

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 16TH APRIL 2007
SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 16TH APRIL 2007

REPORT ON: STRATEGY FOR DELIVERING IMPROVED EDUCATIONAL
OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE IN DUNDEE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 170 - 2007

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval, in general terms, for the development of a strategy to address and improve the educational attainment of Dundee's Looked after Children and Young People.
- 1.2 It suggests a Corporate framework for improving these outcomes for our Looked After Children and Young People over the next 3 years.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the content of report and attached strategic action plan;
- 2.2 Direct the Directors of Education and Social Work to continue to implement the strategic action plan, and to review progress made towards the outcomes of the strategic action plan in March 2008.
- 2.3 Direct the Directors of Education and Social Work to explore different approaches and models of corporate parenting, such as that developed by the London Borough of Barnett and as recommended in, "We Can and Must Do Better" (SE 2007).
- 2.4 Direct the Directors of Education and Social Work to review the progress of the LAC (Educational Attainment) Project on a six monthly basis over the next 12 months.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial costs for implementing improvement of educational attainment of Looked After Children strategy has been met by Scottish Executive funding that ceases in March 2008.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability policy implications.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The contents of the standards encompass the rights of children and young people to be provided with equitable services to meet their diverse needs. The standards also detail the roles and responsibilities for those staff that have a duty, under legislation, to protect and improve the lives of children, young people and their families.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 In 2000 Dundee City Council adopted a Corporate Parenting Policy that states :

"When carrying out corporate parenting responsibilities the Council will adopt the behaviour of a good parents at all times. It will share collective responsibility for ensuring that children who are looked after are provided with quality experiences and the help they need to maximise their full education, social and economic potential. It will ensure that work is undertaken in partnership with children, parents and carers and in the best interests of individual children. The Council will, when carrying out these duties, act as positive advocates for these vulnerable children and will actively challenge instances with less favourable or different treatment".

The definition of a Corporate Parent is:

"the formal and local partnerships needed between all local authority departments and services, and associated agencies, who are responsible for working together to meet the need of looked after children and young people",

(We Can and Must Do Better, Scottish Executive, P.3, 2007).

The term "looked after" (LAC) refers to children and young people who are subject to a supervision requirement and live with parents or other family members, as well as those children and young people who are required to live with foster carers or in a residential setting.

- 6.2 Dundee City Council's Integrated Children's Services Plan, " A Plan for Dundee's Children 2005-2008", identifies looked after children as one of its strategic priorities. One of the main aims identified in the plan is to assess need, co-ordinate intervention and deliver effective services that ensure better outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- 6.3 "Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better", was published in January 2007, by the Scottish Executive. This is the most recent publication following on from others, which highlight and reflect current national policy and intentions for achieving the best possible educational and life outcomes for looked after children and young people and their families.

Some of the other key publications are referred to within the accompanying strategic action plan, and provide a backdrop for all local authorities to revisit and further develop a range of services that better meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people.

6.4 In Dundee some recent statistics of our children looked after children and young people are:

- Local authorities looked after 12,966 children at 31st March 2006. This was an increase of 6 per cent from 2005.
- **In Dundee at 31st March 2006 there were 474 children looked after, representing an increase of 3.8% on the previous year.**
- The proportion of children who are looked after in Scotland has been rising steadily since 2000 and this year reached 1.16% of the child population, the highest since 1982.
- **The proportion in Dundee has also risen and this year reached 1.7% of the child population.**
- Across Scotland, 56% of looked after children were placed at home with parents or with friends/relatives. 13% were looked after in residential accommodation.
- In Dundee, 62% of looked after children were living at home with parents or with friends/relatives. 10% were looked after in residential accommodation, representing an improvement of 1 percentage point from last year and 3 percentage points better than the national statistic.
- Across all local authorities, 2% of children who had been looked after away from home for between 6 weeks and 6 months had experienced 6 or more placements within that period of being looked after. 67% had experienced only one placement.
- **In Dundee, 82% of the children who had been looked after for less than 6 months had experienced one placement only and 18% had experienced only two placements.**
- Approximately 45% of care leavers beyond minimum school leaving age who had been looked after at home achieved at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or above, compared to 57% of care leavers who had been looked after away from home.
- **In Dundee, 41% of those who had been looked after at home achieved at least one qualification, compared to 73% of care leavers who had been looked after away from home.**
- Approximately 28% of care leavers beyond minimum school leaving age who had been looked after at home achieved both English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or above, compared to 41% of care leavers who had been looked after away from home.
- **In Dundee, 30% of those who had been looked after at home achieved both English and Maths, compared to 50% of those who had been looked after away from home.**

6.5 The report, "Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better" (SE) highlights and addresses 8 notable messages:

- The importance of the corporate parenting role;
- The need to raise awareness of the educational needs of looked after children and young people and improve training for foster carers, residential workers, lead professionals, support workers and associated professionals;
- The need for clarity regarding the role and responsibilities of the designated person within schools and residential establishments;
- The importance of providing flexible and appropriate support before, during and post transitions;
- The importance of physical, mental and emotional health and well being in facilitating positive educational outcomes;
- The need for good quality accommodation, which supports the education, training or employment of looked after children and young people;
- The importance of clear advice and a range of emotional, practical and financial support for looked after young people as they make the transition to adulthood/independent living; and,,
- The vital importance of stability and continuity within education and care settings.

6.6 Dundee City Council has a responsibility to progress these messages, which have a focus on education at all levels. Our responsibilities for looked after children and young people go far beyond these messages, but this report specifically aims to address the education outcomes for children and young people who are looked after.

7. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

7.1 The accompanying Strategic Action Plan: "Delivering Improved Educational Outcomes For Looked After Children And Young People In Dundee" has 4 Strategic Priorities. These are as follows:

Priority 1

To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.

Priority 2

To improve the Educational Outcomes for all looked after children and young people.

Priority 3

To increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how these impact on their educational attainment.

Priority 4

To increase the effectiveness of our communication and information gathering regarding the needs and issues of looked after children and young people, and to act on this information to improve their educational outcomes.

