

Annual Report and Business Plan 2009-10



**Services for disabled children
and their families**

ANNUAL REPORT 2009 / 10

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SECTION ONE

THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND VALUES OF LEEDS FAMILY PLACEMENT SERVICE

- (i) The Family Placement Service for Disabled Children has a written Statement of Purpose. The points below are a brief outline of the aims of the service and what is provided.
- The Leeds Family Placement Service for Disabled Children provides a range of high quality inclusive services for disabled children and their families. The service promotes the social model of disability and the inclusion of disabled children in all aspects of family and community life. We are committed to improving the life experience of the children and families who use our services.
 - Our preventative short breaks and sitting services offers support to children and families, consistent with Governmental priorities outlined in "Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families". We aim to provide children using our services with new and positive experiences within a family based setting. (HM Treasury, DES May 2007).
 - It is the philosophy of our professional fostering, permanency and adoption service to provide a family based home for disabled children who can no longer live with their family of origin which meets their individual needs and gives them the same life chances and expectations as other children in society.
 - We aspire to achieve the five outcomes in Every Child Matters for every disabled child in our care, and plan our services to reflect this. The Care Standards Act 2000 and the National Minimum Standards in Foster Care 2002 provide a guide by which standards of care and the provision of services within fostering are to be measured. These will be enhanced by the Children's Workforce Development Council's Induction and Development Standards for Foster Carers. The Leeds Family Placement Service focuses on outcomes for disabled children by meeting these standards in our professional fostering service for disabled children. These standards are also applied in a proportionate and appropriate way to our short breaks and sitting services in a manner which maximises inclusion and opportunity for disabled children.
 - The service is comprised of three schemes which all aim to work together to provide a seamless range of services to disabled children both in the child's home and in the homes of Family Placement carers.
 - There are 11 social workers working in the Family Placement Children's Service (9.5 FTE).

Family Placement Children's Services

Short Breaks

- The service for children has been established for over 30 years and is one of the largest in the country.
- The service offers short breaks ranging from day care to regular weekends to longer periods as needed, offering new experiences and activities for children whilst giving their parents/carers a much needed break.
- The service is a close fit with government policy to increase short breaks for disabled children as outlined in "Aiming High for Disabled Children". Under Aiming High in the first year we have successfully bid for funding to recruit two new professional short breaks carers, and to replace the adapted vehicles of existing professional short breaks carers. Last year we have had a successful bid for 131k for capital funding for adaptations, equipment and sensory equipment.

Sitting and Home based Service

- Provides support to parent/carers by offering care in the child's own home for periods of time ranging from 2 hours to over 24 hours including night sitting. Family Placement carers offer personal care and care for children with complex needs.
- The Children's Special Needs Sitting Service is in its 15th year and is a well established easily accessed service to parents. It is very popular with parents. This service is now at full capacity and there is always a sizable waiting list. Under Aiming High we have successfully bid for a second year of funding for a specialist social worker to increase capacity for all the service with special emphasis on autistic children and children with challenging behaviour. We have also made a successful bid to pilot a befriending service.

Professional Fostering, Permanency and Adoption Service

- It is over 27 years since this foster care service for disabled children was set up in a joint project with Mencap to aid the closure of the Children's Wards at Meanwood Park Hospital.
- The fostering service has grown steadily over the years and is part of the CYPSC strategy to enable disabled children to be placed in ordinary families in Leeds. The service provides all types of foster placements to children across a wide range of disabilities.
- Six years ago the scheme successfully bid to add adoption and adoption support for disabled children to its remit. It has also added securing permanency through Special Guardianship and providing support packages for this. This means that there is a holistic focus on securing the right route to permanency for every disabled child who cannot return to their family of origin.

SECTION TWO

Scheme Values

The following Family Placement Scheme values were compiled by team members in consultation with Family Placement carers. Each Family Placement carer has a copy of our values in their carer handbook and these are discussed in the preparation sessions and when the foster carer or Family Placement Carer agreement is undertaken:

- **We believe** in the value of a service which responds:
 - Reliably we answer phones quickly & return calls
 - Positively we like to say YES
 - Flexibly we are responsive to the people who use our Service**
- **We believe** we should provide a service to all the people of Leeds, & respond positively to the differing needs of the varied communities & cultures in the city.
- **We believe** in valuing all people as individuals with rights & responsibilities irrespective of their age, gender, ability, race, culture, religion, sexuality, regardless of levels of need.
- **We believe** that our service must be accessible to all by ensuring the spread of available information & advice to all sections of the community.
- **We believe** that positive choices should be accessible to everyone. People who use our service, carers & staff should be encouraged to fulfil their potential. Individuality should be celebrated.
- **We believe** the service should exist in an atmosphere of transparency, mutual trust & accountability.
- **We believe** in offering a variety of positive experiences to all those involved in the service, this includes the opportunity to learn, and to build relationships.

SECTION THREE

CO-ORDINATORS PROGRESS REPORT

3.1 Introduction

This year has seen many changes and some challenges to Family Placement Service Provision. The Children's Family Placement Service is now fully assimilated and line managed through the fostering service. We have worked hard to provide increased flexible services in line with the Aiming High Agenda. We have worked to raise standards across all services, rewriting and updating a number of policies and procedures, embedding a professional development approach across all services, introducing Personal Development Plans for Foster Carers, launching and embedding CWDC Induction Workbooks for new and established carers, and the short breaks induction standards for short breaks carers of disabled children. We have also re-looked at our tools on risk assessment across the service and worked to raise the standard of Safe Care Plan for foster carers. We have developed an Essential Information and Pen Picture for disabled children to ensure that foster carers have sufficient information regarding the needs around disability of children matched.

3.2 Children's Professional Fostering Service

The fostering service has had recent Ofsted Inspection July 09 which rated the service as a whole good and the area of Safeguarding adequate. Although this was welcomed and had been the product of much hard work (the fostering service had been judged inadequate in a previous inspection) there is still clearly work to be done. Since April 09 a working party with professionals across health and social care has worked to update the medication and medical treatment policy for looked after children. We have also completed updating the Post 16 and Post 18 Policy for disabled children in foster care to better safeguard disabled young adults in foster care. We have added a health risk assessment to our nursing procedures training form (initially as a pilot) and agreed as permanent with health in May 2010.

We are seeking to further improve the quality of foster placements by embedding Payment for Skills Tasks Skills and Competencies, and combining this with the CWDC standards in foster care. Personal development planning has helped us to check where our carers are in terms of meeting the competency requirements. We have a high ratio of Level 4 carers who have completed NVQ3 or are in the process of doing so. We have run a monthly Support Group with a focus on education and improving standards. Support Group Topics have included CWDC, record keeping and why we need to do so, contact issues, medication policy, intimate care policy. We continue to improve outcomes for disabled looked after children by promoting and supporting adoption and Special Guardianship for disabled children.

3.3 Children's Short Breaks Service

Our children's short breaks and sitting services are highly valued by parents as evidenced in their feedback to the service. The service is clearly aligned with the Social Care Business Plan to develop short breaks for disabled children and their families. It accords with the key principles of the Children Act 2004 whilst delivering best value at competitive unit costs. It is in line with the Every Disabled Child Matters Agenda. When surveyed parents of disabled children consistently said that they needed short breaks to support them in caring for their child (MENCAP Breaking Point, 2006). The Government's "Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families (HM

Treasury, DES, May 2007) pledges to significantly increase short breaks and other support for disabled children and their families.

Over the last year we have re-written the policies and procedures for overnight short breaks (these will need to be updated again in the light of the Statutory Guidance on Short Breaks issued by the DFES in June 2010 to be implemented by April 2011). Since July 09 we have embedded the new CSIR 35 Placement Agreement for short breaks, updated the short breaks medication policy and most recently have developed a new risk assessment for piloting. We have developed tools for the implementation of CWDC short breaks induction standards, held a briefing session on CWDC for short breaks carers with Organisational Development Service, and developed and implemented a Personal Development Plan for short breaks carers.

There has continued to be a considerable impact on referrals to the short breaks service following the introduction of eligibility criteria for overnight care in Leeds (Oct 2008). This has raised the threshold eligibility criteria for overnight short breaks and increased the range of lower tier short breaks services. Whilst the team welcomes a wider range of services we are concerned that some families who need overnight support may be considered ineligible in the application of the new criteria. There is a greater than 75% reduction in referrals since Oct 2009. The service is working to develop flexible individually tailored day care opportunities for disabled children, but continue to be concerned about the barriers which families face in trying to access overnight short term breaks.

3.4 **Children's Sitting and Home Based Service**

In our Annual Reports over the last 3 years we have highlighted the fact that the popular sitting service is at capacity with 1.25 workers supporting over 90 Family Placement Sitting Carers. We have always had an unacceptably high waiting list for this service. Last year we were able to recruit an additional full time social worker for one year through "Aiming High for Disabled Children". This funding is partially targeted at improving services for children with autism and challenging behaviour. We are pleased to report that this funding has been extended until the end of the Aiming High programme which will enable us to continue to meet the needs of children and families waiting for this service. Since the introduction of the new eligibility criteria we have experienced a sharp rise in referrals to this service. This is probably because the service is at lower end of the eligibility criteria: with a minimum allocation of 2 hours per week it can be accessed by parents, through the CAF or lead professional, or through a social worker. This may be a perverse effect of the allocation of the eligibility criteria. We have also made a successful bid for funding through Aiming High to pilot a befriending service for disabled children.

3.5. **Staff Team**

Family Placement is well served by its able and experienced staff team. The staff team is well motivated and continue to strive to perform well against our defined objectives, always seeking high quality and excellence. This is reflected in the stable and supportive team. All social work staff have a service development role, whereby we strive for continuous improvement to better meet the needs of our children, families and foster carers and family placement sitting carers while ensuring a good fit with the Social Care Business Plan. All staff on the service has had regular supervision and annual staff appraisal (with the exception of Diane who has just returned from maternity leave and new workers where appraisals are planned). All are GSCC registered social workers with the exception of Chris Myers who does not need to be social work qualified to work on

the sitting service. Over the past year the social workers on the team have all attended ESCR training courses and workshops. We are on target for a significant improvement in our ESCR recording and data quality.

The children's team is now fully staffed. We have had two workers on maternity leave for part of the past year whose posts have now been covered. See the Family Placement Statement of Purpose for a full breakdown of the Family Placement Staffing Structure:

On the **Professional Permanency, Fostering and Adoption Service**, Margaret Orchard brought experience from Fostering and Adoption. Margaret has recently moved to an adoption family finding post for hard to place children and her place has been filled by Mark Mitchell who is experienced in social work with disabled children and families. Bev Hudson brings experience from fieldwork and Paula Chennells and from working in disabled children's fieldwork teams. Last year Amanda Clark worked on a three month secondment from the Children's Society to cover Alison Hill's maternity leave. Amanda has a wealth of experience in working with disabled children and their families including in the areas of training and children's rights. She was able to assist the team in beginning to embed the CWDC induction standards with foster carers. Alison Hill returned from maternity leave for 3 months during which time she worked on publicity and CWDC completion for 2 carers. She has now decided to take a 3 year career break to improve her work-life balance and to be with her two very young children. Dawn Trutch an experienced fieldwork social worker has been recruited to replace Alison in May 2010. The service has benefitted from an increase in resources into fostering and a new full time post has been created which will enable a reduction in caseloads, more time for carer recruitment and speedier assessments. Mary Field, who has a great deal of experience in working with disabled children in a residential setting has been recruited to this post. She had previously been seconded to the service to cover Diane's maternity leave and had been successful in this role.

The **Children's Short Breaks Team** has remained stable for over six years: Diane Butterworth returned half time from a one year's maternity leave in March. She is keen to resume her role of liaising with Shared Care Network to keep abreast of developments in national policy. Her maternity leave was ably covered by Mary Field who joined us on secondment from the residential sector for disabled children. Tony Bedford, Lesley Haldane, and Jane Danks are highly experienced in their field. Melody Brewer and Chris Myers on the sitting and home based service both have previous experience of working with disabled children and young people as well as a great deal of experience in their present posts. They have been joined by Emma Sutton financed through Aiming High for Disabled Children who brings with her new ideas and lots of energy from her previous fieldwork experience.

Admin Team: The social work team is underpinned by an admin team who understand and share Family Placement values and objectives. This year members of the admin team have been part of the development groups for the service. David O'Connor the team manager (who was shared with Adult Family Placement Service) has moved to work with the YOPS team. We were excited to recruit Gillian Sudron to the post of admin manager part time. Gillian has an excellent background in IT including being a lecturer in this field. She has already gone a long way towards helping us with our ESCR improvement strategy. Pauline O'Hagan supports the sitting and home based service (her hours have been increased to full time to support the Aiming High Programme, Charlie Meikle supports the professional fostering service and sits on the publicity and Cultural Inclusion Group, and Rachel Broadbent supports the short breaks service.

Co-ordinator The service is managed by Kay Beach who is the full time co-ordinator. Family Placement is committed to a "co-ordinator" style of management, enabling staff

to have sufficient autonomy to feel ownership and responsibility for achieving the service's objectives. The co-ordinator was awarded the Transformational Management 'Post Graduate Certificate in Applied Social Work Management' in 2007 through Leeds Metropolitan University. She has a CQSW, an MA in social work, and a Post Graduate Certificate in social work.

3.6 **Family Placement Carers**

Family Placement's greatest strength lies with the experience, skills and knowledge of its carers. They are a truly wonderful group of people. The quality of their work is evidenced by the regularity with which they get "excellent" ticks in the feedback sheets from fieldwork staff, service users, carers and parents. There is a good relationship of trust between Family Placement staff and the carers. Carers are positive about the high level of practical and emotional support which they receive from their supervisory fostering officers. Family Placement carers receive a twice year newsletter from the service "We Care". The shift to an increasingly supervisory role is established, and carers are aware of National Standards Minimum Standards and training expectations underpinning their fostering role. The professional carers have a very good attendance record at support groups which have numbers of 35 plus each month. All professional carers now have a Personal Development Plan and the short breaks service is nearing its target of 100% of carers having a current PDP. Family Placement Carers are working to complete CWDC handbooks. All supervising social workers have agreed targets for individual carers in supervision.

