links:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/virtualschool>

<https://www.wmvscicfoundation.org.uk>





APPENDICES

Tables with **BLUE** headings represent the statistical cohort

Tables with **ORANGE** headings represent the whole cohort, regardless of time in care

APPENDIX A – Outcomes

- Means teacher assessment only

NB All data is unvalidated and therefore subject to change. National data not yet available for comparison.

Table A1 – Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes

GLD*	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC	-	-	25%
National CIC	-	-	
Difference	-	-	

*Good Level of Development, the expected level of development at the end of the EYFS

Table A2 – Year One Phonics outcomes

WA*	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC	-		57%
National CIC	-		
Difference	-		

*Working at or above standard

Table A3 – Key Stage One outcomes

RWM*	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC	-	-	35%
National CIC	-	-	
Difference	-	-	

*Reading, Writing and Maths at the expected standard

Table A4 – Key Stage Two outcomes

RWM	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC		-	25%
National CIC		-	
Difference		-	

Table A5 – Key Stage Four outcomes

The Basics*	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC	-	-	15%
National CIC	-	-	
Difference	-	-	

*English and Maths GCSE at grade 5 or above

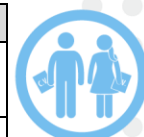


Table A6 – Attainment 8

Attainment 8	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC	-	-	
National CIC	-	-	
Difference	-	-	

Table A7 – Progress 8

Progress 8	2020	2021	2022
Warwickshire CIC	-	-	
National CIC	-	-	
Difference	-	-	

Table A8 – Post 16 destinations summer 2022

	Y12	Y13
College	34.9%	55.3
School	19.8%	9.2%
Apprenticeship	0	2.1%
Training	4.7%	2.8%
Employment	10.3%	10.6%
Other	6.3%	6.4%
Unknown	0	0
NEET	23.8%	13.5%

Table A9 – Quarterly NEET Overview

	Total Post 16 cohort*	Year 12	Year 13 in care	Year 13 care leavers
Q1 2021-22	13.8%	13.7%	19%	12.7%
Q2 2021-22	14.4%	14.3%	13.1%	37.5%
Q3 2021-22	15.2%	14.6%	11.9%	26.3%
Q4 2021-22	19.4%	22.7%	8.2%	21.1%
Q1 2022-23	16.6%	25.4%	15%	7.5%
Current quarter difference	-2.8%	+2.7%	+6.8%	-13.6%

*Includes ALL Y12 and Y13, even after 18th birthday

APPENDIX B – Cohort Information

Table B1 – Number of preschool CIC summer 2022

	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
Attending settings	74	76	77	78
Not attending/not known	7	13	13	18
TOTAL	81	89	90	96

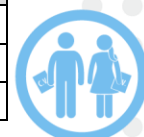


Table B2 – Number of school age CIC summer 2022

	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
New to care	6	19	11	12
Out of care	6	5	6	6
TOTAL	500	514	519	525

Table B3 – Number of Post 16 CIC summer 2022

	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
Y12	120	127	129	132
Y13	42	27	20	6
TOTAL	162	154	149	138

Table B4 – Number of UAS, all ages summer 2022

	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
New UAS	1	15	5	4
TOTAL	86	90	91	89

Table B5 – Designation of schools attended by CIC summer 2022

	CIC
mainstream	77.5%
special	11.4%
ISP	9.9%
other	0.8%

Table B6 – SEND overview by year group summer 2022

	SEND	EHCP	School type
Rec	22%	4%	100% mainstream 0 special
Y1	42%	9%	94% mainstream 6% special
Y2	22%	7%	96% mainstream 4% special
Y3	52%	22%	93% mainstream 7% special
Y4	58%	26%	84% mainstream 13% special 3% ISP
Y5	43%	20%	86% mainstream 9% special 6% ISP
Y6	65%	35%	83% mainstream 7% special 10% ISP
Y7	67%	39%	67% mainstream 17% special 13% ISP
Y8	64%	38%	64% mainstream 11% special 25% ISP
Y9	69%	33%	72% mainstream