Fundamental to all of the above will be our commitment to consult with and involve children and young people in the actions we take towards the above priorities.

Each section sets out clear targets and action points to be undertaken at Corporate, Strategic and Departmental levels.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and the Director of Education have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

Date: 06/04/07

Anne Wilson
Director of Education

Date: 06/04/07

**DELIVERING IMPROVED
EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES
FOR LOOKED AFTER
CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE IN DUNDEE**

A STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

2007 - 2010

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out a strategic framework for improving educational outcomes for looked after children and young people in Dundee. It identifies 4 key priorities on which to focus our delivery to achieve improved outcomes and presents a range of actions relating to these priorities. It also shows the expected outcomes and required resources for implementation, within a given timescale.

By doing these things, this document aims to show a clear and achievable path to giving looked after children and young people in Dundee the best possible support, to enable them to achieve improved outcomes throughout their education.

How has this document been developed?

Although educational outcomes for looked after children and young people have improved in the last year (2005/06), there is significant room for further improvement. Because of this, the Scottish Executive is providing additional funding to local authorities to address these key issues.

The funding provided to Dundee City Council will be used to undertake work specifically aimed at raising attainment levels and educational outcomes for looked after children and young people. This funding ends in March 2008.

This work is being jointly supported by both Social Work and Education Departments, through the work of the multi-agency Looked After Children (LAC) sub group, which inputs directly to the Council's Integrated Children's Services Implementation Management Group.

The LAC Group has representatives from various Council Departments and other agencies such as Health and the voluntary sector, who work in partnership to ensure that work undertaken is integrated and focuses on achieving better outcomes for looked after children and young people.

This document has been developed in the above context, using a multi-agency approach. It recognises that improving the educational outcomes for Dundee's looked after children and young people requires more than just the work of one department or agency.

**We are working together to improve the educational outcomes
for looked after children and young people in Dundee.**

Definitions

The term "looked after children" (LAC) refers to children and young people who are subject to a legal supervision requirement, who may continue to live with parents or other family members, as well as those children and young people who are required to live with foster carers or in a residential setting. Those children who are looked after away from their own home are considered to be "looked after and accommodated".

Children and young people can become "looked after" for many reasons.

These could include:

- physical abuse or neglect;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- some may have suffered the death of a parent, or have parents who can't look after them properly because of illness, lifestyle or other family circumstances;
- others may have disabilities and many different needs; and
- a small number are looked after and accommodated due to offences they have committed.

All children who are looked after and require to live away from their families, will have experienced the trauma of being separated from these families. In addition, many of them will have experienced neglect, abuse or rejection, or the early effects on their development due to parental substance misuse.

Looked after children and young people may continue to live at home with their birth parents or other family members, as well as with foster carers or in a residential setting

Life Outcomes and Education Attainment of Looked after Children and Young People

For many looked after children and young people, expected life outcomes and education attainment is significantly lower than for those within the general population.

The Scottish Executive has set out a vision for the life outcomes of Scotland's looked after children and young people.

These are that all children should be:

Safe

Nationally, in 2005, over 9,000 children and young people were reported to Scottish Local Authorities because of concerns for their safety.

As of the 31st December 2006, over 97 children and young people were on the child protection register in Dundee.

Every child and young person is safe and protected from abuse, harm and neglect.

Nurtured

The latest Scottish Executive figures (as of March 2006) indicate that there are nearly 13,000 looked after children in Scotland. Of these, just under 6,000 children and young people were living with foster carers. The remaining 56% were either in a residential placement (13%), or staying with relatives, friends or another arrangement.

In Dundee, as of 31st December 2006, over 140 of our looked after children and young people live with foster carers. Around 50 are accommodated in residential establishments. The rest continue to be looked after with relatives, friends or another arrangement.

Every child and young person is nurtured and is happy, secure and welcome in all settings.

Achieving

In Scotland, of the young people who left care in 2005-06, beyond the minimum school leaving age, 50% had at least one qualification at SCQF level 3 or above, and 34% had both English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or above.

The greatest improvement is with young people who ceased to be looked after at home.

In Dundee as of 31st December 2006, 54% of looked after children and young people, who left care, beyond the minimum school leaving age, had one qualification at SCQF level 3 or above. 38% had both English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or above.

Every child and young person achieves and reaches own full potential.

Healthy and Active

Children and young people from low income families are much more likely to experience social exclusion, lifestyles which put health at risk and poorer access to health services.

Significant numbers of looked after children and young people present mental health issues. Research undertaken in 2004 found that one in ten looked after children and young people had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder (the disorder causing distress to the child or having a considerable impact on the child's day to day life). (Source: National Statistics - The Mental Health of young people Looked After By Local Authorities in Scotland 2005).

Local data for children born in 1998, showed that at pre-school review, 21.2% were over weight or obese. Nationally, by the age of 16, 2 in every 3 girls, and 1 in every 3 boys, do not reach the recommended minimum levels of physical activity (National Physical Activity Strategy 2003). In Dundee, all schools will be Active Schools by 2007. This means that all children and young people of nursery and school age should have 2 hours of structured physical activity every week.

For looked after children and young people who are excluded from school, or on a part time timetable, this often does not happen.

Every child and young person is healthy and active, has health needs identified and addressed promptly and takes part in a full range of activities at school and in the community.

Respected and Responsible

31% of young people under the age of 22 said that they would definitely not vote in the 1997 general election (MORI, 1997).¹

Young people are concerned about political issues but not so interested in politics. (JRF, 2000)¹.

Only 34% of participating children in the "Our Lives" Report had heard about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. (SCF, 1999)¹

Every child and young person is respected and responsible and shares in decision making.

Included

25.3% of children in Dundee live in workless households (Healthy Scotland Community Profiles 2004)

27.6% of children in Primary Schools and 21.2% in Secondary Schools are entitled to free school meals. (Source: SE)

Over a quarter of Dundee's population (28.3%) live in the 15% most deprived data zones in Scotland - a proportion third only to Glasgow (53.4%) and Inverclyde (33.1%). (Source: SMID 2004)

In the 2001 Census, 3.7% of Dundee's population came from ethnic minority populations compared to 2.0% for Scotland as a whole, with 1.2% from the Pakistani community, compared to 0.6% for Scotland as a whole.