3.7 **Financial Report**

Family Placement Service had a staffing budget of £355,510 2009-10. At outturn the spend was £360,214. The overspend of £4,704 is accounted for by the fact that finance need to via the Aiming High staffing costs into the staffing budget. This would mean that the budget was not overspent.

Excluding staff at the beginning of the year April 09- March 10 the Children's Family Placement Service had a total budget of £1,800,800 which across the three services was:

- Short breaks £ 280,310
- Professional fostering service £ 1,443,280
- Sitting and Home based service 77,210

The Unit Costs for the Children Services 2009-10 are as follows:

Professional Fostering Service: £57.96 per 24 hours of care

Children's Short Breaks Service: £60.88 per 24 hours of care

Children's Sitting Service: £18.42 per hour of care

Professional Fostering Service

The professional fostering service had been consistently overspent in previous years in the light of the fact that the budget did not reflect the proportion of disabled children entering the LAC fostering service. Research indicates that there is a relatively high proportion of disabled children in the looked after cohort, that between 10% and 25% are disabled, with 10% and over falling into the category of having significant and multiple disability (Baker et al, 2005; Gordon et al DOH 1998a). This 10% plus is the profile of the children placed through the Family Placement professional fostering service. There was also significant increased costs involved in implementing Payment for Skills and assimilating the Family Placement Professional Level 4 carers to this in 2007-

8. In 2007 -08 a report was drafted to DMT to reflect the real numbers of disabled children fostered, the cost of implementing Payment for Skills, and to allow for growth of four additional Level 4 carers. In 2007-8 the service received significant additional funding of £383,520 to cover these additional costs and enable the service to realistically be able to set budgets.

Funding for 5 placements was transferred to the SGO budget in 2008-9 to reflect the increasing numbers of Family Placement Carers intending to go down the route of Special Guardianship Orders to secure permanency for disabled children. The Family Placement Professional Fostering and Adoption Service actively promotes Adoption and Special Guardianship for disabled children. It is envisaged that ultimately this will reduce the number of looked after disabled children and the costs thereof. However, foster carer who become Special Guardians for disabled children will continue to be paid at the same rates as foster carers (minus child benefit and child tax credit).

The professional fostering service was under spent by £238,105 in 2009 -10. This may be partially accounted for by the success in moving children to SGO orders and the coordinator will work with finance and the SDM fostering and adoption to look at the impact on the SGO budget of children moving from the Family Placement to the SGO budget. If this is significant some of the budget may need to be transferred to the SGO budget as this is a trend which it is hoped to continue.

The coordinator to work with the finance manager to analyse whether some of the under spend is due to a delay in payments in the final fortnight of 2009 – 10 budget being processed.

Placements for young people with Fair Access to Care eligible needs post 18 are financed through the Joint Commissioning Service Adult Social Care and not the fostering service. In the coming year Post 18 placements will in the main transfer to the St Anne's Community Carers Scheme when the young person reaches 18.

The Unit Costs for the service remain £57.96 per 24 hours of care the same as 2008-9

This unit cost is still low and combined with high satisfaction demonstrates best value.

Short Breaks

The total budget for 2009-10 short breaks was £280,310.

The actual spend was £214,511, an under spend of £65,799.

This under spend is accounted for in four ways.

1. There is money factored into the budget for seven professional Level C short breaks contract carers. Between 2008 – 9 and 2009 -10 three professional short breaks carers changed their fostering role and decided to become full time carers for a disabled child. This means that we have a chronic shortage of short breaks carers with adapted premises offering ground floor accommodation to disabled children. We are actively working to recruit replacement professional short breaks carers.
2. Although we have recruited two professional carers for children who are hard to place (autism and difficult behaviour) these have been funded through Aiming High for Disabled Children. We have kept sufficient capacity within the seven to

accommodate these in the budget when the "Aiming High" programme comes to an end.

3. The professional short breaks carers' fees which equals £13, 520 for each carer have erroneously been funded through the professional fostering budget rather than the short breaks budget. Adjustments will be made to the budget outturns to reflect this. This goes a long way towards understanding the overspend.
4. The numbers of children referred to the service has fallen over the past two years because of the application of new eligibility criteria for short term breaks. It is envisaged that the service will increase daycare provision to provide more flexible services. As the service has increasing referrals for hard to place children we will need to recruit more professional short breaks carers to meet the increased needs of the children referred.

The service has received £100,000 capital grant from "Aiming High" in the last year. This was spent on replacing 4 vehicles for professional short breaks carers with adapted accommodation. The Family Placement Short Breaks service also received £10,000 from the capital grant for specialist equipment which was spent on equipment recommended by the short breaks occupational therapist.

In the coming year we have successfully bid for a further £101k for specialist equipment and adaptations and £30k for sensory equipment for short breaks carers through the "Aiming High Grant.

The Unit Costs for 2009-10 are £60.88

The Unit Cost for 2008 -9 were £60.89 per 24 hours of care.

Sitting Service

The funding for the service 2009-10 was £77,210.

The spending on the service was £59,595 an under spend of £17,615.

The coordinator to check the figures with finance as there has been a delay in getting the payments through payroll into the budgets thereby overestimating the amount of under spend.

Historically there has been an under spend on this service over the last three years because although we have had large waiting lists there has not been the capacity in the service because of under-resourcing to meet the demand. Emma Sutton started with the Family Placement Service in October 2009 and from this time we have seen a significant rise in children matched reflecting the increased capacity. We would therefore expect the fees budget to be fully spent in the coming year.

The coordinator had argued that the fees budget should not be reduced as it is expected that in the coming year we will reverse the trend reducing the waiting list, increasing the number of carers assessed, and increasing the number of children matched to carers.

The service has been successful in bidding for the new specialist social worker post for the sitting service to continue for a further 15 months until the end of the duration of "Aiming High" and Emma Sutton will remain in this post.

The Unit Costs for the Children Services 2009-10 are £18.42 as compared with £18.43 per hour of care in 2008-9.

The service has made a bid to pilot a befriending service to complement the sitting service and offer more choice to children and families through "Aiming High".

3.8 **Regulation**

Children's Service Regulation

The Family Placement Children's fostering and overnight short breaks services are inspected as part of the Fostering Service by Ofsted. This will continue as the statutory guidance issued by the government in June 2010 is clear that overnight placements in the carers' home should be provided by registered foster carers.

In the light of the new Statutory Guidance on short term breaks issued in June 2010 and to be implemented by April 2011 the Family Placement Service will review how sitting and daycare is regulated in the Family Placement Service to ensure that we fully comply with the new regulations. We are currently working with Shared Care Network to look at the implications for sitting and daycare services.

Discussion is taking place within CYPSC as to where the sitting service, which does not provide overnight care under Section 20 of the Children Act, fits into the regulatory process. The coordinator has also sought the views of Shared Care Network as to how these schemes are regulated and has written to Ofsted for advice re the sitting service. Whilst in the past some schemes are regulated through fostering, some through domiciliary care, and some are not regulated through these processes the new guidance states that sitting services providing personal care should be regulated as a domiciliary care service. Whilst the majority of sitters are not providing personal care and therefore would not need to be regulated for over eights it is likely to be simpler to register the whole service as a domiciliary care service.

The Family Placement Service participated in the 2007 inspection of the Leeds Children and Young People's Social Care Adoption Service. The inspectors were positive about our proactive approach to finding placements for disabled children, and our financial support to facilitate Adoption and Special Guardianship for disabled children. There has not been an adoption inspection since this time.

3.9 **Equalities**

The Placement Service operates a full equal opportunities policy. Carers are asked in the assessment process their views on diversity and discrimination and we do not approve carers who do not share the values of CYPSC in this respect.

We are mindful in the matching process of a child's cultural needs and discuss this with their families.

We keep statistics on the ethnicity of all children and carers so that we can ensure that our carer population reflects the diverse communities of Leeds. See statistics attached to the team reports.

In the last year our Diversity and Cultural Inclusion Group which promotes the service to all communities of Leeds and seeks to recruit carers which reflect the diversity of the communities in Leeds was combined with the Publicity Working Group. This was because the service lost the Asian Development Worker Denise Farooq in the split between Family Placement Adults and Children's teams. The coordinator has been concerned that this has represented a backward step as we have been less able to reach out to Asian communities and visit Asian organisations and voluntary sector groups. The coordinator has instigated an Equality Impact Assessment of the service to look at

the way forward and potential barriers and challenges. Hassan Kayani from the Service Improvement Team has attended a Family Placement team meeting to talk to all the staff about Equality Impact Assessment and a Family Placement working party with a member from each team has been tasked with taking this forward. Next year the publicity group to start to have a clear part of the agenda of each meeting dedicated to diversity and inclusion issues. Asian development workers

All professional foster carers have been given a copy of Information for U a booklet developed by CYPSC for children and carers from BME communities. Family Placement Service has carers of African-Caribbean heritage who give advice on hair and skin care and provide mentoring to placements where black children are matched to white foster carers.

We have a range of publicity materials in different Asian languages.

We will use the expertise in the fostering service who have an Asian and a BME development worker and seek funding for a part time Asian development post as soon as the opportunity arises.

3.10 **Training of Family Placement Children's Carers**

The Family Placement Children's Service delivers induction training for short breaks carers, including sitters, four or five times a year, in evening (6 evening sessions per course) and weekend (2 day) format to try to ensure accessibility for all interested parties. This is regularly updated to ensure relevance and is based on the Shared Care Network "When am I coming to stay".

Carers wishing to be approved as foster carers on the Professional Fostering, Adoption and Permanency Service are also asked to attend "Skills to Foster", which is the BAAF approved course for induction of foster carers. This is facilitated by the Leeds CYPSC fostering service.

It is standard practice on the Family Placement Service for foster carers who are interested in fostering a disabled child to be asked to undertake the short breaks training and to provide short breaks for six months before they are assessed as full time foster carers, although a minority of highly skilled and experienced carers will be approved at Level 4 following initial assessment and will then have foster children placed with them. The practice of asking carers to undertake short breaks first gives them the opportunity to experience caring for a disabled child.

A comprehensive post approval training programme has been delivered or facilitated by Family Placement social workers. Training courses have also been commissioned from a variety of organisations. These are targeted primarily to short breaks carers and sitters although they are also accessed by foster carers as part of their post approval training package. The aim of the post approval training is to increase carers understanding around issues relating to looking after a disabled child. They are also intended to meet standards including the requirements of the National Minimum Standards in foster care. Last year the workers on the service provided or facilitated post approval training in the following: Child Protection Level 1 and Level 2, Makaton, Epilepsy, Specialist Autism, First Aid and Resuscitation, Moving and Handling, Good Practice in Sexual Health, Sexuality and Growing Up. Most of the courses had two sessions; morning and evening to make them accessible to more carers.

To meet the increased need for variety of training, and to acknowledge the increasing workload of Family Placement social workers in relation to meeting NMS, CWDC etc, the coordinator has had meetings with the manager of CYPSC Organisational Development

Unit. From 2010 carers on the short breaks and sitting service will be able to access the training available to foster carers and will be sent the foster carer training calendar. Some of the training will be provided at weekends and evenings (evenings are most suitable for short breaks carers many of whom work through the week and have placement children at weekends). The coordinator and the manager of EDU have mapped the training and development needs of short breaks and sitting family placement carers and these will be on the training calendar from Oct 2010. There will also be a series of training in the coming year financed through the Aiming High Programme and delivered by Barnardos, The Children's Society and other organisations.

Carers were also invited to attend the Shared Care Network Spring Conference, AGM and training.

Foster carers on the Professional Fostering Service are always sent the Employee Development Unit Training Calendar for foster carers. As Level 4 carers they have to attend 3 relevant training courses and 8 support groups. The Professional Fostering Service run monthly support groups for foster carers which usually have a training element. These are increasingly well attended with upwards of 35 foster carers at each session.

In accordance with the National Minimum Standards and CWDC requirements attendance at training courses and support groups continues to improve. All professional foster carers on the Family Placement Service and the majority of short breaks carers now have a Personal Development plan which maps their training needs for the coming year. Carers' attendance on training courses is monitored through the PDP and reviewing process.

The co-ordinator, two social workers, and a foster carer from the Family Placement Service have been part of the CWDC induction standards implementation group. Foster carers have attended workshops and the majority now have their induction booklet in process. The coordinator is monitoring through supervision the progress in completing the workbook and targets have been set for all supervising fostering officers. The CWDC standards for short breaks for disabled children were published in June 09. Family Placement Service have worked with Organisation Development Unit to produce tools and an implementation plan for short breaks. There has been a briefing / workshop for short breaks carers. Our first short breaks workbook is nearing completion.

Diane Butterworth regularly delivers Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) training with her multi-agency colleagues in Safeguarding for field social workers and other professionals around child protection and disabled children.

The service has a system to evaluate carer training and collate the responses.

All Family Placement administration staff and social workers have now had basic and/or additional training in ESCR. We acknowledge we have a long way to go in terms of becoming a service which makes full use of ESCR. Social workers have been encouraged to make greater use of IT training, especially Lotus Notes and Word through the appraisal process.

Family Placement social workers have registered with the General Social Care Council and are undertaking training which reflects their professional responsibilities. Staff training is reviewed 6 monthly through the staff appraisal process.

The co-ordinator has had her annual meeting with colleagues in Health to update the training protocol between Health and CYPSC for foster carers and sitters. It has been agreed that a risk assessment will be completed by the nurse providing the training for

nursing procedures as part of the Identification of Procedure and Consent Form. This has been piloted since August 09 and has now been agreed as a permanent part of the training protocol. Carers have been invited to a support group to update their nursing procedures training, as well as having specialist training for procedures with specific children. and Disabled Children's nursing team (behaviour management and support) will participate in this support group. The LAC nurses will attend a support group to advise and support carers on the management of medication and discuss the updated Medication and Medical Treatment Policy.

3.11 **Services for Children with Restricted Mobility**

There is a clear risk assessment process around Moving and Handling issues. The children's team have developed risk assessment procedures in line with the social model of disability and the "Dignity of Risk" (ref). These form part of the Placement Agreement Meeting on the Short Breaks Service, and form part of the planning process for the Professional Fostering, Adoption and Permanency Service.