			13% special 15% ISP
Y10	59%	41%	64% mainstream 21% special 14% ISP
Y11	43%	25%	81% mainstream 9% special 10% ISP
TOTAL	52%	28%	See table B5

APPENDIX C – Virtual School Information

Table C1 – Enrichment Activities summer 2022

UniversityGo! Year 7	A science exploration day at Thinktank in Birmingham was very popular. This was linked to Life Sciences at the University of Warwick.
UniversityGo! Year 8	Year 8 students built on their Year 7 Life Sciences by focussing on Sprots Science with Coventry University. Course options and sport facilities were shared.
UniversityGo! Year 9	Students had the change to explore Hospitality and Tourism with Coventry university. A final session introduced the group to the UNlty programme. An activity day which included a visit to Nandos proved to be a hit!
UNlty	The popular masterclass in law ran again, including the change to solve a murder mystery. Students had the opportunity to participate in a two-night residential at Whitemoor Lakes in August.

Table C2 – Virtual School Staffing Structure

Role	Post status	working weeks	hours per week	Salary scale/point	budget
VSH	permanent	52	37	Hay	core funding
Senior Education Adviser	upgraded	52	37	Soulbury 10-14	core funding Section 31 top up
Education Adviser, CIC	permanent	41	37	Soulbury 3-6	core funding
Education Adviser, CIC	fixed term	41	37	Soulbury 3-6	Section 31 reserves
Education Adviser, CPiC	permanent	52	30	Soulbury 3-6	Section 31
Post 16 Education Officer	permanent	41	37	Scale G	core funding
Early Years Education Officer	fixed term	52	12	Scale G	Section 31
Enrichment Coordinator	permanent	41	30	Scale G	core funding



VS Officer	permanent	52	22.5	Scale F	core funding
VS Officer	permanent	52	30	Scale F	core funding



APPENDIX D – School Information

Table D1 – Ofsted grading for schools attended summer 2022

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Not inspected
Warwickshire CIC	14.8%	70.1%	9.1%	3.9%	1.6%
National CIC	17%	68%	11%	4%	1.0%
Difference	-2.2%	+2.1%	-1.9%	-0.1%	+0.6%

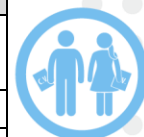


Table D2 – Attendance 2021-2022

	Total absence	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Persistent absence
National CIC				
Warwickshire CIC	11.8%	8.4%	3.6%	28.6%
Difference				

Table D3 – Attendance levels per year group to end of summer term 2022

Year group	Attended %	Authorised Absence %	Unauthorised Absence %	Persistent absence rate %
Reception	94.8	7.2	1.0	21.9
Year 1	93.0	6.9	0.2	22.1
Year 2	93.2	6.6	0.3	22.6
Year 3	94.8	5.2	0.1	8.9
Year 4	94.7	5.1	0.3	9.8
Year 5	95.3	4.6	0.2	8.9
Year 6	96.4	3.4	0.3	5.2
Year 7	93.4	5.5	1.4	20.4
Year 8	89.5	6.4	4.5	30.1
Year 9	79.5	13.2	7.1	42.5
Year 10	84.3	8.8	7.8	34.5
Year 11	76.9	15.9	7.8	57.6

Table D4 – Annual Suspensions

	Warwickshire CIC	National CIC	Difference
2017	15.04	11.46	+3.58
2018	10.10	11.28	-1.18
2019	8.55	11.38	-2.83
2020	9.8		
2021	12.6		





Table D5 – CIC spending time not on a school roll summer 2022

	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
Newly off roll	3	7	10	2
Put on roll	2	3	1	4
Total off roll	6	10	19	8

Table D6 – in-year school moves by key stage summer 2022

	EYFS	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Totals
2019-20						101
2020-21	10	10	18	26	19	83
2021-22	4	14	26	22	10	76
Sum 21	5	4	3	11	3	26
Aut 21	3	8	18	9	4	42
Spr 22	1	5	3	8	5	22
Sum 22	0	1	5	5	1	12