Every child and young person is included and knows that barriers will be taken seriously and addressed.

¹ Source: A Plan for Dundee's Children, 2005 - 8

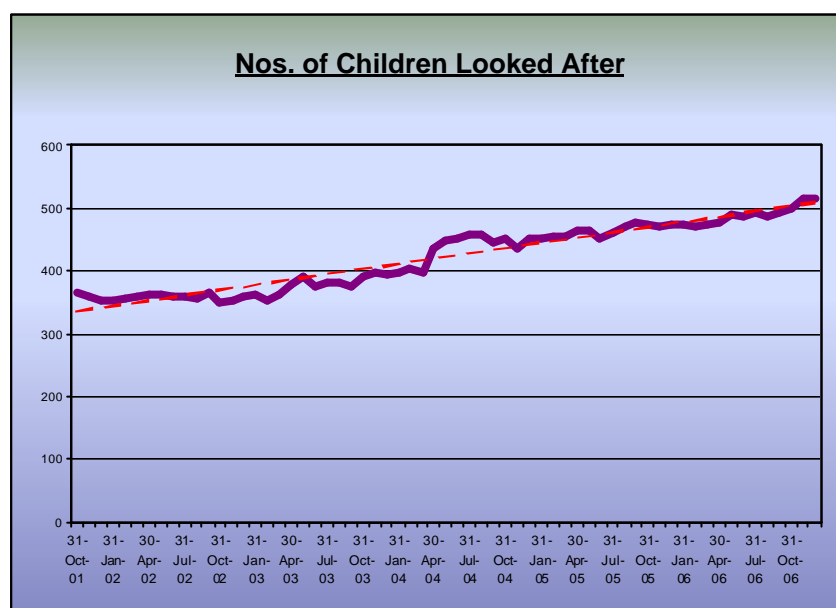
Local Context

As of December 2006, we had 516 looked after children and young people in Dundee City.

This represents an increase of 9% on last year's December figure and an increase of 45% on the December 2001 figure.

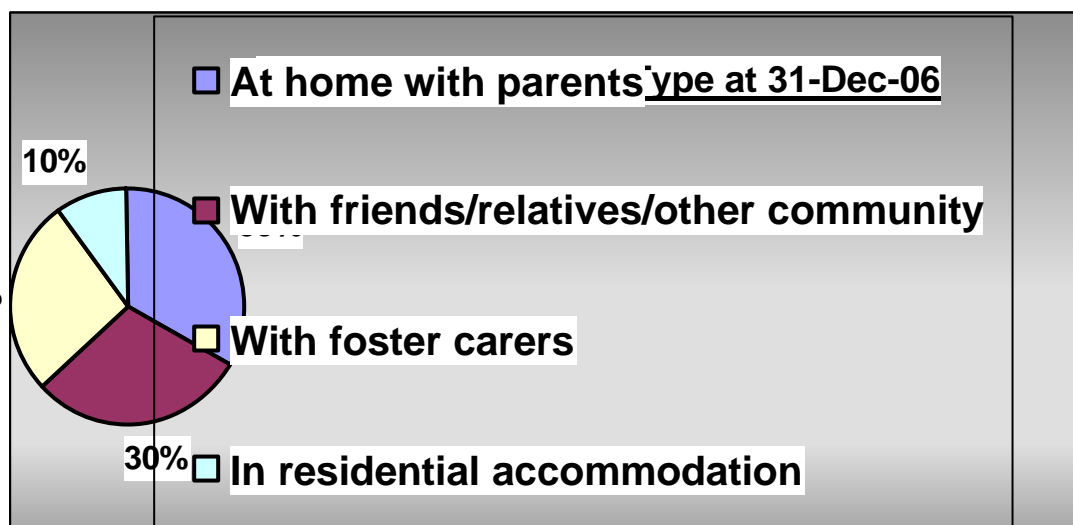
This demonstrates the increasing trend in the proportion of children who are looked after in Dundee - now standing at 1.85% of the child population - the last reported rate (March 06) for Scotland as a whole was 1.16%.

Figure 1 - Nos of Looked After Children (31 October '01 - 31 October '06)



Looked after children and young people in Dundee are accommodated in a variety of places.

Figure 2 - % of Looked After Children and Young People by Placement Type



Over the past 12 months the average % of looked after children and young people accommodated in residential settings at any given time has been 10%. This compares well to the last nationally reported figure (March '06) of 13%.

Despite a significant increase (45% since 2001) in the number of looked after children, the proportion of children and young people in residential accommodation has actually fallen and is being maintained below the national average. In Dundee, the proportion of children and young people cared for at home or within their extended family now accounts for 63% of all children and young people who are looked after.

Academic Attainment of Looked After Children and Young People

In Dundee, we have continued to increase the number of looked after children and young people who leave care having attained standard grade english and maths at SCQF level 3 or higher.

Our year on year trend looked like this as of the end of academic session 2006.

Figure 3 - Academic attainment of children aged 16 – 17 who ceased to be looked after

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
None (No qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher)	62%	72%	60%	66%	46%
At least 1 subject at SCQF level 3 or higher	38%	28%	40%	33%	54%
Both English & Maths at SCQF level 3 or higher	18%	10%	19%	22%	38%

The figures for 2005-06 suggest a significant improvement in the academic attainment of previously looked after children.

It should be noted that the Scottish Executive changed the reporting requirements for 2005-06 to include all care leavers beyond minimum school leaving age (not just those aged 16 or 17 as in previous years).

This may therefore account for some of the improvements suggested by the 2005-06 statistics.

Despite our apparent recent improvements, this still falls far short of the nationally reported 'average' attainment of 7 standard grades at any level (Learning with Care, 2001) and the national target of both English and Maths standard grades to be achieved by all children (Social Justice Milestone No.8).