If Moving & Handling issues are identified, referral is made to the Disability Services Team and an action plan drawn up. Working relations with DST Children's Occupational Therapists team are very good. The referral form between Disability Service Team and Family Placement has been revised to provide more detailed information is working well. Good practice from the "Dignity of Risk" is incorporated into the carers' handbook for short breaks.

In the year 2008-9 we secured funding and completed the adaptation of one property for a new Level C fee paid short breaks professional carer and had a very successful opening of this hosted by a young man who had used the short breaks service over a number of years. This year in 2009-10 we have added a specialist bath and other facilities to this extension funded through Aiming High. We have worked closely with Miranda Chalmers the Occupational Therapist for short breaks funded through "Aiming High for Disabled Children". Miranda has assessed the needs of most of the children using the service who have moving and handling needs. She has assessed how these needs are being met in placement and recommended equipment where necessary. We have been fortunate to have had £20k added to last year's equipment budget from a successful bid for "Aiming High" Capital funding which was spent on addressing the needs identified. In the coming year we will complete this project. We have made a further successful bid for 101k for adaptations and capital equipment based on the projections made by the short breaks occupational therapist. We have identified a match where an adaptation to property is required to enable the match to continue throughout the childhood of a child using the service. This has been agreed. Over the next year Miranda will complete her assessments of all the children using the service and the equipment necessary will be provided.

We have purchased 4 adapted vehicles through "Aiming High" capital funding for professional foster carers providing short term breaks to children who are wheelchair users. Three of these are based with professional short breaks carers for disabled children. It is planned to use the fourth as a "floating" vehicle for other approved short breaks family placement carers for children who are wheelchair users. This vehicle will be based at Acorn Lodge short breaks unit where staff will be able to use it for disabled children if it is not required for family placement carers. There is money in the "Aiming High" budget for 2 further vehicles. However, these cannot be purchased until we have replaced the carers who have changed roles.

We are acutely aware of the need to recruit new carers to this role as two carers changed their role last year alongside another in the previous year. We have dropped

from having six Professional Level C fee paid Short Breaks carers who had fully adapted accommodation, and an adapted vehicle to transport children to three at the close of this year. We also have a level B carer who works as a teacher for children with special needs who does have adapted premises and provides matches to five children who are wheelchair users. We have tried a number of strategies including advertising in the Yorkshire Evening Post for professional short breaks carers using Aiming High Funding. We have had an information evening for potential professional carers which was not well attended. The coordinator visited two existing carers whose property might be suitable for adaptation to discuss the professional short breaks role. Neither carer felt able to make the commitment to this. We have also advertised amongst our existing short breaks carers through "We Care" to try to identify possible new professional short breaks carers. In the coming year we intend to look at new ways of addressing this issue and to explore further recruitment possibilities.

A specialist carer for deaf children also has fully adapted accommodation (a partnership project with the ALMOs). This carer intends to continue their match with a deaf physically disabled young woman post 18. However, whilst this is very positive in terms of continuity and transitions it does mean that they will no longer continue to offer placements to children. A number of other short breaks carers have ground floor accommodation.

Last year one new adaptation to a professional Level 4 carer's property was completed, financed through a combination of Disabled Facilities Grants with a top up from the Family Placement adaptations budget, to secure permanency for a child with multiple complex needs. Another extension was started last year and is nearing completion planned again to secure permanency for a child with multiple complex needs.

Family Placement Service commission adaptations through 'Care and Repair', a not for profit charitable organisation, with whom we have an excellent working relationship. Their specialist expertise in building disabled facilities, combined with their client focused approach, has made their collaboration invaluable in carrying out the adaptations which we require. This arrangement is agreed through Corporate Property Services and contracting and meets all procurement requirements.

In 2009-10 the Children's Family Placement Service had a budget of £40k per year for adaptations which is not connected to "Aiming High" and therefore isn't time limited. This is approximately the cost of one major adaptation or two DFG top-up grants. This budget also needs to finance small adaptations, such as putting in specialist bathroom facilities and updating disabled facilities in short breaks and full time foster carers' homes. This budget would be sufficient with careful planning if it didn't also have to be used when there is insufficient money for equipment and vehicle funding.

Each Family Placement Service has a small equipment budget. Occupational therapists are increasingly assessing children as requiring more complex expensive individualised equipment. Many children (including children on short breaks) need specialist beds which cost in excess of £1,500. Sleep systems, specialist shower chairs and seating are also being recommended. There have been ongoing equipment meetings throughout the year with the OT service, the Equipment Service and Family Placement Service. Transporting equipment is difficult through a combination of logistical (parents and carers needing to wait in for transport), cost (if an item is moved a number of times it may be cheaper to buy two), and infection control (equipment has to be cleaned between being moved from one house to another and cannot be turned round in a day but is required every day for the child). In 2009-10 there has not been the pressure on the equipment budget because of the capital funding secured through "Aiming High". In the coming year we will use the capital funding of 101k to address any identified needs of children matched and to ensure that the carer's homes we have at the moment have

the equipment needed to meet the needs of the children placed. This should put us in a good position for the future.

This year Gillian Sudron Admin Manager has updated a comprehensive database of equipment with carers in their homes which requires servicing and is ensuring that all equipment is annually serviced.

3.12 **Partnership Working**

Family Placement have always been proactive in partnership working. We are very proud of our record in this area which is evidenced year on year in our annual reports.

On the Children's Scheme, we have developed a protocol with the community and acute health trusts to train and support foster carers and Family Placement carers who undertake nursing interventions in respect of the children they look after. The protocol shares the responsibility between the agencies. There is a yearly meeting with health managers to update this and look at any issues which have arisen.

This year the co-ordinator has worked closely with colleagues in CYPSC, the designated Dr for looked after children and other health professionals including the manager of the Children's Nursing Team to update the Medications and Medical treatment policies for the service. The recommendations from the Ofsted inspection that there should be more emphasis on the needs of BME children, that there should be more in the policy for LAC children about contraceptive and related issues and that the training and consent form for foster carers should include a risk assessment have all been incorporated.

On the ground, social workers, supervisory social workers, and children's nurses' work together to ensure that the health needs of children are met.

On the professional fostering service we are making greater use of LAC nurses to support children who are vulnerable due to their learning disability and sexualised behaviour.

The Fire Service now visit all carers' homes to undertake a fire risk assessment and discuss a fire plan for the household. They fit smoke alarms where necessary.

We continue to work closely with all agencies involved in housing and adaptations. Care and Repair continue to provide consultancy for Family Placement and to oversee our adaptations and extensions.

We have close working relationships with the Children's Disability Service Team and their occupational therapists.

We have a protocol and Service Level Agreement in place with Leeds Equipment Service who clean and store Family Placement Equipment and loan small items to carers.

We have a transitions agreement and protocol with the Leeds Adult Social Care Shared Lives Scheme (formally Adults Family Placement Service). Workers from the service attend the children's team meeting on a three monthly basis to discuss which children are in their eighteenth year and what the future short breaks plans are. The Adult Service have procedures to access and approve carers who wish to continue to care for the children they are matched to post 18.

We also work closely with the St Anne's Adult Placement Shared Lives Service and have a protocol in place with them for young disabled people post 18 who wish to continue to live with their former foster carers or Special Guardians. This year we have completed

our Post 16 Post 18 policy and procedure for disabled children in foster care and this has now been approved by Adult Social Care and Children and Young People's Social Care. In the coming year we will provide training across children and adults social care on this policy. St Anne's Community Carers were involved in consultation in regards to this policy which will better safeguard vulnerable young adults.

We work closely with our colleagues in Legal Section who helped to develop the Post 16 and post 18 policy for disabled children. Colleagues in legal also work with us to draw up grant agreements where adaptations are made to the homes of foster carers.

We work closely with Pathway Planning and the Transitions Service in making plans for Disabled Young Adults.

The co-ordinator works closely with her colleagues in Fostering and Adoption. She attends regular management meetings, and policies and procedures are developed across both services.

3.13 **Away Day**

Family Placement held our yearly working Away Day this year at Thorner. The focus was on Meeting the Challenges around short breaks and the issues regarding overnight care. We looked proactively at how we can ensure our services are fit for purpose, are a good fit with the policies and procedures of Children and Young People's Social Care, the aspirations of government in the "Aiming High" strategy, and accessible to disabled children and their families. The Awayday resulted in an Action Plan which included a review of services. Following this the coordinator has re-written the short breaks procedures, and the team have had two project mornings to plan the development and expansion of our established daycare provision.

3.14 **Safe Caring**

All Family Placement Carers have a full assessment including CRB, Child Protection and Medical checks, personal and professional references when they are assessed, the CRB is updated every 3 years. We are carefully monitoring the phased introduction of ISA registration under the Vetting and Barring scheme and will be fully compliant with this when it is fully implemented. No Family Placement carer will fall between the changing requirements. When a child is matched to a carer on the short breaks service the carer receives full information about the child in the form of an Essential Information and Pen Picture of the child. They also receive copies of any current useful reports giving information about the child's needs (e.g. child development assessments). They meet the child and their parents at the PPV where further information is exchanged. After a series of introductions a Placement Agreement Meeting takes place in respect of the child (with the social worker, Family Placement Carer and Supervisory Social Worker) where a Placement Agreement including the child's health needs is signed and a risk assessment is completed. All children on the Family Placement Service have a full risk assessment. Family Placement carers are asked to produce a Safe Care Plan as part of their assessment for all three services. Safe Care Plans are reviewed and updated. Safeguarding forms part of our preparation and ongoing training. All carers have information regarding our restraint and behaviour management policy in their handbooks. They also have the policy on intimate care, and medical treatment and medication in their handbooks. The Fire Service visits every household to complete a Fire Risk Assessment and each carer has a Health and Safety Checklist of their home completed.

On the professional fostering service support groups this year have addressed Children's Rights, CWDC at 2 support groups, Nursing Procedures and Medication policy,

consultation on what carers want from support group training, Annual Picnic, Welfare Rights, LAC nurses including information on swine flu, education issues, Intensive Interaction a communication method used with disabled children. At a recent support group we carers received training in the need to record and how to do so was the focus of discussion. The support groups are used as an information sharing forum for all news, new policies and procedures, etc.

The protocol for fire risk assessment is operational. The Fire Service visits each Family Placement carer's home at the time of their approval to undertake a fire risk assessment. They leave a copy of this with the carer. They also agree a fire plan for the specific situation.

3.15 **Progress against Strategic Goals**

The Family Placement Service is proactive in ensuring that we are fit for purpose and that our activities are clearly aligned to Children and Young People's Social Care business plans and agendas. We know we can only be ready for the future by ensuring our services are Best Value, relevant, fit with the aims and objectives of Children and Young People's Social Care and provide our service users with choice and satisfaction. We do this through regular team meetings, working groups, and development mornings which look at departmental and Government priorities and at our own performance. It is our aim to be forward thinking and ready for any new challenge.

In the last year the Children's Family Placement Statement of Purpose has been updated, and we have produced this Annual Report to transparently outline what we do.

The coordinator has updated and revised the procedures for overnight short breaks, and has also been part of working parties to update the medication policies.

The Policy and Procedure for Disabled Children/Young People in foster carer Post 16 years of age & Former Relevant Children Post 18 Years of Age, is now completed and signed off. Training will be given to all relevant parties in the coming months.

Last year we said we planned to develop and publicise a flexible menu of short breaks services to meet the challenges and opportunities of the era of "Aiming High for Disabled Children". We had an away day on this. We have extended and promoted our daycare provision and visited all the CYPSC Disabled Children's Teams and DCAP panel to inform professionals of this. We have had two development mornings to fine tune issues around assessment, regulation, training, referrals, the interface between short breaks and sitting in terms of daycare, ensuring we are a good fit with the priorities of CYPSC, and other related issues. The coordinator is in the process of writing procedures for daycare. We have waited until the government published the Short Breaks: Statutory Guidance on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children using short breaks (issued June 2010, implementation April 2011) before writing these procedures so that we were clear about the regulatory framework.

We have met our goal to "meet all the requirements and targets pertaining to our successful Aiming High Bid". We have established a temporary post in the sitting service to increase capacity financed through "Aiming High". Funding for this post has been agreed for a further 15 months after the initial year. Emma Sutton is meeting the targets set in the original bid. We have recruited two new professional short breaks carers for children with autism and difficult behaviour. We have purchased four new vehicles. We have used the Aiming High OT to ensure the £10k capital equipment bid was properly spent, and have successfully bid for an additional 101k in the coming year.

In line with our strategic goals 2008 -09 we have continued to monitor the impact of the CYPSC DCAP eligibility criteria on the Family Placement Short Breaks service.

Month and Year	No. of Referrals
January 2009	1
February 2009	0
March 2009	1
April 2009	0
May 2009	2
June 2009	5
July 2009	2
August 2009	0
September 2009	1
October 2009	1
November 2009	2
December 2009	3
Dec 09 –March 10	0
TOTAL	17

We have continued to experience a reduction in new children referred to the service, and those referred tend to be children who are wheelchair users (where there is a shortage of ground floor accommodation), children with very challenging behaviour, or referred in crisis situations.

We have worked hard to target recruitment of short breaks carers on those with experience who can meet the needs of harder to place children. However, although we have had some success with this and approved only carers with some previous experience of caring for disabled children the reality is that the whole family are approved and the children and partners of foster carers need a more gradual introduction to children whose behaviour challenges.

We have successfully actioned the CWDC induction standards implementation plan for foster carers and are on target for all full time carers being compliant by April 2011.

As the CWDC only released the workbooks for short breaks in June 2009 we are particularly proud that the majority of our short breaks social workers have attended Shared Care Network Training in CWDC for short breaks, we have designed tools to help in the completion of the short breaks workbooks, held an evening workshop for short breaks foster carers, and set a timetable for completion. We have received our first completed short breaks handbook and most carers are now starting this work. Their may be a small minority of carers on the short breaks service who feel that this task is disproportionate to their role but we are working with them to achieve compliance.