Table D7 – PP+ payments to schools

	Payments to schools via PEPs	Average PEP related spend per CIC	Additional funding requests	Average additional funding spend per application
Autumn 2020	£229,465	£520.33	£15,532.90	£1,941.61
Spring 2021	£256,700	£554.43	£106,458	£3,670.97
Summer 2021	£264,500	£566.38	£41,085.41	£2,934.67
Autumn 2021	£282,400	£619.30	£60,186.66	£2,507.78
Spring 2022	£295,000	£699.05	£67,040.66	£3,352.03
Summer 2022	£244,900	£540.62	£16,931.78	£1,539.25

Table D8 – Recovery Funding

	Funding requests	Average spend per CIC
Autumn 2021	£20,139	£559.42
Spring 2022	£20,453	£409.06
Summer 2022	£13,680	£651.43

For questions or further information email: deenamoorey@warwickshire.gov.uk

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Special Guardianship Order Team Annual Report 2021 – 2022

Date Issued: September 2022

Team: Fostering Team

Author: Jo Smith, Operations Manager
Louise Dudley, Team Leader



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Introduction

Local authorities are required to make arrangements for the provision of special guardianship support services. These include counselling, advice, information, and such other services (including financial support) as are prescribed in the Regulations. The Regulations also provide for the assessment of needs for special guardianship support services, and the planning and the reviewing of those support services

Since June 2019, we have developed an SGO Support Team within Warwickshire. The SGO Support Team can offer extended support to aid placement stability.

The Special Guardianship Team is a countywide service, providing a range of support to SGO holders, individuals who have a child (previously Looked After) on a Child Arrangement Order and or are seeking a Special Guardianship Order.

(For the purpose of this report a Special Guardianship Order will be referred to as an SGO)

Support includes:

An SGO Duty Support Line.

Allocated SGO Support Social Worker.

A Family Support Social Worker.

Applications & Monitoring to the Adoption Support Fund for therapeutic intervention.

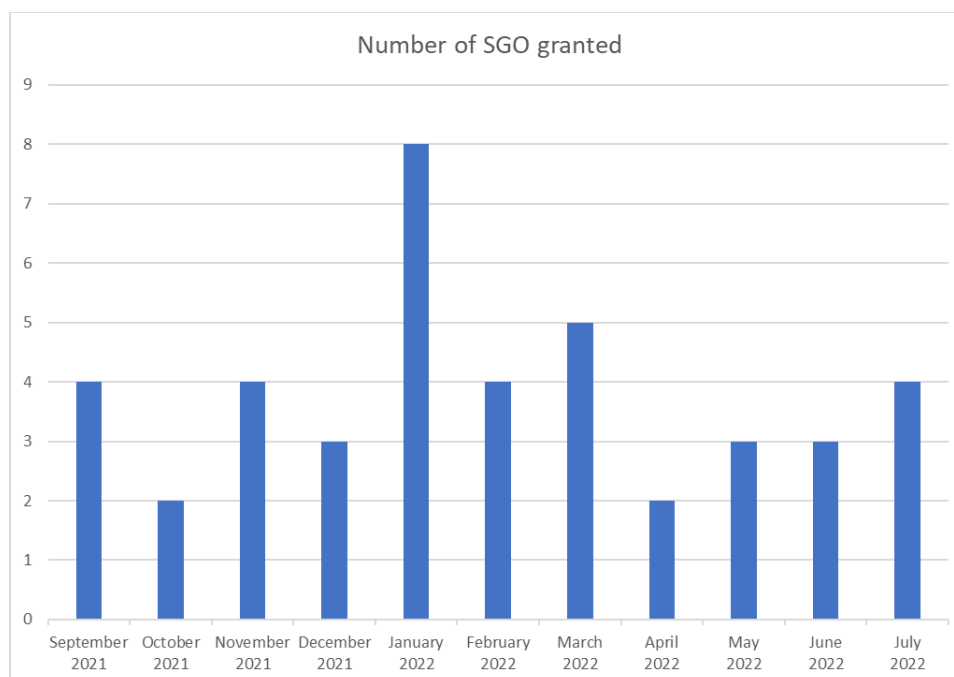
Quarterly SGO Newsletter.