The following 3 charts expand on the above table

Figure 4 - No Qualifications at SCQF level 3 or higher

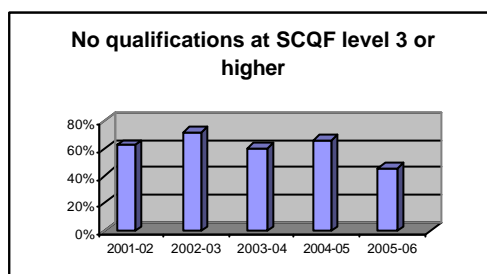


Figure 5 - At least 1 subject at SCQF level 3 or above

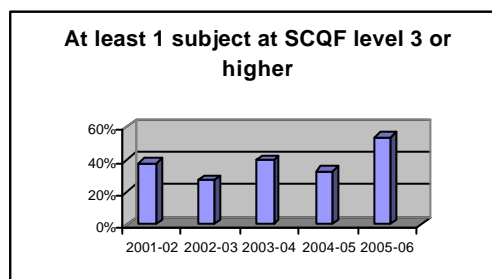
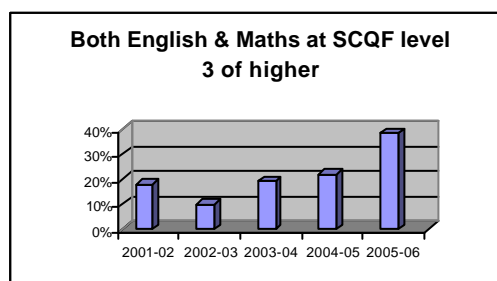


Figure 6 - Both English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or higher



Nationally, only 1% of looked after children and young people go on to University compared to 50% of the general population; 46% of young women and 59% of young men leave school without any qualifications. (Source: Extraordinary Lives, Social Work Inspection Agency 2006).

The Academic Attainment Of Children And Young People Looked After At Home And Those Looked After Away From Home.

There are significant differences in educational outcomes for looked after children and young people who remain at home compared to those who are looked after and accommodated away from home.

The following 2 charts clearly show that, with the exception of 2004-05, the attainment of children looked after at home has been considerably poorer than those looked after and accommodated away from home.

Figure 7 - Comparison of at least 1 subject at SCQF level 3 or higher (Young people looked after at home or away from home).

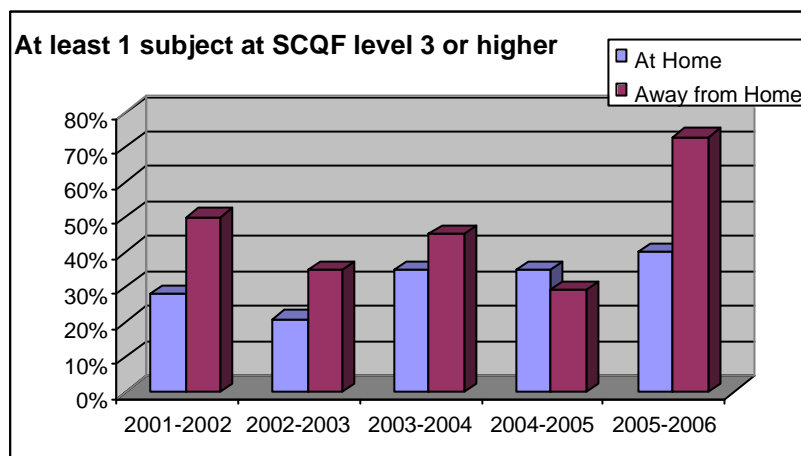
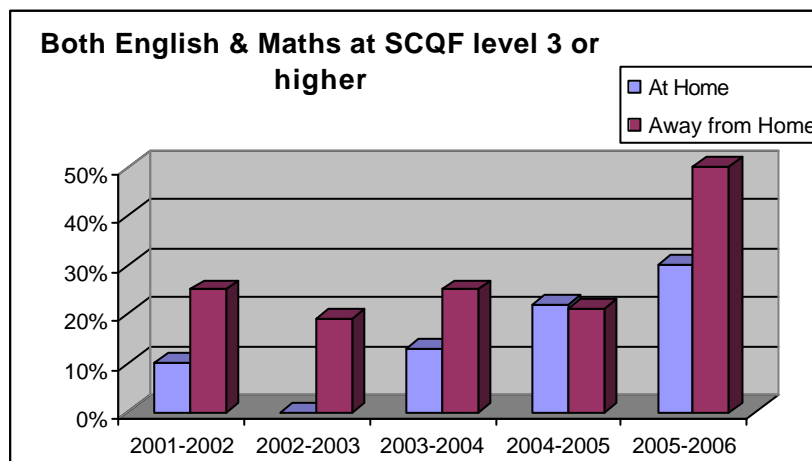


Figure 8 - Comparison of English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or higher (Young people looked after at home or away from home).



This presents us with particular challenges aimed at improving the educational outcomes of this group of children and young people who are looked after at home.

National thinking and policy

Over the last few years there has been a range of national policy documents, research, and recommendations that reaffirm the need to improve the educational outcomes for looked after children and young people.

These include:

We Can And Must Do Better

The Scottish Executive published this document in January 2007.

It reflects the findings of a Scottish Executive working group, which was established specifically to consider the educational outcomes of looked after children and young people.

It sets out key messages aimed at tackling these deep-rooted but not insurmountable issues and concludes that "the status quo for (looked after children and young people) is simply not acceptable.

Getting It Right for Every Child

The Scottish Executive published its initial implementation plan for Getting It Right for Every Child in June 2006, and a further consultation paper on the Draft Children's Services (Scotland) Bill, in December 2006.

The implementation plan and proposed legislation changes aim to reform children's services in the areas of **practice** (developing and changing the tools professionals need to do their jobs), the **removal of barriers** (what gets in the way of agencies working together), and **legislation** (placing new duties on agencies and professionals to foster further co-operation and take action to meet the needs of children and young people).