We have developed a tasks, skills and competencies framework for short breaks carers for disabled children. The short breaks supervisory social workers are working to embed this in the service. Our supervising social workers have rolled out Personal Development Plans for foster carers across the service. We have used this to ensure that all foster carers understand their tasks, skills, and competencies requirements for their role, and that these are embedded and achieved on the professional fostering service.

The coordinator reviewed the decision not to assimilate the short breaks service into payment for skills. The coordinator has met with the professional short breaks carers to look at the issues around assimilation of the short breaks service into the Payment for Skills Model and ways in which their terms and conditions differ. Following a series of meetings with the SDM fostering and adoption it was initially decided not to assimilate, however after further discussions with the SDM and Head of Service it has been agreed to prepare a new options paper. This is a very complex issue with pros and cons in almost equal measure.

The coordinator has attended a consultation meeting with government office regarding the regulatory framework for short term breaks and has discussed the implications of this with senior management in CYPSC. The government DCFS has released statutory guidance in April 2010 with an implementation date of April 2011: "Short Breaks, statutory guidance on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children using short breaks". In the coming months the coordinator will meet with the relevant managers in CYPSC regarding the application of the guidance and will write these into the Family Placement Procedures.

It has been agreed to use the CSIR 35 model as the Placement Agreement across overnight short breaks services which are less than 120 days and covered by Regulation 13 Children Act Guidance which will be superseded (this will be reduced to 75 days from April 2011 reflect the statutory guidance). This has yet to be implemented in the residential sector. Meetings with the CDSM fostering, the CDSM Disability the Principal Unit Manager residential care are still ongoing in the light of the recent statutory guidance issued by the DCSF.

The service has made significant progress with ESCR. There has been a data clean up. The manager is managing the workload through ESCR and has been on a number of training workshops. All staff have attended workshops to learn how to check the information recorded against foster carers is correct and that they are matched currently to the right children in placement. All staff have learned to record ongoing recording onto the carer's records and are in various stages of going forward with this. We are still working closely with area teams to correct child's details which are not correct on the system.

We have continued to develop Adoption and Special Guardianship for disabled children in Leeds, and to contribute to reducing the looked after population. We have had some significant success with moving children from LAC to Special Guardianship Orders and securing permanency through this route. We held an intensive targeted recruitment campaign for permanency carer and adopters from October 2009 to January 2010, with press articles and new publicity materials. However, we did not get a positive response in terms of recruiting new permanency carers and adopters.

Family Placement works strategically with other sections of the Department to reduce the need for outside placements, both respite and longer term, for children with special needs. Last year we have had our first ventilated child discharged from paediatric intensive care to foster care. This year we have matched two children with tracheotomy to foster carers.

The co-ordinator and the admin team manager are working with the Business Support Team and the ESCR implementation Team to map our processes. We have worked with ESCR team to align our products on the Children's Service to those used by the Fostering Service and have updated the Notice of Movement Form to encourage children's social workers to keep the system updated in terms of matching children to carers on ESCR particularly in relation to short breaks. We have moved Professional

carer payments to ESCR financials. The admin manager has organised a data clean up of the information recorded on Family Placement carers to ensure that this is correct.

Although Family Placement Service has been good at keeping data we have often developed our own systems and databases for this.

3.16 Evaluation of Service Performance

The Family Placement services have a number of mechanisms for evaluating performance. Statistics are kept in relation to key indicators across the schemes which are presented in the Annual Report. Work on improving the quality of the statistics is ongoing.

The Children's Service records CRBs, and foster carer reviews which will soon be mapped for ESCR. We are therefore able to track when these are due for renewal and have systems to ensure that they are completed within the timescales.

All Family Placement carers are asked to give feedback on the support which they have received at their annual review. This tends to be positive. Good feedback is the norm with carers citing efficient and quick responses from link workers as being very helpful:

"I have always felt very supported with Margaret and find her very easy to speak to".

CY Foster Carer

Social workers and parents are sent feedback forms before the carer review. These are almost all positive with social workers and parents regularly ticking the 'excellent' and 'very good' boxes. Some quotes illustrate this:

"J is incredibly supportive and caring towards A. We know that A is well looked after, stimulated and contented when he stays with her and her family"

*"I feel very lucky to have C & D as carers for D. He gets very excited when he knows he's going
Parents of children on Short Breaks*

*"having a night out once in a while has really been good for myself, knowing he's in good hands means everything"
M.D. Parent of child on Sitting Service March 2010*

*Susan always brings nice things to do, stickers, glue, craft things to make. If its daytime and fine Susan will take A to the park....She is kind and attentive and looks after A very well"
J.D. Parent of child on sitting service July 09*

We have established a consultation form for children. Whilst we acknowledge that many disabled children may be unable to respond in this format, we are encouraging parents and social workers to help children complete this. This enables the Family Placement Service to directly seek the views of children.

Some of the children's comments from last year are as follows:

"She is nice to me" E.H. children's sitting

*"She talks in different languages. She goes out for day trips
With me. She's funny and kind" K.M. Children's sitting*

"they are always nice to me" L.W. professional fostering service"

"They are nice.. I like going to the park and shopping" C.W. Children's Short Breaks

There is also a mechanism through the reviewing service for children to give feedback on the service. All children using the Short Breaks and Professional Fostering Service are subject to statutory 6 monthly reviews. On the Short Breaks Service, proportionality is applied with one annual "live" review and one paper review. A CSIR 90 Consultation Form for a disabled child has been developed to help disabled children using the short breaks service contribute to the review process, and can be used by social workers in conjunction with the "I'll Go First" communication tool for working with disabled children. In practice even with support this review form can only be used by a minority of more able children. To address this we have worked with the Communication Officer for disabled children to develop training for social workers around communication with disabled children. This is now being mainlined onto the Employee Development Unit training programme for social workers. The aim is to widen participation into its widest form. Some children may be able to draw pictures to indicate their feelings, others may need to be engaged through body language and responses within the placement. We have worked with the independent reviewing team on accepting these different types of communication as evidence of participation.

SECTION FOUR

Recruitment and Publicity Report

From April 09

Family Placement Carers: Joanne Williams, Elaine Wyatt, Zarina Khan, Waseem Butt, Debbie Wren, Jackie Paris, Janet Sharp, Cathy Luca, Mandy Munro Staff members Kay Beach - Coordinator, Tony Bedford, Margaret Orchard, Charlie Meikle, Paula Chennells, Chris Myers.

Aims

To ensure that all sections of the community in Leeds, including potential families wishing to use the service, potential Family Placement Carers, and key referrers are aware of the range of services provided by Children's Family Placement Service. To ensure that the Family Placement service is responsive to the needs of all the citizens of Leeds, and provides services which are culturally appropriate and reflect the diversity of our city. To ensure that the profile of our service users and our carers reflects the cultural diversity of Leeds.

Key Objectives

To recruit more carers across all Children's Family Placement schemes. To publicise our services to families and referrers. To ensure that referrers are familiar with services and these match the needs of children and families referred. To recruit more carers from black and minority ethnic communities. To be proactive in challenging discrimination, and to ensure that our service is publicised and accessible to minority communities.

Position Statement

In April 09 the service split the publicity function which had been shared between Adults and Children's Family Placement Team, and to combine the publicity and cultural inclusion function within the Children's Service.

We have held regular publicity and cultural inclusion meetings to promote the service and recruit more carers.

We have been fortunate in recruiting more carers to be part of the group, and many carers have contributed to our publicity work in 2009 -2010.

The group members and our carers have actively committed themselves to organising publicity events over the past year. For example:

Our foster carers have organised publicity days and stalls and leafleting at the Kirkstall Community

Day, Opera in the Park, the Beeston Mala, The Donkey Sanctuary Open day Chapeltown Carnival, and other events.

Cathy Louca and her foster daughter Jacqueline Fitzsimmons have run in the Race for Life wearing Family Placement tee-shirts.

Publicity material, posters, leaflets, and cards for shop windows has gone out to all carers on the service to help publicise Family Placement in the local area.

We have conducted a review of our expressions of interest and have found that these have clear consistent themes. Most successful carers come to us through word of mouth from other carers. The next most popular route is seeing cards in local shop windows, the third is bus backs, with other forms of publicity attracting occasional responses.



We have developed a range of publicity for the professional fostering and adoption service as part of our campaign to attract new carers to this service. We used a Leeds adopter, adopted children and children on SGOs with their parents consent too feature in this. We developed posters, leaflets, bookmarks, and a banner for this service.

We put up posters across venues in Leeds with the help of our foster carers. We had the banner at various venues including the Town Hall over the Christmas period when there were lots of community activities.

As part of a publicity pitch for permanency and the positive aspects of this we organised a 13 plus party

to celebrate the achievements of young people 13 plus who have been permanently placed through the Family Placement Service. This was organised by staff and foster carers; Cathy Louca made a beautiful cake and carers contributed other food. Peter Lorimer, Leeds footballing legend attended the event and was photographed giving all the young people a certificate of achievement. We undertook a press release giving the positive stories and profiles of five young people (including one who has run in the disability Olympic Games) who were happy to be interviewed by the press. However, despite these best efforts there was only a small article in the Yorkshire Evening Post. We had a short piece of coverage on Radio Aire who interviewed an adoptive parent.

No adopters or permanency carers came forward as a result of the campaign. Mark Mitchell to lead with Kay Beach on finding new angles for this in the press.

The short breaks service has also worked hard to recruit new professional foster carers. An advert financed through "Aiming High" was placed in the Yorkshire Post seeking carers with experience. We got a small response from this and held an Information Meeting for potential carers. However, there were no suitable applicants who wished to pursue this role.

We attended the SILC promotion to inform parents about services for disabled children.

We have worked with Shared Care Network as

part of Share the Care Week. One of our carers Robina Ditta was profiled and used as a good example of the flexible use of short breaks to meet the needs of an Asian family with a severely disabled child. This went out on national networks.

We have continued to advertise in smaller publications including the Pudsey news and the Rothwell News.

We have put our publicity boards at various venues across the city.

We have leaflets and posters for all the services which were updated in 07-08 to ensure they reflected the social model of disability.

Pauline O'Hagan sends out leaflets from all the services on an annual basis to all GP surgeries, CYPSC offices, libraries, SILCs and schools with special needs provision, health centres, children's centres and other venues.

The Annual Report is circulated widely across professionals, voluntary organisations, health and our other partners.

The Family Placement website includes information for BME communities. It has leaflets in different languages. This Annual Report will replace the 2008-9 one which is now on the intranet and internet. A Registration of Interest has been added to the Family Placement website. "We Care" is also placed on the website

The service has a video and DVD, and audio tapes which are available in a range of South Asian

languages. Leaflets are also available in different languages including Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, and Seyheti.

Information in large print is available on request.

We continue to give presentations about Family Placement using PowerPoint and all social workers have been trained in this medium.

We have continued our advertisement campaign on the buses.

'We Care' for carers, and the annual mail out have been sent out to ensure that our stakeholders have up to date information about the service.

Carers are sent publicity cards to place in shop windows etc with "We Care".

We have a full information pack which is sent to all perspective new carers.

We have good links with the department's press office.

Key Issues

We no longer have an Asian Development worker in the Family Placement Service. This has definitely reduced our activities in terms of reaching Asian groups and community organisations. In the coming year we will work to utilize the Asian development worker in the fostering service and will try to put forward a business case for a 18.5 hour Asian development post for Family Placement although in the current economic climate this is likely to be aspirational.

It is apparent that in combining the Publicity and Cultural Inclusion Group there has been less focus on Asian communities. The co-ordinator has invited Hassan Kayani from the Service Improvement Team has visited the family Placement team meeting to help us plan an Equality Impact Assessment. This will be a priority to be completed by autumn 2010 and implemented immediately thereafter.

There is a mis-match particularly on the sitting service between children referred and the skills and experience of carers recruited from the Asian communities. We have not been successful in getting referrals from less complex service users. We have used newsletters, letters to team managers, and e-mails of carer vacancies to try to redress the balance. This year we have matched a number of Asian carers who were not being used and this issue seems to be improving.

Experienced black and Asian carers to mentor inexperienced carers on the service where it has been difficult to match children to inexperienced carers.

Demographic changes and changing perception of work roles have combined to limit the number of potential carers we are able to recruit. We need to continue to develop imaginative ways to recruit in a shrinking market.

We need to ensure that all team members take on an active role in publicising Family Placement, and that this is not seen as the responsibility of the publicity group.

The cost of advertising is increasing. The budget has not increased to reflect this. We need to continue to find innovative and affordable advertising, and to look at whether we can divert more of our budget to advertising.

Targets

To undertake an Equality Impact Assessment of the service to best use the resources we have and to ensure that we continue to work hard to ensure equality continues to be embedded throughout the service.

As part of this we will review our performance in

recruitment of BME carers, including Asian carers, and placements of black and Asian children.

To ensure that the Diversity and Inclusion Function is fully part of the publicity agenda in the coming year and that we do not lose our edge in recruiting black and Asian carers.

To recruit more Asian carers across all services.

To recruit more African carers to the fostering service to match the profile of children being referred.

To produce a clear calendar for the coming year with a publicity event in each month.

To further exploit the use of the internet in advertising the service.

To continue to promote stories about local people and Family Placement in the local press.

To find new ways to push the agenda to recruit foster carers and adopters for disabled children.



SECTION FIVE

TEAM REPORTS.

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Aim of Service

To provide administrative support to Family Placement Carers and Social Workers.

Key Objectives

To ensure Family Placement Carers are paid promptly and to ensure that Carers' requirements are dealt with efficiently. To ensure that effective systems and procedures are in place to support the Social Work functions. To seek to improve existing procedures and systems, and to improve the efficiency and the quality of the service.

Position statement

The past year has been one of consolidation after the split with adult services and move to the wider Fostering and Adoption Department.

The core of the team has remained the same with Rachel Broadbent, Charlie Meikle and Pauline O'Hagan continuing to provide sterling service as Administration Assistants. Administration Officer David O'Connor left in July 2009. The post had been split into 2 part-time positions, one for Adult Family Placement (Shared Lives) and one for Children's services. Gillian Sudron commenced the role for Children's Family Placement in December 2009.