Monthly Coffee Mornings.

Therapeutic Life Story Work

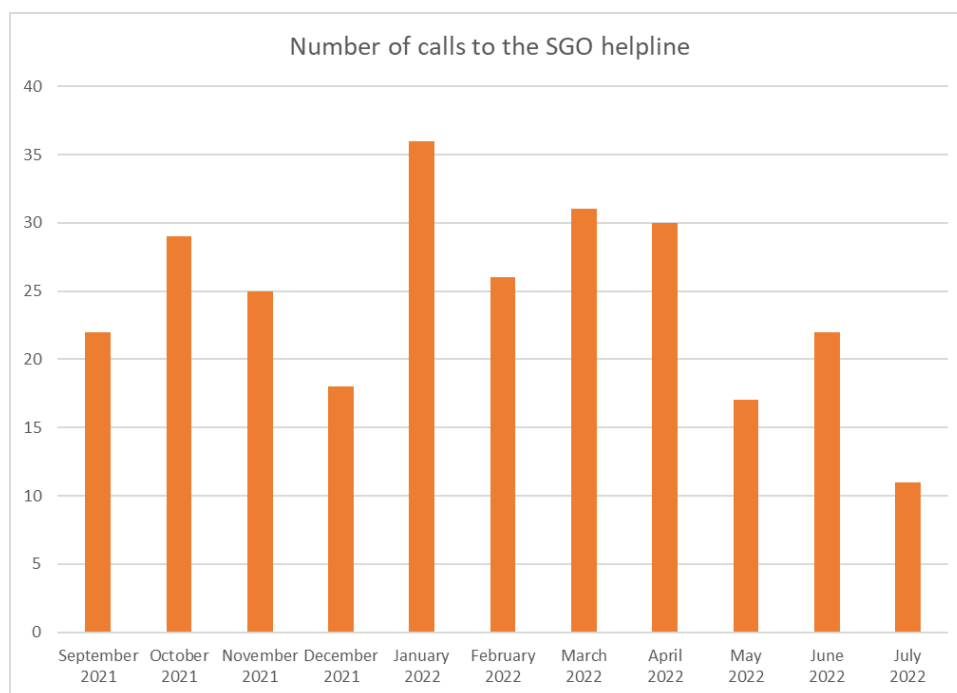
Warwickshire Fostering Data

Data received into the service indicates that month on month Special Guardianship Orders are increasing. Since formally recording within our service there have been 48 Special Guardianship Orders granted between September 2021 to July 2022.



We are consistently receiving four or more new referrals a month into our SGO Duty Support Line, requesting support for SGO caring Families. These referrals come from either the SGO carers themselves or professionals working with the SGO families either within Warwickshire or from other Local authority areas. Currently staff have a stable case load of up to 18 families. Two of the team members are also now Therapeutic Life Story Work (TLSW) trained, so within their case allocations, they also carry out one piece of Therapeutic Life Story work with a young person at one time. This has worked well, however the Special Guardianship Support Social Workers are still developing their skills in this area and have valued the support of other workers who are (TLSW) within Warwickshire.

We are now at a point where cases cannot be allocated immediately due to capacity, and work is allocated when workers have availability.



The number of calls into the Duty Support Line are recorded each month. The highest numbers recorded were in January 2022 at 36 and the lowest July 2022 at 11. Workers report that the summer holiday period can be quieter.

Calls are varied in terms of issues, but include family time issues, finance, and behaviour management, these calls can result in sign posting to other services, advice and guidance or a referral for assessment into our team for a SGO Support Needs Assessment.