Extraordinary Lives

The Social Work Inspectorate published this document in June 2006.

It reviewed what good care for children and young people who are looked after by local authorities looks like, identified good practice and recommended further areas for improvement.

It sets out key messages that show there is nothing inevitable about looked after children and young people doing less well in education, having poor health or being involved in crime.

Evaluating Services for Children and Young People Using Quality Indicators

The HMle published this document in 2006.

It sets out a self-evaluation framework for assessing the quality of services for children and young people, identifying strengths in this provision and highlighting areas where further development or improvements in services are required.

It allows those involved in delivering an integrated approach to services for children and young people to prepare for anticipated inspections by the end of 2008.

Learning With Care

The HMle and Social Work Services Inspectorate published this jointly in March 2001.

The report describes the educational experiences of looked after children and made recommendations to achieve progress. In addition to this, a package of training materials designed to help staff and carers of looked after children and young people raise their education attainment and improve outcomes was published in May 2003.

Common Themes

The above documents have a series of common and recurring themes that require to be reflected in any action taken to improve educational outcomes for looked after children and young people. :

These are:

- **the need to strengthen and develop the role of Corporate Parenting and responsibility for looked after children and young people, and to act as champions;**
- **the requirement to work collaboratively, share information and develop effective joint practice that changes educational and life outcomes for looked after children and young people;**
- **the need to raise awareness of the specific issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how they impact on their capacity to attain and achieve;**
- **the need to improve training for those supporting looked after children and young people on how to best meet their educational expectations in a flexible and consistent way;**
- **the need to challenge the stereotype of looked after children and young people and the expectation that it is inevitable they will fail;**
- **the requirement to improve our knowledge about what we know about our looked after children and young people and what we do with that information;**
- **the importance that stability, support through transitions, good health and wellbeing play in assisting looked after children and young people to attain; and**
- **the need to consult and involve looked after children and young people in this work and regularly monitor how well we are doing what we say we will.**

As well as these national documents, we are also guided by our own strategic aims and objectives relating to our commitment to looked after children and young people in Dundee. These include the following:

Dundee City Council's Corporate Parenting Policy

This was adopted by Council in 2000.

Corporate Parenting emphasises the collective responsibility of the local authority to achieve good parenting for the children in their care.

The policy allows those who have the responsibilities of corporate parents to enhance their decision-making and scrutiny roles in respect of children in need in the city.

It states that:

"When carrying out corporate parenting responsibilities the Council will adopt the behaviour of a good parents at all times".

The Education of Pupils who are Looked After by the Local Authority

This document was adopted jointly by the Education and Social Work Departments in 2001.

It provides a position statement on the education of looked after children and young people which supports the concept of social inclusion and that children and young people who are looked after are amongst the most needy and vulnerable pupils in the city.

Among its recommendations is that one senior member of staff be nominated to co-ordinate support for looked after children and young people.

A Plan for Dundee's Children 2005 - 08

This document expresses the council's shared commitment to the children, young people and families of Dundee.

It is built around a vision that every child and young person in the City matters and deserves the best possible life outcomes.

It commits Dundee City Council and its planning partners to working together to ensure that our children's services are as good as they can be.

It sets out how a range of agencies will work better to improve the lives of children and young people in Dundee, helping them to lead lives that are safe, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included.

In order to progress this agenda, a Strategic Planning Group consisting of key representatives from every Council department, Health, the Police and the voluntary sector meet on a regular basis.

Agencies represented in this strategic planning and implementation process work together to ensure there is an integrated approach to the delivery of services for children and young people in Dundee happens effectively.

Standards for Children and Young People Looked After and Looked After and Accommodated

This document was adopted as policy by Social Work Department in November 2006.

It provides a structured framework showing the specific standards of care expected for children and young people who become looked after and accommodated.

It covers the criteria for assessment, related policy or legislative references, and sources of evidence for processes relating to every stage of a child or young person life whilst they are accommodated by Dundee City Council.

It sets out clear guidelines for the welfare of children and young people relating to:

- assessment of their needs;
- planning, intervention and reviews;
- matching the child or young person with appropriate care away from their birth families;
- the responsibilities of the child or young person's social worker;
- providing a safe and positive environment ;
- their health care and development;
- their educational needs;
- their contact with their families and friends; and
- recording of and access to information held about them.

Dundee City Council and its partners have a shared commitment to positive educational outcomes for looked after children and young people.

Our Strategic Priorities for Change

In order to ensure the implementation of national and local policies, we have developed a set of 4 Strategic Priorities for change. These are:

Priority 1

To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.

Priority 2

To improve the Educational Outcomes for all looked after children and young people.

Priority 3

To increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how these impact on their educational attainment.

Priority 4

To increase the effectiveness of our communication and information gathering regarding the needs and issues of looked after children and young people, and to act on this information to improve their educational outcomes.

Fundamental to all of the above will be our commitment to consult with and involve children and young people in the actions we take towards the above priorities.

Priority 1

To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.

The definition of a Corporate Parent is:

"the formal and local partnerships needed between all local authority departments and services, and associated agencies, who are responsible for working together to meet the need of looked after children and young people",

(We Can and Must Do Better, Scottish Executive, P.3, 2007).

In 2000 Dundee City Council adopted a Corporate Parenting Policy that states:

"When carrying out corporate parenting responsibilities the Council will adopt the behaviour of a good parents at all times. It will share collective responsibility for ensuring that children who are looked after are provided with quality experiences and the help they need to maximise their full education, social and economic potential. It will ensure that work is undertaken in partnership with children, parents and carers and in the best interests of individual children. The Council will, when carrying out these duties, act as positive advocates for these vulnerable children and will actively challenge instances with less favourable or different treatment".

Since 2000 when this policy was first implemented there have been significant developments at a national level.

In addition to this, we have also established our Integrated Children's Services Strategic Planning Group that allows us to collectively develop and improve our internal systems and procedures to reflect good consistent models of parenting.