The team joined other administrative staff in attending 2 days of Customer Care Training during the year. The aim of this course was to build on existing skills to present a more professional and caring service to our internal and external customers.

Recording data onto ESCR and assisting social work staff to use the system effectively continues to be an important task for the team. There is an ongoing effort to ensure every child is linked with their carer on the database so that an accurate picture of the service can be captured.

Our integration into the Fostering and Adoption

Department has resulted in some adjustment of procedures to increase consistency and allow the best practice from both teams to benefit all. In response to a recent inspection finding the CRB renewal database is now maintained centrally for the department with the team receiving notification of renewal deadlines on a monthly basis.

A move across the Council to performance management focussed on measurable targets for staff has begun to impact on administration. Standards for meeting agendas and minutes have been introduced with other areas under consideration. The team in Family Placement continue to meet targets for payments to carers and carer reviews.

Admin processes continue to be mapped in detail to assist in training staff to cover each others' roles and to allow areas for improvement to be identified. The new process for recording and paying short breaks has been mapped and the mapping of payments for the long-term service is underway.

Funding from Aiming High to recruit an extra member of staff to the sitting service also resulted in increased hours for Pauline O'Hagan to reflect the increased workload. This funding has been secured for the coming financial year.

The department was able to procure the services of a professional contractor to archive closed files onto electronic media. This has enabled the service to end the need for file storage at the Roundhay Road office.

Key Issues

The effective use of ESCR by all personnel continues to be a key goal. All team members attend regular training to update their understanding of the system and keep abreast of new developments.

Accommodating a growing team in the same space in Merrion House is proving to be an ongoing challenge.

Targets

To review the agreement with Leeds Community Equipment Service and continue to develop systems to track and maintain equipment.

Continue to map key processes and develop the Administration Handbook.

Further IT training on ESCR, FMS, DCal and general IT systems.

To reduce the amount of paperwork being kept in the office and to adhere to the Council's environmental policies.

To work with the Social Work team to streamline systems and ensure best practice in file maintenance.

To ensure that implementation of all policies keeps pace with current changes and legislation.

Working to ensure the information on ESCR corresponds with the information we need to supply for inspections and other external agencies.

To look at recording of the review process to ensure we capture all the different aspects of the review to

clearly see all areas are being included.

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Administration Team

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Children's Sitting



SECTION 6 REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SHORT BREAKS SCHEME

Aim of the Service

To provide a high quality and flexible short breaks service, offering children fun and new experiences, which is responsive to assessed need.

Key Objectives

To recruit and approve more carers with experience of disabled children and provide a family based short breaks service to the disabled children and their families who need this.

Position Statement

57 Short Breaks carers and 27 carers from the Professional Fostering and Adoption Service provided 5902 days of care to 137 disabled children. The number of days are down from 2009-10 which is accounted by the reduction of referrals to the service.

Although the figures show 16 children being matched to new carers some of this activity is emergency placements including LAC children.

A clear trend is a move towards daycare. In 2009- 10 1,304 overnights were provided and 722 days of daycare.

The unit costs were £60.88 compared with £60.89 per day of care in 2007-8.

In 2006 52 new referrals were made to the short breaks service, in 2007 there were 56, between Jan and Sept 08 there were 40 referrals. From Oct 08 to April 09 there was a sharp decrease to 6 referrals. In 2009-10 there were 15 referrals to the service.

An additional 275 days of care were provided to 9 mainstream children through the professional fostering service. Short breaks carers did not provide any care to mainstream children in the last year which reflects a policy decision in the service to only provide short breaks to non-disabled children where one child is a sibling of a LAC disabled child.

Over the year we have continued to proactively deregistered carers who were not active. 7 carers were deregistered. 5 new carers have been approved.

We now have a capacity planning tool to map the progress of all assessments on the service.

The procedures for overnight short breaks have been completely re-written. There has been a development day to address changes which have taken place in CYPSC and how these need to be reflected in Family Placement procedures.

There has also been a development morning for daycare and procedures will be written which reflect the requirement of the statutory guidance on short breaks issued in April 2010.

Five professional fee-paid level C carers have provided 1,754 days of care to children. This is a reduction on last years figures and reflects the fact that two level C carers changed their role last year and one the previous year. A priority for the service is to recruit more professional short breaks carers. There is funding in the mainline budget for seven and two are presently funded through "Aiming High".

Eight Level B carers (carers providing over 90 days of care) have provided 1298 days of care to disabled children.

The Short Breaks Service is primarily a planned service. Over the last 12 months we have placed 5 children in emergency situations.

The scheme workers hold regular three weekly matching meetings where they match the needs of children referred with the skills, competencies, cultural backgrounds, and accommodation of carers with vacancies. They have detailed knowledge of the needs of the children through meeting the parents, the pen picture and the social worker assessment of the child.

Adaptations and upgrading of carers' homes have continued. This year we have invested in providing a specialist bath and other equipment for a professional Level C foster carer, and have re-equipped a carer with ground floor accommodation with capital funding through "Aiming High" capital funding. We have also purchased a specialist bed for a child. Next year we plan to complete an ambitious review of all children with mobility needs to ensure they have the right equipment and adaptations to meet their specific needs.

Supervisory fostering officers continue to cross review carers to provide a measure of independence. An application has been made for this function to be transferred to the Independent Reviewing Team and this is being positively supported by CYPSC. A successful pilot reviewing project including five short breaks carers has

taken place in the last year and an application is in for continued funding.

The four scheme workers are very experienced. All four have progressed beyond Level 38 on the social work scale and are registered with the GSCC and are meeting the training and professional development standards. Diane Butterworth returned from maternity leave in Feb 2010.

The service has been lucky to have recruited Mary Field on secondment from Pinfolds (disabled children's residential home) to provide maternity cover. Mary provided very good experience of effective recording and systems. On Diane's return from maternity leave Mary secured a permanent post with the professional fostering service.

Two workers regularly sit on Leeds CYPSC Fostering Panels. One worker has finished this role this year as she has come to the end of the period members are allowed to be on the panel.

The social workers on the scheme have attended the Shared Care Network AGM and training day which included presentations on "Aiming High", and the new CWDC standards for short breaks. They have also had training in CWDC implementation for short breaks through Shared Care Network, as well as pursuing individual personal development agendas as outlined in their staff appraisals.

The coordinator and Lesley Haldane are members of the Disabled Children's Allocations Panel.

Links with Shared Care Network remain strong with a team member on both the

Management Committee and Policy Group of Shared Care network, which ensure our input into and knowledge of national policy issues and plans regarding short breaks for disabled children.

This coordinator has been in close contact with Dermott McCann Policy Advisor, around implementing CWDC and the new statutory guidance on short breaks.

Following our CWDC training the team have had a half day development morning on CWDC short breaks, where we put together an implementation plan for Leeds and developed the tools required.

Each worker has targets for their carers to complete this and a number of workbooks are underway with one completed. The aim is to have all carers compliant with the requirement to have completed the induction standards by April 2011. This is a big task as the workbooks were only released in June 09 a year after those for mainstream foster carers.

The coordinator attended the DCSF consultation on the new statutory guidance in Nov 09.

A scheme worker provides multi-agency training on Safeguarding and Disabled Children.

A scheme worker sits on the management committee of the Weekenders Club in an advisory capacity.

The annual children's winter party was again a great success with ever growing attendance from carers and the children to whom they provide short breaks.

The service has offered 4 preparation sessions per year to prospective new carers.

This includes a session which take place over six consecutive evenings, and three weekend courses.

This is a reduction in our usual provision of five. One session had to be cancelled as the service is not getting sufficient children referred to match to carers recruited.

We continue to provide a range of post approval training in line with NMS in Fostering. A calendar of training ensures that carers are given the opportunity to attend sessions throughout the year. The mainstream training calendar has now been extended to all short breaks carers. Attendance at training continues to improve.

A Tasks, Skills and Competencies framework for short breaks carers has been introduced and embedded to continue to improve standards and to ensure consistency with the wider fostering service. This will be added to the carer's handbook.



All Family Placement short breaks carers have an up to date handbooks for short breaks. These have key policies and procedures pertaining to the service including policies on restraint and behaviour management, Health and Safety, Intimate Care, and Medication and medical treatment.

The medication and medical treatment policy has been updated through a working party which has met over the year with members across health and social care. This has been sent out to all short

breaks carers to put in the carer's handbook.

All parents have had a letter reminding them of their responsibilities in terms of the medication policy. This letter will be sent to parents annually.

We continue to have good partnership arrangements with colleagues in health, housing and education.

Work is ongoing to ensure that we actively consult with children using the service. The Organisation Development Unit now has a training course developed in partnership with Family Placement and the Communication and Participation Officer on the training schedule. This should ensure that social workers in the field are trained in communicating with disabled children.

In April 2008 Family Placement Service offered a participation event to children using the short breaks service. This was carefully planned with the disabled children's participation officer, and included communication facilitators, and activities which were appropriate for children with limited communication. There was a drop in tea-coffee bar for parents who brought their children. Unfortunately the take up was so low (three children) that the event had to be cancelled. It will be a priority for the coming year to develop a fun day to consult children using the service in our practices.

The carer's review paperwork now includes a form for direct consultation with children. The coordinator carefully reads all responses which tend to be positive. Any issues are addressed.

Workers on the service have attended and held stalls at "market place" events across Leeds where they meet parents and publicise the service. They have also attended a number of events to promote the service.

Statistics continue to be collected and evaluated to identify gaps in service and to inform planning. The matching process has provided very useful figures which show trends in referrals, and highlights gaps in service provision.

The families of all new children referred to the service are visited by a member of the Family Placement team who tell them about the service (including the medication procedures), completes or updates a pen picture including the child's needs with the family, gives the family an information pack for parents and a Children's Guide. The pen picture is sent to potential carers as part of the matching process.

There are regular meetings of the Family Placement Children's team and the Adult Shared Lives Service (formally Adult Family Placement Service) to ensure smooth transitions. Three young people continued to have placements with their previous carer under the Adult Shared Lives.

The service continues to proactively look at how we meet the NMS for Foster Care whilst applying proportionality for a short breaks service:

- (i) The initial match is first considered at a matching meeting to ensure the needs of the child and the skills of the carer are a good fit.
- (ii) Carers are given a significant amount of information regarding the child when a match is considered. They are sent a

detailed pen picture (which has been completed with the parent by a Family Placement Social Worker)

(iii) Parents, child, and social worker attend a pre-placement introductory visit with the Family Placement carer where the child's needs are discussed.

(iv) We have Placement Agreement Meetings for all ongoing placements which includes the parent, social worker Family Placement Carer and Supervising Fostering Officer.

(v) A risk assessment on the child and a CSIR 35 is completed at the Placement Agreement Meeting.

(vi) We have clear medication procedures, and policy.

(vii) We have a protocol with the fire service who undertake a fire risk assessment in the homes of carers.

(viii) We have developed methods to improve consultation, feedback, and evaluation of the service.

The service has made a successful bid for "Aiming High for Disabled Children" funding to increase our capacity in key areas. The areas targeted are children with complex health and mobility needs, and children with challenging behaviour including autism.

We have replaced four adapted vehicles for professional short breaks carers. Three are based with the carers and one is a "floating" vehicle to be accessed by all short breaks carers who have a child with restricted mobility. We have funding agreed for two other vehicles but need to recruit ground floor carers to make use of these.

We have funding for two professional carers who have been recruited to care for children with autism and difficult behaviour.

We have secured funding in the coming year to provide £30k of sensory equipment for professional short breaks carers, and 101k for adaptations and equipment including a full adaptation for a specific named child.

Regular team meetings/ support groups have been introduced for Level C professional short breaks carers who had been required to attend the fostering support group which was not always appropriate to their needs. The team is considering extending this to all short breaks carers. In the past short breaks support groups had not been well attended and the service has used celebration events (such as the winter party and summer picnic) to bring short breaks carers together.

There have been no complaints in relation to the short breaks service. A strategy meeting has been called on the 31st March. Outcomes to be reported in next year's Annual report.

Key Issues

The service is becoming ever more professionalized, and the children referred have higher levels of need which is explicit in the raising of the eligibility criteria for overnight stays by CYPSC. In response to this the service needs to recruit and fund more fee-paid professional carers who can respond to this challenge and meet complex needs.

Over the last year although we have recruited two new professional short breaks carers, an experienced special needs assistant and an experienced nanny to provide care for children with autism and difficult behaviour, we

have also had two professional carers with adapted property change their fostering role. The considerable challenge for the short breaks service is to be able to replace these skilled carers and to ensure suitable specialist accommodation is in place.

Family Placement would usually recruit new professional carers from our existing experienced short breaks carer cohort. At the present time we do not have any carers who are interested in becoming professional carers. We have advertised in our carer's magazine "We Care" and in the local press for carers with experience of working with children with special needs. Despite these efforts the carers we have recruited have been through our short breaks pool.



In Leeds eligibility criteria for services for disabled children introduced in Oct 2008 raised the threshold for overnight short breaks. The impact on referrals to Family Placement Service has been a 75% reduction in referrals. The children referred are at the higher levels of need, and are often requiring ground floor accommodation. This means that our usual process of "growing" inexperienced carers by matching them to children with relatively straightforward special needs and gradually building their skills is more difficult. We

have recruited carers to the service who we have been unable to match because no children in the middle needs category have been referred. The team therefore need to increasingly target skilled and experienced carers for recruitment whose families could manage a child who has a high level of needs.

The service is also concerned about the impact of the raising of the eligibility criteria on families of disabled children who feel they need overnight short breaks, and whether the needs of some families will be appropriately met.

Family Placement have always offered placements to a range of disabled children including those who are harder to place but some of the referrals coming through are children whose care needs are not compatible with care in a family environment because they need higher staff ratios, waking night care and the consistency of the same environment.

Alongside the new eligibility criteria a welcome plan is being implemented to increase the range of services and support available to disabled children and their families and to promote inclusion. Family Placement need to ensure that our services are fit for purpose in changing times and meet business plan of CYPSC.