Adoption Support Fund Data known as ASF (including new ASF criteria)

ASF Data for Warwickshire SGO Team

2021/22

Quarter 1

01/04/21 – 30/06/21	10 approved applications	£37,902.53
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Quarter 2

01/07/21 – 30/09/21	10 approved applications	£33,929.88
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Quarter 3

01/10/21 – 31/12/21	8 approved applications	£23,165.75
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Quarter 4 01/01/22 – 31/03/22**	0 approved applications	
2022/23		
Quarter 1 01/04/22 – 30/06/22*	17 approved applications	£62,734.58

The Adoption Support Fund eligibility criteria changed from April 2022 widening its eligibility criteria which is as follows:

- From 1 April 2022, we will extend the eligibility criteria for ASF to include all children under a Residency Order or Child Arrangement Order who were previously looked after. This means that all children under permanence arrangements who were previously looked after will have the same access to the ASF.
- Additionally, from 1 April 2022 we will extend the eligibility criteria to those children that were previously looked after but whose Adoption, Special Guardianship, Residency or Child Arrangement Order placement has broken down, irrespective of any reconciliation plans. This will enable children to continue to receive support to improve future outcomes or potentially to aid a return home.

This has had a slight impact on the SGO support service as we are now receiving referrals for young people where their SGO placements have broken down, and also for children whose adoptive placements have broken down.

Structure of the Team

Team Leader Louise Dudley on an 18.5-hour contract
3 SGO Support Social workers. Hannah Douthwaite, on a permanent 30-hour contract, Vickey Hodgkinson on a fixed term 37-hour contract until March 2023 and Marta Teichert on a fixed term 37-hour contract until March 2023. The team also has access to Ria George Family Support Worker, who can offer family support services to SGO caring families.

Functions of the Teams

The SGO Support Team offers a duty support line which is available Monday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm Professionals within Warwickshire and outside of county boundary can call and seek advice and guidance in respect of Special Guardianship in relation to any children or young people who were previously looked after by Warwickshire Children's Services,

Professionals can also refer into our service any SGO carers living in the Warwickshire area post the three years of an SGO order being granted in another local authority area.

SGO carers themselves can also contact the SGO duty support line to discuss any worries or concerns. Referrals into the service can be made through the duty line or by Warwickshire staff through Mosaic. Staff each do one week at a time on duty.

As a team we have been increasingly asked to attend meetings with workers and potential SGO carers to give information about the SGO support offer within Warwickshire. The feedback from these meetings is that carers interested in securing an SGO have found these beneficial.

The SGO Support Social Workers work restoratively with families to support in times of need and crisis. Social workers complete an SGO Needs Assessment to ascertain current need and challenges and look towards supporting these needs. A recommendation from an assessment could be to apply for ASF funding to support with the therapeutic needs of the family. At times SGO Support Social Workers contribute to the planning and support of Early Help and Child In Need Plans, as the families open to our services can also have Children's Services involved in their lives. SGO Support Social Workers also refer into the Front Door should safeguarding concerns arise.

Training for SGO carers

Warwickshire SGO Support Team was a member of the Special Guardianship Project Group; this group was formed to devise a training program for those people who were interested in securing an SGO Order. This project has now concluded and a training program consisting of four areas has been devised. Here in Warwickshire conversations have been had to identify how we implement this training. Meetings have been held with the Fostering Training Manager to look at the detail as to how Warwickshire can facilitate this training. Initial thoughts are that there is enough content to cover a 5-hour training session, work with our Permanency Co-Ordinator has started to identify potential attendees, for the first training session.

In addition to the specific training SGO carers can have access to all the training available to mainstream foster carers.

Challenges to the SGO Team

Working within the new remit criteria of the ASF brings challenges, including an increase in referrals to work with SGO and Adoption breakdowns. The logistics in terms of ASF applications and allocation of children. In addition to working with an increase in breadth of this work. This leaves the service in a position where a waiting list for allocation will be required.

The new remit of the ASF has not been cascaded through to social work teams, whilst a decision is made as to who will take responsibility for this an interim measure is in place that and the SGO team has picked this up.