Our Programme for Change is that

- **Corporate Parenting is further recognised and valued;**
- **the understanding of Corporate Parenting by those making decisions increases, and that decision-making is underpinned by the needs of looked after children and young people;**
- **our looked after children and young people are supported and their needs addressed through every aspect of corporate structures. Their quality of life is enhanced by the decisions and actions taken by their corporate parents;**
- **each individual looked after child or young person has a champion to assist with addressing his or her needs;**
- **practical ways of making Corporate Parenting work in reality are identified. Barriers to this are recognised and strategies for eliminating these barriers are agreed;**
- **the significance of the Corporate Parent remains a priority; and**
- **Our looked after children and young people achieve the best life and educational outcomes.**

Priority 1

To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.</p>	<p>Our looked after children and young people are supported at a corporate level.</p>	<p>Revise and update the Council's Corporate Parenting policy.</p>	<p>Sept 2007 LAC Group</p>	<p>Officer Time</p>	
		<p>Brief new and existing Elected Members on the Council's roles and responsibilities re Corporate Parenting.</p>	<p>Oct 2007 ICSSPG</p>	<p>Officer Time</p>	<p>Progress report Sept 2007</p>
		<p>Hold a joint seminar for all corporate parent partners.</p>	<p>Feb 2008 LAC Group</p>	<p>Cost of Seminar, venue, etc.</p>	<p>Progress report Oct 2007</p>
	<p>The needs of looked after children and young people are addressed by relevant corporate structures and the decisions they take.</p>	<p>Ensure Corporate Parenting issues that affect looked after children and young people are discussed and recorded when Departments make decisions relating to services that will affect the lives of children and young people.</p>	<p>October 2007 ICSSPG</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Report annually starting Oct 2007</p>

Priority 1

To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.</p>	<p>Our looked after children and young people receive the best service possible.</p> <p>Each looked after child and young person has a Corporate Champion.</p> <p>Corporate Parents will know how well we are doing and where there is room for improvement.</p>	<p>Make Corporate Parenting a standing item on the Integrated Children's Services Strategic Planning Group's agenda.</p> <p>Endorse the Identification of a "corporate champion" for each looked after child and young person, following on from exploration of the various models.</p> <p>Report regularly to Corporate Parents, on the outcomes for looked after children and young people, through standards and quality reports.</p> <p>Ensure Corporate Parenting is reflected in Departmental Service Plans</p>	<p>September 2007 ICSSPG</p> <p>By March 2008 ICSSPG</p> <p>Annually. Quality & Standards Report to Committee</p> <p>Council Departments. New Service Plans in place 2007 - 10</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Officer time to develop briefing materials.</p> <p>Officer Time</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Report annually starting Oct 2007</p> <p>Progress report Sept 2007</p> <p>Report annually starting Oct 2007</p> <p>Annual Service Plan Progress Reports</p>

Priority 1

To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To further develop and strengthen the role of the Corporate Parent.</p>	<p>Issues such as problems with education or health are dealt with timeously and appropriately.</p>	<p>To develop, implement and monitor a tripartite policy for identifying and addressing the needs of looked after children and young people in the city</p>	<p>LAC Group Oct 2007</p>	<p>Officer Time</p>	<p>Report annually starting Oct 2007</p>

Priority 2

To improve the Educational Outcomes for all looked after children and young people.

Educational outcomes for our looked after children and young people are not as good as they could be.

There are many different reasons for this.

Education outcomes are negatively impacted upon by many different factors in the lives of looked after children and young people.

Because of this it is important that we make it our job to ensure that we create as many opportunities for success as possible.

The Council also needs to put in place different types of support that help each looked after child or young person when they come across barriers achieving best possible educational outcomes.

The Council need to create a safe and educationally rich environment for all looked after children and young people in Dundee.

Our Programme for Change is:

- **to implement a policy for the education of Looked After Children and Young People which reflects current thinking on meeting their needs;**
- **to have a process for dealing with the needs of our looked after children and young people that effectively integrates the work of different council departments and partners;**
- **to identify recurring themes and issues affecting the educational attainment of our looked after children and young people, and deal with them with at strategic and operational levels;**
- **to increase the number of our looked after children and young people who attain SCQF level 3 or above in Standard Grade English and Maths;**
- **to ensure that the care plans of our looked after children and young people meets their needs and cover the significant areas of their live, such as their education and health;**
- **to ensure that Designated staff members for looked after children and young people in schools and residential establishments continue to be clear about their role and can effectively contribute to the care plan for our looked after children and young people;**
- **to increase access to tools and resources that will help professionals, carers, families and children and young people make a difference to attainment; and**
- **to reduce the number of moves of placement for Looked After and Accommodated children and young people, creating stability and continuity of care.**

Priority 2

To improve the Educational Outcomes for all looked after children and young people.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To improve educational outcomes for all looked after children and young people.</p>	<p>Our looked after children and young people have minimum disruptions to their education and spend the most time possible in school or educational setting.</p> <p>We will continue to develop integrated ways to addressing the needs of looked after children and young people.</p>	<p>To continue to revise the joint Social work and Education Departments policy on the education of pupils looked after by the local authority.</p> <p>To work in partnership with other agencies whenever possible and appropriate.</p> <p>To identify, analyse and act on "real time" issues.</p> <p>To establish an agreed reporting mechanism for sharing and recording these "real time" issues.</p>	<p>Education & Social Work Departments March 2008</p> <p>LAC Group</p>	<p>Officer Time</p> <p>Officer time</p>	<p>Report annually starting Oct 2007</p> <p>In place by August 2007</p> <p>Data reported to Committee 6 monthly as of Oct 2007</p>