At our Awayday we looked at short breaks and developing and promoting a more fluid service which better meets the

varied forms of short breaks outlined in the planning for disabled children. We have also had a development morning to look at how to develop our popular daycare service. The procedures are currently being written for this.

The Common Assessment Framework is being fully implemented in Leeds. Family Placement Service have ensured that carers still have the information they need in relation to the child by developing the "Essential Information and Pen Picture" which is completed for every child referred. We have had a manager from the CAF to attend a team meeting to inform each other of our roles.

Training is an ongoing issue which we are constantly planning, improving and evaluating. The service was unable to secure additional finance for training though "Aiming High". This part of the bid was unsuccessful as the commissioners ruled that the monies cannot be allocated to improve existing services. This is therefore an area which will continue to be a funding pressure as carers must be trained to comply with the N.M.S. and CWDC short breaks induction standards.

This year we have agreed with Organisation Development Unit that short breaks carers will receive the calendar for foster carers and will be able to access courses on this. The coordinator and the manager of Organisational Development have mapped the requirements of short breaks carers and completed a

training overview of what is required. CYPSC has made a successful workforce development bid to Aiming High and Barnardos and the Children's Society will be commissioned to provide a range of training for the workforce around disability issues which will be open to all Family Placement Carers and workers.

Payment for Skills was not implemented in the short breaks service (with the exception of Level 4 professional foster carers who also provide short breaks or holiday placements). This was because PfS was designed for full time foster carers and did not translate well to short breaks where some of our carers may only provide a weekend every eight weeks. To pay at Level 1 would have made the recruitment of short breaks carers not viable and would have meant a reduction in payments for most Level A carers. The service could not afford to pay Level 2 for all short breaks placements although all the children placed have significant additional needs. The professional short breaks carers are contracted to five days over seven with two days rest. They are paid a full weekly fee equivalent to the highest fee at Level 4 (but do not receive a second fee if they have two children) and an enhanced maintenance allowance. Unlike PFS carers they do not have children in placement every day. It is unrealistic to require short breaks carers with children coming and going throughout the week to work seven days out of seven, whilst to reduce

the fee pro-rata would have been unacceptable to carers.

However, Level C professional carers have a perception that in not being assimilated to PfS they have been disadvantaged and lost status. The coordinator and the CSDM reviewed this situation in 2009 - 10 and decided not to assimilate. However, there does continue to be pros and cons to this and in the coming year the coordinator will write a full options paper outlining these.

The DCSF have now published statutory guidance on the provision of short term breaks (published April 2009 to be implemented April 2010). This sets out and changes the way in which short breaks will be regulated in the future. It gives local authorities the duty to conduct an assessment to establish which children requiring overnight short breaks will be accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, and which children will be provided with overnight services under Section 17 (children in need). The coordinator will work with managers across CYPSC to agree how this will be implemented in Leeds.

Family Placement Service have developed a CSIR 35 Placement Agreement which gives all the relevant information for short breaks, including the child's health and medication needs, and a care plan as to how the child's needs will be met by the carer. Parents see this document as more relevant and less stigmatising than the LAC forms designed for children being accommodated

into full time care. The CSIR 35 is completed alongside updating the risk assessment at the Placement Agreement Meeting and therefore owned by parents. They are proportionate in the sense that they come from the assumption that the parents will be responsible for meeting the child's health and education needs as outlined in National Minimum standards Standard 32. From April 2011 all children accommodated for more than 75 days will be regarded as full LAC.

Some teams are continuing completing LAC forms for short term breaks in addition to the CSIR 35. Many parents are uncomfortable with this situation. They have been particularly unhappy about the completion of LAC paperwork in relation to their child as this is very much geared to accommodation on a longer term basis. Some parents have refused to have the LAC paperwork completed and one has elected to have day care only. Parents talk about the use of this paperwork stigmatising themselves and their child. The coordinator is presently holding a series of meetings with the SCDM disability and the SCDM fostering and adoption, and the Principal Unit Manager for Residential Services. The intention is to use the CSIR 35 as the Placement Agreement/Placement Plan across short term breaks

In the Family Placement Short Breaks Service every placement has a CSIR 35 signed by the parent or person with parental responsibility. We have

involved parents in the Pre-Placement Visit, the Placement Agreement Meeting and in completing the risk assessment.

Family Placement Service tends to keep our own databases and records. It is a priority to improve the recording on ESCR for short breaks as field social workers do not always link the child to the product on ESCR. The Change of Circumstances Form which has not been used for short breaks is a prompt for social workers to link products and children when they are authorising payments. We have recently updated the Change of Circumstances (Notice of Movement Form) to include all Family Placement products including short breaks. The new products have been updated on ESCR. Social workers will be instructed to use this form for short breaks. This should assist the ESCR reporting system in reporting short breaks, particularly in improving accuracy in linking the children using the services to carer products.

We now have an own bedroom policy on this service in line with the fostering service policy and procedure. Bedrooms will only be shared by siblings, or in specific circumstances where it clearly benefits the child and a bedroom sharing risk assessment will be completed. For example we have recently had a referral for a teenage boy who is a wheelchair user. The boy has few opportunities to meet with his peers and non for a sleep over. He has specifically said that he wants

to spend time with other youngsters who share his experiences and have sleep-overs. We have identified another boy with similar needs. They have been matched to the same carer and will come on placement together if they choose to do so. There will be a risk assessment and bedroom sharing assessment in place.

Targets

All carers to have a Personal Development Plan on the short breaks service.

All carers to complete CWDC workbook for short breaks by April 2011.

The coordinator to agree with senior staff in CYPSC how the "Short Breaks Statutory Guidance to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children" will be implemented for short breaks. The coordinator to update all short breaks procedures to ensure that requirements issued April 2010, implementation date April 2011, are met in Family Placement Service.

To recruit two professional short breaks carers for children who need ground floor accommodation, or those with autism and some challenging behaviour.

To explore imaginative new ways to recruit new carers.

To ensure that all our services are published on the HUB, and are well publicised across Leeds and that parents of disabled children know about our services.

To increase overall carer numbers.

The coordinator to complete an options paper re the pros and

cons of the assimilation of short breaks into the Payment for Skills model, and to address the concerns of Level C professional carers.

To continue to improve consultation with children and to host a "fun day" for children using the service. To try a new format in the light of the lack of interest in the April 2009 event.

To formally agree with CYPSC when LAC forms will be used respect of short breaks reflecting the 75 days per year in the new statutory guidance.

To publish a fluid menu of services and to promote this

with the CYPSC children's team.

The coordinator to write new procedures for daycare to offer more choice to parents, in line with the "Aiming High" and CYPSC objectives.

To increase placement opportunities for autistic children.

To continue to pursue additional funding and opportunities for training and to liaise with Organisational Development Unit around providing additional training for short breaks.

To continue to improve ESCR reporting for short breaks.



Team members

Tony Bedford	247 8411
Diane Butterworth	247 8656
Mary Fields (until March 2010)	247 8656
Jane Danks	247 8655
Lesley Haldane	247 8655
Rachel Broadbent (admin)	247 8934

OUTCOMES FOR THE CHILDREN'S SHORT BREAKS SERVICE

The foster carers on the service continued to get good feedback from social workers and families through the reviewing process.

Some examples of feedback:

"She is nice"

"I like D as I help with his vegetable patch. I like T cooking" #

"G is very funny, I is very polite"

"They take me out for treats and play with me"

Children using short breaks.

"W enjoys the activities that D provides. He also likes to meet other people on placement which helps with his social skills".

"I wouldn't change anything that K does with J. She is fantastic with him and part of his family. We would be lost without her"

"P is an excellent carer, very easy to get on with. M enjoys it there and when asked said P makes me laugh"

"gives me and my husband a proper rest and time to spend with our son"
parents' using the short breaks service

Overall carers rated their supervising social workers highly:

Parent Consultation – 101 forms were sent out to parents/ and carers where the children were looked after and 39 returned

Is your child's carer good at the provision of child orientated time/attention? - We had 36 responses to this question and 100% of parents/foster carers said yes.

Have you been able to approach your carer to resolve issues? - We had 35 responses to this question and 100% of parents/foster carers said yes.

Is your child's carer able to meet your child's Communication needs? - We had 37 responses to this question and 100% of parents/foster carers said yes.

Family Placement Child Consultation – 96 forms were sent out, 30 were returned (some children were helped by parents to complete the form)

Do you like it when you stay with your carer? - We had 30 responses and 100% said yes

Do you like the things you do with your carer? - We had 30 responses and 100% said yes.

Consultation with the Child's Social Worker -114 forms were sent. We had 42 responses prior to the review.

Provision of child oriented time/attention - We had 11 responses to this question. 82% of social workers said very good and 18% of social workers said good.

Overall are you happy with the service from Family Placement? We had 13 responses and 100% said yes.

Family Placement Carer Consultation 57 forms were sent out. We had 20 responses prior to the review (others were completed by foster carers and returned at the review, these were not put on the database. This issue will be addressed in the coming year).

Are you satisfied with the provision of information from social workers? - We had 45 responses to this question (some carers were commenting on more than one social worker). 87% of carers said yes and 13% of carers said no.

Are you satisfied with the frequency of the Supervisory Fostering Officer's visits? - We had 15 responses to this question and 100% of carers said yes.

Is your Supervisory Fostering Officer able to resolve any problems / issues?

We had 15 responses to this question and 100% said yes.

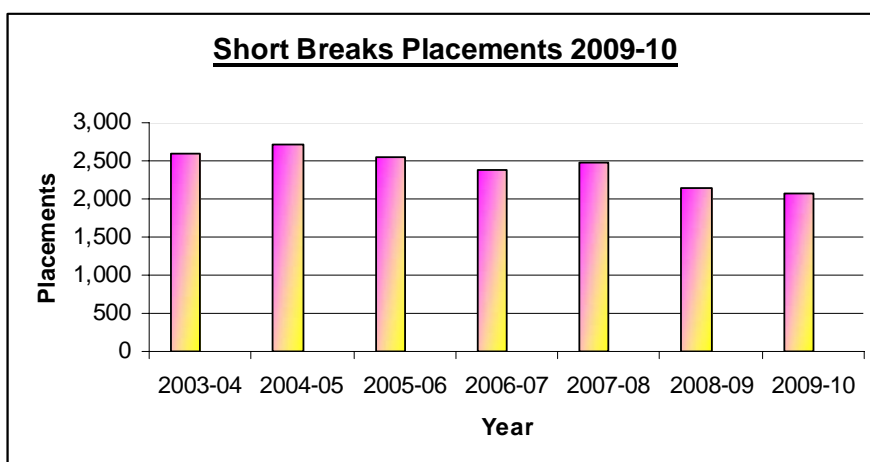
Are you satisfied with the frequency of visits of the child's social worker?

We had 40 responses (some carers were commenting on more than one social worker) 78% said yes and 22% said no.

The highest levels of dissatisfaction was with transport.

Of 14 responses 86% were satisfied and 14% dissatisfied.

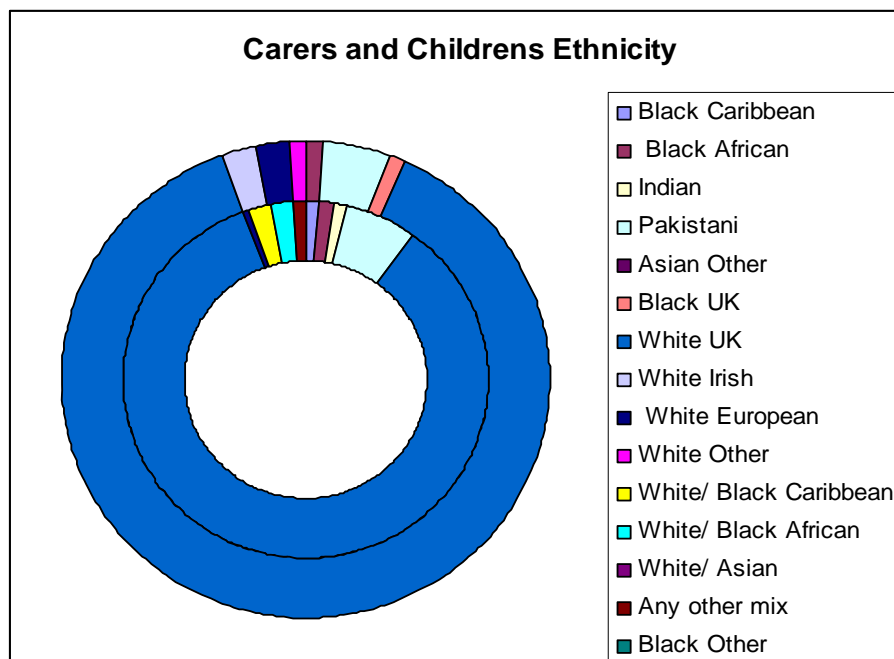
Outcomes	LT Carers	Level A Carers	Level B Carers	Level C Carers	Total Short Breaks service
No. of placements	347	631	453	647	2078
Days of care	1342.5	1508	1298	1754	5902.5
No. of days for mainstream children	275	0	0	0	275
No. of placements for mainstream children	52	0	0	0	52
No. of carers on the register 01/04/09	28	47	7	5	59 SB Carers and 28 LT Carers
No. of carers on the register 01/04/10	27	43	8	6	57 SB Carers and 27 LT Carers
No. of Day Care Placements	124	249	123	226	722
No. of Over Night Placements	216	365	327	396	1304



Ethnicity Profile		
Code with description	Children using the service	Carers & registered partners.
Black Caribbean	2	0
Black African	2	1
Indian	2	0
Pakistani	10	4
Asian Other	0	0
Black UK	0	1
White UK	137	80
White Irish	0	2
White European	1	2
White Other	0	1
White/ Black Caribbean	3	0
White/ Black African	3	0
White/ Asian	0	0
Any other mix	2	0
Black Other	0	0
% from Ethnic Minorities	15.4%	12.0%

No. of children on scheme	163
No. of children unmatched	12
No. of children matched / phasing in	5
No. of children ongoing	137
Emergencies	5
Mainstream children	7
No. of new children	16
No. of new carers approved	5
No. of carers deregistered	7

NB number of new children includes those re-matched and those placed in emergencies.



REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SITTING AND HOME BASED SCHEME

Aim of the Service

This service provides short, and in some cases extended periods of care for disabled children in their own home, daytime or evenings and occasional overnights. Carers will sometimes take children out in the community. It can be used as part of a package of care alongside other respite provision or can stand alone.

Key Objectives

To provide a flexible and reliable sitting service valued by parents. To work to ensure that all children referred are matched in a timely manner.

Position Statement

The Children's Sitting Scheme has always been very popular with parents and feedback continues to be good.

In 2009 - 10 7,290 hours of care were provided to 151 children. This is an increase in the number of children using the service from 138 last year. This reflects the activities of Emma Sutton who has been working to create additional capacity for autistic children and children with complex needs.

9.87% of the children were from ethnic minority backgrounds. This reflects population trends in Leeds where there are proportionately higher numbers of disabled children from South Asian communities.

The unit costs are for 2008-9 £18.42 per hour of care very similar to last year.

26 new carers have been approved on the scheme and 16 have left the service. The 26 new carers reflects the work of Emma Sutton who has been recruited through "Aiming High" and started with the service in Oct 09. However, the nature of the service which attracts students and other short term workers means we have a high turnover of carers on the service.

The scheme can be accessed directly by parents if their children meet the eligibility criteria and if their needs are 2 hours a week or less and they don't have other services, this fits with "aiming High" where the core offer is 2 hours per week support to families of all disabled children. The "Aiming High" aspiration is that parents should be able to access this without high levels of professional involvement if they do not want this.

The sitting service is very busy with a high turn-over. Although 151 children received a service there were 84 new referrals and 9 re-referrals made during the period. This was 30 more children than were referred last year. Demand has always been greater than capacity on this service.

We are delighted that our "Aiming High" funding initially



for one year has been approved for a further 15 months as stage 2 of "Aiming High" The funding is for an additional social worker to increase capacity across the service, with particular reference to children with autism, challenging behaviour

and multiple complex needs. We are confident that we will be able to evidence that this post will have a significant impact on meeting the needs of children and families. Emma Sutton was recruited to the post in Oct 2009 and is making a significant impact.

We have also been awarded funding to increase the admin support by 7 hours to the sitting service to reflect the additional workload on admin. Pauline O'Hagan is full time for the duration of the project.

The Disabled Children's Allocation panel administrator is now keeping a spreadsheet of the services accessed by families. Family Placement give details of all of our activities for this database. This should enable a fairer distribution of resources, but does not seem to be reducing the pressure on the service. Some families will still require the service as part of a package of care alongside other services but there need for this will have been fully assessed and approved by the DCAP panel.

The single largest group of children using the service are those with autism. The second are those with a physical disability. A high proportion of the children placed have more than one disability. These are the children targeted as most in need through the "Aiming High" strategy.

The sitting service had stalls at a number of publicity events including Bramley Fun Day, and the Special Needs Marketplace for parents at the Civic Hall.

We now annually undertake a comprehensive review of the full waiting list. We send an annual letter to all parents on the waiting list to ask them if their needs had been met by other services and whether they wish to remain on the waiting list. We also asked parents responding to list any other services they receive.

Although we hold a waiting list the workers on the service match the children in terms of the children's needs and the skills and competencies of the carers to meet this. The workers also match geographically. This means that some children will wait longer for a service than others as the need to provide good, safe matches overrides other considerations.

At outturn, there was an under-spend on the fees to carers budget. Within the next year this will be used by the children being matched by the "Aiming High" worker.

Standards have been raised in reviewing carers, supervisory visits and caseload recording. We will be reviewing all our documentation and recording tools this year.

The children's consultation form and parent's consultation forms have provided some interesting and positive feedback. Information from all service-user feedback is being collated on a database so the evaluation can then be used to improve the service.

Safeguarding is embedded across the service. All carers have a full assessment and approval is by the Head of

Children's Resources. Our assessment process is the same as that outlined as a model of good practice for sitting services in the new DCFS statutory guidance. All carers have CRBs, medical reports from their GP, Child Protection Checks, Health Authority checks, 2 personal references, and a professional reference where appropriate. Safeguarding and Health and Safety form part of the preparation training, which is the same as for short breaks. Safe Care Plans are produced by all new carers as part of their assessment. Carers are invited to attend on-going training.

All carers have a handbook which includes policies on Medication and Nursing Interventions, smoking, Restraint, Do's and Don'ts in sitting, Intimate Care, Complaints, looking after black and ethnic minority children, etc.

CRBs are updated every 3 years. We have a database which records when CRBs are due, and compliance has recently checked by the coordinator to ensure that all CRBs are in date.

All carers are subject to annual review (although workers are struggling to achieve this within the timescales as most sitters are only available in the evening). Proportionality is applied in terms of supervision of carers. This takes the form of telephone supervision as well as some visits.

The team workers visit all new referrals to meet the parents and children and to take a pen-picture including the needs of the child. Children are carefully matched by scheme workers according to the skills and abilities of carers and the needs of the child. The scheme workers

take the potential carer to meet the parents and child for a pre-placement visit where the needs of the child are fully discussed. If the match is progressed there is a Placement Agreement Meeting with Parents where a Placement Agreement outlining the child's needs and the arrangements for contacting parents, etc, is completed and a risk assessment undertaken.

The service has made a successful bid through "Aiming High" for a social worker and part time admin post to pilot a befriending service to complement of sitting service and offer more choice to parents and children. This would be for 15 months duration.

Key Issues

Capacity has always been the main issue for this service. There is money in the fees to carers' budget, many children on the waiting list, satisfied parents who are receiving the service, but it is not possible for workers to deliver more without increased staffing. We welcome the "Aiming High" funding and Emma Sutton's contribution.

CYPSC are considering whether to go ahead with the "Aiming High bid to pilot a befriending service. Although there is some money in the budget to accommodate some additional spend on fees if the project ends after 15 months, thereby not stopping services where children and families are already receiving these, there is a concern that additional services cannot be developed in the light of the funding issues facing CYPSC and the considerable overspend across the service.

All the carers need to be matched by the two part-time workers, and the full time

"Aiming High worker. This involves initial visits to families, introduction visits with the child and carer, and a further visit to the family to sign the agreement form and undertake a risk assessment. This is in addition to assessment, approval and review visits to carers.

At the recent Awayday the sitting service looked at how we can provide service more fluidly with the short breaks service. The sitting service will be involved in the re-writing of the day care procedures.

The Disabled Children's Allocation Panel may impact on the way we allocate resources. At the moment newly referred parents are allocated 8 hours a month, with the possibility of rising to 288 hours per year (24hours pre month) in response to assessed and approved need. We may need to consider how we could allocate hours

differently reflecting the assessment.

The practice of initially allocating 8 hours per month will continue as this is a good fit with "Aiming High" where the core offer to parents is 2 hours support per week.

Targets

The coordinator to review all the policies and procedures on the service in the coming year.

The coordinator to re-write the procedures for the service to reflect the new statutory guidance on the provision of short breaks issued by the DCSF in April 09.

The coordinator to review the regulation of the service in the light of the new guidance, (in the new guidance no external regulation for sitting and befriending services where personal care is not provided), and to explore whether children receiving personal

care in placements need to be registered as a domiciliary care service.

To continue to increase carer numbers, and to meet the targets for recruiting carers and matching new children which formed part of our "Aiming High" bid.

To ensure all new carers are matched as quickly as possible to increase the number of placements available to families.

To undertake publicity campaigns to target areas where more sitters are needed, or where there are difficult to place children.

Team members

Chris Myers	247
8959	
Melody Brewer	
247 8959	
Emma Sutton	
Pauline O'Hagan (admin)	
24 78584	

OUTCOMES FOR THE CHILDREN'S SITTING & HOME BASED SERVICE

Again customer satisfaction was very high from families receiving the service. Feedback from parents via the carer review was consistently very good.

A quote from parent N.M.:

"Rita has become part of our family, we love and care for her so much. We have much respect and trust for her. She is wonderful with k and Nothing is too much bother for her. We would be lost without her."

And from a child using the service E.C

"I like Wessal's food. I like cooking with her. She has a nice family"

Children's Sitting Scheme Service User Feedback - Evaluation Summary 2009-10

Parents

Is your child's carer able to meet your child's Cultural needs? – We had 51 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes.

Is your child's carer able to meet your child's Communication needs? – We had 50 responses to this question. 96% said yes 4% said sometimes.

Are you happy with your child's carer's standard of Safety? – We had 52 responses to this question. 98% said yes 2% said sometimes.

Are you happy with your child's carer's standard of Friendliness? – We had 52 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes.

Is your child's carer able to offer the dates/times you would like? – We had 52 responses to this question. 75% said yes 4% said no and 21% said sometimes.

Have you been able to approach your carer to resolve issues? – We had 41 responses to this question. 95% said yes and 5% said no.

Is your child's carer good at the provision of child orientated time/attention? – We had 48 responses to this question. 94% said yes and 6% said sometimes.

Does your child appear to be happy with the activities provided? – We had 49 responses to this question. 94% said yes and 6% said sometimes.

Does your child appear happy to see his / her carer? – We had 52 responses to this question. 96% said yes 2% said no and 2% said sometimes.

Does your child's carer look after any siblings? – We had 48 responses to this question. 48% said yes 44% said no and 8% said sometimes.

Does the carer ever take your child out? – We had 49 responses to this question. 20% said yes 71% said no and 8% said sometimes.

Ability to maintain drug regime / provide medical care (if appropriate) – We had 25 responses to this question as, in many cases, the question was not applicable. 96% said yes and 4% said no.

Overall are you happy with the service you receive from Family Placement? – We had 52 responses to this question. 98% said yes and 2% said no.

Children Using the Service (Many of these were assisted by parents)

Do you like it when your carer comes to look after you? – We had 35 responses to this question. 97% said yes and 3% said no.

Do you like the things you do with your carer? – We had 35 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes.

Family Placement Carers

Are you satisfied with the frequency of the Link Worker's visits / contacts? – We had 31 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes.

Are you satisfied with the frequency of the provision of information? – We had 31 responses to this question. 97% said yes and 3% said no.

Is the Link Worker able to resolve any problems / issues? – We had 27 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes.

Are you satisfied with services from Social Services regarding: Equipment ? – We had 22 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes..

Allowances ? – We had 28 responses to this question. 93% said yes and 7% said no.

Do you have Placement Agreements for all the children ? – We had 25 responses to this question. 96% said yes and 4% said no.

Do you have Integrated Needs Assessments Papers for all the children? – We had 23 responses to this question. 96% said yes and 4% said no.

Do any of the children who you sit for you take medication? – We had 30 responses to this question. 53% said yes and 47% said no.

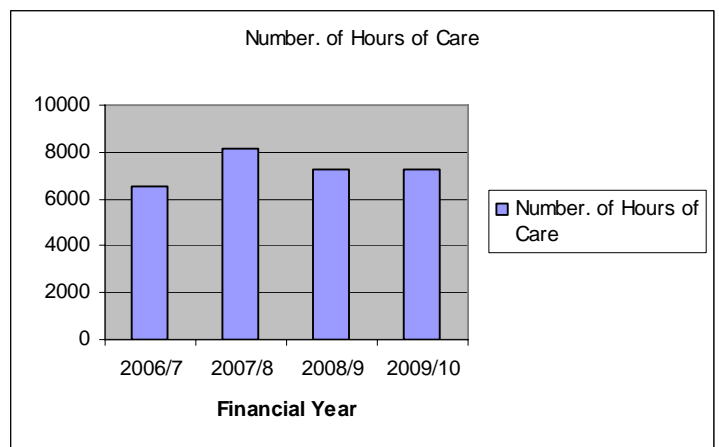
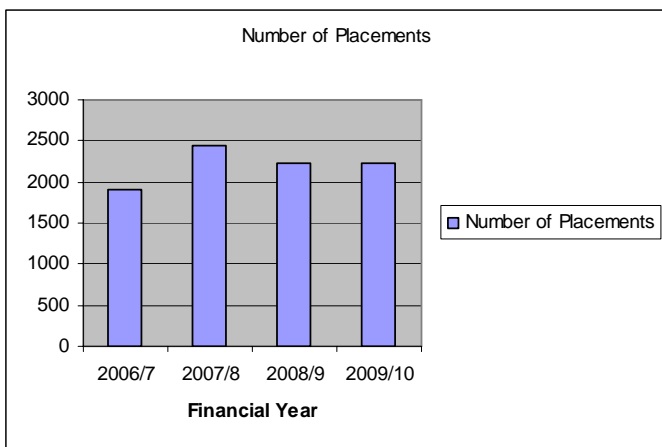
Do any of the children who you sit for have any nursing procedures ? – We had 31 responses to this question. 26% said yes and 74% said no.

Is the up to date information in your Carer's Handbook ? – We had 25 responses to this question. 92% said yes and 8% said no.

Have you attended any training/support groups in the last year, through Family Placement or otherwise (work) ? – We had 30 responses to this question. 80% said yes and 20% said no.

Overall are you happy with the service you receive from Family Placement? – (
 We had 31 responses to this question. All (100%) said yes.

	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Number of Placements	1917	2438	2235	2235
	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Number. of Hours of Care	6524	8160	7290.5	7278.5
	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Number of Children using scheme	132	144	138	151
	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Number of Carers	87	102	86	96



REPORT OF THE PROFESSIONAL FOSTERING, ADOPTION & PERMANENCY SERVICE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

Aims of the Service

To recruit, assess, and support permanent families (fostering, adoptive & special guardianship) for disabled children. To provide post adoption & post special guardianship support packages. To provide high quality foster placements on a shared care, assessment, task centred, pre-adoptive and emergency basis. Staff also act on a consultancy basis offering support to area social workers on specialist disability issues.

Key Objectives

To provide quality placements for disabled children reflecting their right to family life. To work together with the managers of Pinfolds and Acorn Lodge to reduce placements outside Leeds, and to keep disabled children close to their families and communities.