Moving forward this will need to be managed by a service who has access to the ASF and has a clear system to meet the financial accounting requirements and annual audit. Currently in Warwickshire, only the SGO team has this. The promotion of the widened ASF criteria has not been changed in our current leaflets. They will be changed when a decision has been made about who will lead on this. There is no specific budget for the SGO team. Therefore, all materials for therapeutic life story work, facility costs and artwork come from the main fostering budget.

The SGO support team continues to evolve however staffing constraints hamper resources to facilitate the SGO carer training and all the development work and services that could be provided to SGO carers, these could include a buddy service, respite care, activity days, walks, teenage support group, letterbox contact service, online support groups.

SGO Carer spreadsheet

This needs to be a far more robust spreadsheet to enable the collection of new data in respect of SGO carers and the existing data of SGO carers currently living in the boundary of Warwickshire. This will enable us to connect with all SGO carers and inform them of support services, allow us to proactively support carers rather than working with them at a point of crisis.

Summary

The total spends for ASF applications for 2021-2022 is £54,470.96 and it is anticipated this will increase in 2022-2023, the indication from the second quarter figures in 2022, is that we have already applied £70,298.58 worth of funding.

Special Guardianship Orders are increasing in Warwickshire and Nationally, therefore, it is reasonable to expect that this service needs to expand. If the decision is made that the SGO support team is to take on the additional responsibility of SGO, Adoption, Child Arrangement Order or Residency breakdowns (where a child has been Section 20) for therapeutic services from the ASF we do not have the ability to meet this demand without additional staff. Out of the 3 social work staff we have, 1 post is the only permanent one.

It is imperative that to meet the demands of the service and the growing need of SGO carers in a situation where we are seeing a significant growth in SGO's being granted that consideration is given to the expansion and development of the team to ensure that we have a stable, knowledgeable team that will enable us to offer and develop the service to meet the needs of SGO carers and the children that they care for.

Item	Report detail	Date of Meeting
Update from CICC and Care Leaver Forum	Receive an update from children and young people from the CICC and Care Leaver Forum.	* Standing items for every meeting
Performance Data	Report which includes key data regarding CLA & Care Leavers	
Development of Work Programme for 2023/2024 and Forward Plan information	To consider proposed work programme & future areas of work for the panel; including information from the forward plan with items relevant to the remit of the panel	
Good news stories	Officers to put forward good news stories for CLA, care leavers & foster carers.	
Report from the Virtual School Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Term (March/April) - annual report • Summer Term (July/August) - school stability, exclusions, attendance, PEP completion rates for the academic year, Post 16 overview • Autumn term (November) - data forecast for the academic year, Post 16 EET destinations 	Quarterly Report

Report detail	Date of Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the need and timescales for care leavers and CLA receiving a CAMHS/RISE service and a report into the process for mental health assessments (Zoe Mayhew) 	<i>To be rescheduled</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGO Policy Impact and Report Virtual School Autumn Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28th November 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWIFT Annual report for health Timescales for Mental Health The Vanguard Project (rescheduled from February 2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16th January 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance for Child in Care – Angela Richardson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27th March 2023

Actions from the previous meetings/Additions to the work programme

- County Line – a police representative will be asked to attend
- Child Exploitation – suggest that this is a one item only agenda
- Partnership working with District and Borough colleagues - A Charter with shared objectives will be presented to the panel after April 2022
- Review into the turnover of Social Workers to identify any trends (John Coleman).
- Invitation to be sent to a representative of the Police to join a discussions in relation to missing children (Sharon Shaw).

Information circulated to Members outside of meetings

None currently

Items included on the Forward Plan relevant to the remit of the Panel:

The remit of the panel is to secure elected member and cross-organisation support and commitment for delivering improvement services and better outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers: *(updated 23/11/2023)*

Decision	Description	Date due	Decision Maker
None currently			

Future Meetings - 2022/23

- 16th January 2023 at 10am
- 27th March 2023 at 10am

Proposed Dates for 2023/24

- 16th January 2023 at 10am
- 27th March 2023 at 10am
- 19th June 2023 at 10am
- 18th September 2023 at 10am
- 13th November 2023 at 10am
- 15th January 2024 at 10am
- 25th March 2024 at 10am

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