Priority 2

To improve the Educational Outcomes for all looked after children and young people.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To improve the educational outcomes for all looked after children and young people.</p>	<p>More of our looked after children and young people will attain english and maths at SCQF standard grade level 3 or above.</p> <p>There will be a specific named person who will advocate on their behalf in each school or educational establishment.</p>	<p>Support the range of 1:1 and group intervention work through the LAC (Education Attainment) Project.</p> <p>Provide "borrowable" resources for use by professional staff, carers, birth families and looked after children and young people.</p> <p>Review and develop the remit of the Designated Person In Schools and Residential establishments.</p>	<p>LAC Group Ongoing until March 2008</p> <p>LAC Education Attainment Project June 2007</p> <p>LAC Group March 2008</p>	<p>SE funding ceases March 2008</p> <p>SE funding ceases March 2008</p> <p>Officer time Training and Staff Development</p>	<p>6 Monthly report to Committee starting Oct 2007</p> <p>Progress report to Committee in Oct 2007</p>

Priority 2

To improve the Educational Outcomes for all looked after children and young people.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
To improve the educational outcomes for all looked after children and young people.	Looked after children and young people receive consistency of service.	Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Looked After & Looked After and Accommodated Standards. Ensure that the above standards are reflected in any Service Level agreement with independent and voluntary sector providers.	ICSSPG September 2007	None	Report Annually beginning Oct 2007

Priority 3

To increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how these impact on their educational attainment.

Social workers, health professionals and teachers currently receive separate training. This often means that it is harder to reach a shared understanding of the issues faced by looked after and accommodated children and young people when they are at their most vulnerable.

Post professional awareness raising training on the educational needs and outcomes for looked after children and young people is generally limited and may leave staff and carers feeling ill equipped.

In Dundee, this type of joint, integrated training requires to happen more regularly and as a matter of course.

We require to consult with our looked after children and young people to establish if the decisions we take are making a difference to their lives.

Our Programme for Change is:

- **to have a greater shared understanding, through joint training and staff development, of the approaches which are needed to minimise the disruption to attainment for our looked after children and young people;**
- **to look at our in-house training and staff development programmes and identify opportunities for joint delivery, tying this in to ongoing inservice and staff development opportunities;**
- **to maximise communication and minimise "professional preciousness";**
- **to establish accessible ways of engaging, involving and consulting with our looked after children and young people;**
- **to know if our service delivery is meeting the needs of our looked after children and young people;**
- **to show that this work is successful and making a difference to attainment levels and the lives of looked after children and young people; and**
- **to engage children and young people in defining outcomes and quality measures in relation to their ability to improve their educational attainment.**

Priority 3

To increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how these impact on their educational attainment.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how these impact on their educational attainment.</p>	<p>The needs of our looked after children and young people are evident through training and will inform best practice.</p> <p>Looked after children and young people feel listened to and valued.</p>	<p>Deliver the materials from "Learning With Care" 3 times over the coming 12 months, to primary and secondary school staff, social work, health professionals and residential staff as well as foster carers and relative carers.</p> <p>Develop and deliver a joint programme of "in-house" training on issues which affect looked after children and young people.</p> <p>Establish a consultation and evaluation process that captures the views of looked after children and young people.</p>	<p>LAC Group. Training delivered 3 times throughout 2007 - 08</p> <p>LAC Group Training Programme in place for academic year 2007-08</p>	<p>Funding from SE to be used (funding ceases March 2008)</p> <p>Officer time</p>	<p>6 Monthly report to Committee starting Oct 2007</p> <p>Report Annually beginning Oct 2007</p>

Priority 3

To increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the issues that affect the lives of looked after children and young people, and how these impact on their educational attainment.

ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
		Regularly report back to Committee on progress made in addressing the needs of looked after children and young people in improving their educational outcomes.			

Priority 4

To increase the effectiveness of our communication and information gathering regarding the needs and issues of looked after children and young people, and to act on this information to improve their educational outcomes.

We currently gather a range information about our looked after children and young people.

Some data is already collected on a regular basis by our education and social work departments. However, the data is not gathered, collated or analysed in the most integrated way.

There are some gaps in our knowledge and in what we ask to be recorded and monitored over the educational lives of our looked after children and young people.

We require to examine the range and scope of our data collection and identify where there are significant gaps in this.

There is currently no robust method in place to highlight and record when our looked after children and young people are not attaining to their potential.

We also need to find a way of recording issues and themes which are recurring, get in the way of our looked after children and young people learning, but which are more problematic to resolve. We need to better analyse the information we collect in order to inform our action planning and to achieve continuous improvement.

Our Programme for Change is:

- **to have a clearer picture of which of our looked after children and young people we need to target to support improvement in their learning;**
- **to identify those of our looked after children and young people who are not attaining to their potential;**
- **to monitor and track the educational progress of our looked after children and young people, as well as gather thorough, relevant data regarding their lives which may prevent them learning to the best of their ability;**
- **to take quick and decisive action to improve performance based on the evidence of the data;**
- **to establish data links to information held about our looked after children and young people who may go on to become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training); and**
- **to develop and implement a comprehensive performance management reporting framework through the looked after children group, on the outcomes for looked after children and young people, including educational attainment.**

Priority 4

To increase the effectiveness of our communication and information gathering regarding the needs and issues of looked after children and young people, and to act on this information to improve their educational outcomes.

ACTION PLAN

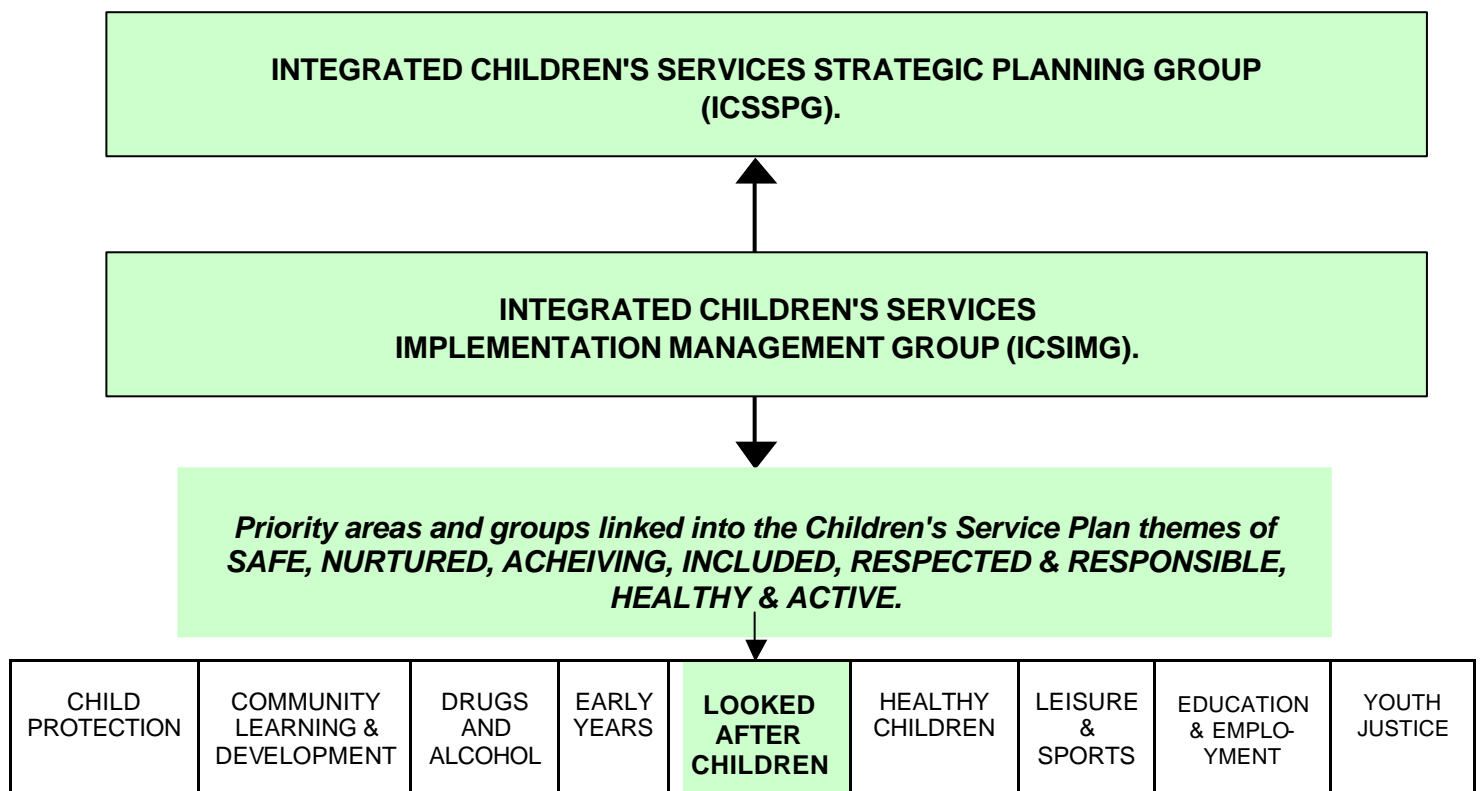
OBJECTIVE	OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	BY WHOM AND WHEN	FUNDING & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	PROGRESS
<p>To increase the effectiveness of our communication and information gathering regarding the needs and issues of looked after children and young people, and to act on this information to improve their educational outcomes.</p>	<p>The needs of looked after children and young people are evidenced and tracked over time.</p> <p>Recurring themes and issues are identified and dealt with at a strategic level.</p> <p>Work requiring a greater degree of integrated working is identified and progressed.</p>	<p>Identify the existing sources and locations of our current data.</p> <p>Identify which type of data we do not record and require to add to the existing system.</p> <p>Link into "client tracking" developments, including those who go on to become NEET.</p> <p>Contribute to the development of the "client tracking" database.</p> <p>Contribute to the development of a Performance Management Framework for looked after children and young people</p> <p>Record unmet need and identify strategies for addressing this unmet need.</p>	<p>LAC Group September 2007</p> <p>Client Tracking pilot completed June 2007</p> <p>ICSSPG March 2008</p>	<p>Officer Time</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p>	<p>6 Monthly report to Committee starting Oct 2007</p> <p>Report Annually beginning Oct 2007</p> <p>Report Annually beginning Oct 2007</p>

Monitoring Framework

This Strategy will be monitored by the LAC (Looked After Children) Group, which reports directly to the Integrated Children's Services Implementation Management Group (ICSIMG).

In turn, progress will be monitored via the ICSIMG through to the Integrated Children's Services Strategic Planning Group (ICSSPG).

DUNDEE INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE



We will ask our looked after children and young people, their families and their carers, to tell us how we are doing and where we have room for improvement.

We will look at methods of doing this that are inclusive and creative. These will include, customer satisfaction surveys, questionnaires, feedback from groups and individuals.

In particular, we will involve, consult and discuss the successes of this action plan with our looked after children and young people, on an annual basis.

6 monthly progress reports on the work of the LAC (Education Attainment) Project will be submitted to the Scottish Executive and reported back to the ICSSPG through the Looked After Children Group.

This Looked After Children (LAC) Group will monitor the progress of the Action Plan and highlight issues requiring resolution via the Integrated Children's Services Implementation Management Group or the Integrated Children's Services Strategic Planning Group.

Links to key policy documents listed in this Action Plan.

National Policy

We Can and Must Do Better

Educational Outcomes for Looked After Children and Young People – Ministerial Working Group Report (January 2007)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/01/15084446/0>

Getting It Right for Every Child

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/01/22142141/0>

Extraordinary Lives

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/140731/0034643.pdf>

Evaluation Services for children and young people

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/evaluating%20services.pdf.pdf>

Learning with Care

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/5679text.pdf>

Local Policy

Dundee City Council Corporate Parenting Policy

<http://www.dundee.gov.uk/reports/reports/291-2000.pdf>

The Education of Pupils Looked After by the Local Authority

<http://www.dundee.gov.uk/reports/reports/112-2001.pdf>

A Plan for Dundee's Children

http://www.dundee.gov.uk/chserv/childrens_plan.pdf

Standards for Looked After and Looked After and Accommodated Children and Young People

Additional recommended reading

Education of Young People in Public Care - Barnet Council

<http://www.barnet.gov.uk/education-of-young-people-in-public-care.pdf>