Position Statement

At the end of the period 2009 -10, 48 Level 4 carers were registered on the service. In the previous year they have provided 74 disabled children and young people with 16,079 days of care.

10 young people have remained with their foster carers' post 18, with most placements transferring to the St Anne's Community Carers Shared Lives Adult Placement service within 6 months of their 18th birthday.

Unit costs for the service remained stable with a 6p increase from £57.90 for 2008-9 to £57.96 for 2009 - 2010. This does not include 18 plus as these young people are financed through ASC Joint Commissioning Service.

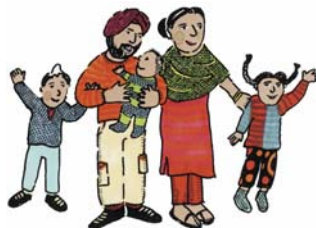
There was a significant underspend on the fees to carers budget possibly accounted for by a rise in Special Guardianship Orders reducing the LAC population and a net loss of 3 carers to the service from 2008-9. The coordinator will address this with finance and the CSDM fostering and to look at whether any of the

budget should be moved to the SGO budget.

The service has clear disability eligibility criteria.

28 of the professional foster carers, the same figure as last year, have also provided short breaks, holiday cover, or respite.

3 new Level 4 carers have been approved this year. All of these had previously been approved as short breaks carers and had built skills and experience through this route. It remains Family Placement practice to ask potential new carers who have limited experience to undertake 6 months of short breaks for disabled children before being assessed as Level 4 carers. All the carers approved had considerable more than 6 months experience.



Four carer households have been deregistered on the service. Of these one retired after her placement child

moved to an adult placement, one became adoptive parents, one took SGOs on the 2 children in placement, and one was de-registered for misconduct.

The service has continued to work closely with Mainstream Fostering, providing 497 days of care to mainstream children. These are primarily siblings of disabled children placed with the disabled child.

The trend towards a rise in the number of children with complex health needs or autism being referred to the service continues. This is in line with national trends. The Improving Life Chances Report 2005 showed that there was a 62% increase in the number of disabled children from 1975. Within this cohort, children with complex health needs and autism are the fastest growing groups.

In the last year the service placed 15 children, 3 in an emergency situation (including siblings). The trends in placement are very similar to last year. Placements are being sought as a result of neglect issues, a number of the parents have mental health difficulties (some

associated to the child's disability), and issues around drug and alcohol abuse are significant. Placements are mainly for boys. There has been a large spectrum of age and disability.

In 2008 -9 the service placed two children who have been in hospital for over a year and have complex health needs. One child required ventilation and one was on TPN Total Parenteral Nutrition. This is a procedure whereby a child is fed directly into their bloodstream.

This year we have placed a child with a tracheotomy and a second child with a tracheotomy has been matched to a foster carer as part of a child protection twin tracking plan. These children require a high level of partnership support from health. The recent placement of the child with a tracheotomy was supported by a package of care whereby the child was placed at Hannah House where the foster carer received intensive training.

One adaptations of carer's property has been completed with a DFG and a top-up from Family Placement adaptation budget to enable them to continue to care for a disabled child who is permanently placed(L.S). A further adaptation (TH) on the same basis is near completion. One carer (CL) has had an adaptation financed wholly through a DFG to provide downstairs accommodation for her teenage foster child who has a degenerative condition.

Our adoption worker moved to a Family Finding post in Jan 2010. We have decided to base the new Family Placement Adoption worker Mark Mitchell in the adoption team to be operationally managed by an Adoption

Team Manager. This will ensure that the worker will get the professional development and supervision to increase his skills and knowledge in the adoption field. He is already experienced in working with disabled children. The remit of the adoption worker will continue to be to work with disabled children: to provide adoption support of families who have adopted disabled children and support to carers who have taken SGOs on disabled children and are no longer registered as foster carers; to be responsible for publicity; and to recruit and assess new adopters for disabled children and children with uncertain prognosis. The worker will work alongside the adoption team to family find for disabled children and to look at new ways within the adoption team of Opening Doors to all adopters to consider taking a disabled child. The Family Placement co-ordinator will work closely with the adoption team manager to set the agenda for the adoption worker.

In the last year Margaret Orchard placed a mainstream child with adopters who had previously adopted their disabled foster child. She has also assessed one other foster carer to adopt a disabled child in placement. The order has been granted

Four initial visits were made to potential new adopters but all of these withdrew in further discussion around what might be involved. No adoption assessments were completed for disabled children on applicants who were not already known to the service. The adoption worker has been family finding for four disabled children.

Five Special Guardianship Orders have been granted to foster carers on the service. Another six are in progress.

There has been a delay in the appointment of guardians by CAFCASS who are experiencing a shortage and this has had a impact on timescales.

As we continue to promote Special Guardianship it is envisaged that the budgets will follow the children. The coordinator to work out how much of the fostering budget needs to transfer to the SGO budget in the coming year. This will continue as SGOs rise.

CYPSC offer a support package for adopters & special guardians which will offers the same financial & practical support as received by foster carers for disabled children.

Family Placement Children's Service now forms a specialist team for disabled children within the Fostering and Adoption Service. Foster carers on the service are assimilated into the Payment for Skills framework. Carers are required to attend 8 support groups and 3 pieces of training each year. New carers are required to complete 10 mandatory training sessions within the first two years.

A full training programme has been delivered over the last 12 months by Family placement Service which compliments the Organisation Development Unit training for foster carers, including courses on autism, epilepsy, first aid, moving and handling. All Level 4 carers receive the Organisational Development Training Calendar and attend courses from this.

Attendance at support group is a requirement of Payment for Skills, and there has been very good attendance at Family Placement Support Groups which attract over 40 people. Many of these groups

have a training focus with guest speakers e.g. Children's Rights, CWDC, intensive interaction, nursing needs and invasive procedures, internet safety. A crèche is provided at the support group.

Last year we piloted less formal drop in sessions for carers in local areas as some carers had said that the formal groups were not conducive to the "support" function and they would like the opportunity to meet in smaller groups. However, these were very poorly attended and will not be continued.

We have robust systems to ensure that Safe Caring is embedded in the service. The admin team keep records of CRBs and reviews due and papers are sent out prior to the due date to ensure that the service meets the requirements within the timescales. All carers have new Foster Carer Handbooks, Safe Care Plans, a health and safety assessment, a risk assessment for every child, up to date Annual Reviews and CRBs. We have a protocol with health to ensure that all carers administering nursing procedures are properly trained, all carers have training in Safe Care, and are aware of the policies and procedures in the handbook. Over 40 carers attended the support group/training about policies and procedures and recording delivered this year. Every foster carer on the service is allocated to a supervising social worker who makes visits in accordance with or exceeding N.M.S.

All foster carers on the service now have a current Personal Development Plan which was a target for our last Annual Report.

Three carer households have been approved as Adult

Placement Carers on St Anne's Community Carers Shared Lives Scheme to enable them to continue to offer placements to their grown up foster children into adulthood. The placements are in the process of transferring.

One other carer assessments is underway in relation to two young people. One family who were Special Guardians for a disabled child supported by the scheme have been approved as an Adult Carers for their former foster child.

Of the 4 social work staff (3.5 fte) Alison Hill 18.5 hours returned from maternity leave in August 09. She left for a 3 year career break to improve her work life balance and enable her to spend time with her two young children in Nov 09. A temporary worker Amanda Clarke was recruited from the Children's Society for a three month secondment to cover some of the maternity leave and additional hours were given to Lesley Haldane. Amanda had experience of Children's Rights and Disabled children. Amanda concentrated her efforts on assisting with rolling out the implementation of CWDC including trialling on-line workbooks with a carer and the publicity campaign to recruit more permanency carers. The 18.5 hour post will be permanently filled by Dawn Trutch from May 2010. Dawn has experience with disabled children and as a field social worker.

The staff on the team have undertaken a great deal of training in ESCR record keeping and CWDC workshops. They have also individually pursued their own professional development through the staff appraisal process.

The capacity issues within the professional fostering team have been recognised by the

CYPSC senior management team. An additional social work post is to be created on the service from April 2010. Mary Field has been appointed as the successful candidate to this post.

The Family Placement Children's Service have been proactively trying to improve our consultation with children. Supervisory social worker and foster carers attend children's reviews, advise on communication with disabled children which will often be non verbal and non written.

We have now been sending consultation forms to children on the service for over two years. They were originally sent to the child in placement but children tended to ask their foster carers with help in completing the forms. Over the last year they have been sent via the social worker to ensure independence from the foster carer. However, this has resulted in a reduction of consultation forms being completed. Family Placement supervising social workers are working with colleagues in the field to ensure these forms are completed with the children.

The coordinator has met with Martin Ewing who manages the St Anne's Community Carers Shared Lives Scheme and a protocol has been written and agreed between the two organisations. This was a target of the last Annual Report.

The Post 16 Post 18 policy for disabled children in foster care has been completed and signed off at Delegated Decisions which was a target in last years Annual Report.

The Medication and Medical treatment policy for looked after children has been amended and updated. This has been given to all foster

carers in a mailing and through support group. A support group is organised to go through the Policy with foster carers.

There has been one formal complaint regarding foster carers which was partially upheld. The complainant said that the standard of care given to a child and communication was not good enough in certain areas (see FP Statement of Purpose). This was part of a wider complaint about the way in which CYPSC took a legal order in respect of a disabled young person.

The CYPSC policies and procedures on allegations are followed. One carer household has been de-registered following a strategy meeting and subsequent proceedings.



From Oct 09 – Jan 2010 we had an intensive recruitment campaign for permanent carers across fostering and adoption. We commissioned new posters and leaflets featuring adopters and adopted children from the service which were distributed around Leeds. We had a banner in the Town Hall over the Christmas period and at other significant venues across Leeds. We had Radio Aire coverage and an article in the Yorkshire Evening Post about our party to celebrate the achievements of young people who had been fostered and adopted through the Family Placement Service. We know that these posters were visual across Leeds as the adopter featured got lots of phone calls and contacts from people in her past (and her dentist) saying they had seen the

poster. However, we did not get any new adoption applicants from this campaign.

In Nov 09 we organised a very successful party for young people to celebrate the achievements of those aged 13 -30 who had been fostered or adopted through the Family Placement Service. The party was a great success, with many foster carers helping with the organisation. All the young people received a certificate of achievement from the Leeds footballing legend Peter Lorimer and had their photograph taken with him. Many of the young people said they had a fantastic time and the party was much more appropriate for their age group than the Family Placement winter party which is for all ages and tends to have entertainment geared to the younger age group. The press was given profiles of a number of young people they could interview and pictures of young people at the event with Peter Lorimer. Despite this the press did not attend and only a small article was subsequently published in the YEP. By popular demand from young people using the service we intend to hold a similar event this year.

Key Issues

The service continues to need to recruit new foster carers and adopters to ensure that we have placement choice and carers with a range of skills. Although we are successful in “growing” carers through the short breaks scheme there is currently a lot of pressure on placements with very few vacancies. The vacancies which exist do not always match the profile of the children requiring placement. Two recent new assessments did not progress to panel.

Recruiting adopters who are not already known to the service is also proving difficult.

There is only a very small cohort of people who want to adopt a disabled child or a child with uncertain prognosis. The campaign to recruit foster carers and adopters to the service has not been successful. In the coming year we will continue to push this agenda. We are planning a campaign called “where have all the carers gone?” to highlight in the press the poor response we had to our last publicity.

We want to keep improving the feedback which we get from disabled children in foster care. It is always a challenge to ensure that we seek the views of children with limited communication about their views of their life with foster parents. In the coming year we will trial a consultation day for disabled children in foster care. We intend to ask Barnardo’s Children’s Rights Service to assist with this and the new participation worker (who is presently part time).

Family Placement Service has a very good record in placing babies with poor prognosis and complex health needs, and at any given time there will be a number of these children in placement. We need to build on our positive planning with health to ensure that we build a protocol, which can meet the needs of these children as effectively as possible.

The service needs to embed the Post 16 Post 18 policy for disabled children in foster care and former relevant children, which has now been approved and signed off by CYPSC and ASC. A number of carers have been reluctant to transfer the placements to the St Anne’s Community Shared Lives Scheme when the young person reaches 18 and two have refused to do. These carers are in breach of a

policy to safeguard young adults and plans are in place to resolve this situation to ensure that the policy is complied with. The policy was written by a number of key managers across Children's and Adult Social Care and transitions services. The clear legal advice was that we need to implement this policy to safeguard vulnerable young adults through the application of statutory National Minimum Standards in Adult Placements which cannot be applied through a fostering service. Foster carers have had a support group devoted to this topic but further training will be organised for foster carers, social workers across adult and children's services, the pathway planning team, supervising fostering officers, and all other relevant staff.

We have robust plans and targets in place to meet the CWDC induction standards for

foster carers. We have devoted support groups to this and organisational development have organised workshops for carers. However, there may still be some carers who are reluctant to complete this task and will require additional support.

TARGETS 2010-11

To ensure that all carers are compliant with CWDC induction standards by April 2011.

To embed the Post 16 post 18 fostering policy for disabled children, and to roll out training on this to all relevant parties.

To hold a consultation event for disabled children with support from Barnardo's Children's Rights.

To further develop Special Guardianship. To ensure at least 5 SGO orders in respect

of disabled children are made in the coming year.

To push the adoption agenda by achieving a minimum of two adoptions of disabled children, or children with uncertain prognosis.

To recruit four Level 4 foster carers to the professional fostering service.

To continue to undertake an intensive recruitment campaign to target adopters and permanent foster carers.

Team Members

Paula Chennells	
224 3504	
Bev Hudson	224 3399
Margaret Orchard	247 8939 (left Jan 2010)
Mary Field	2478939
Dawn Trutch	247 8939
Mark Mitchell	2477417
Charlie Meikle (Admin)	247 5095

OUTCOMES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICE

Low unit costs, good stability, show best value, and it would be more expensive for the Social Services Department to place these children elsewhere.

We have continued to collate feedback from social workers, parents, children and foster carers in relation to the quality of the service provided.

Some quotes illustrate the mainly positive feedback:

"Bev and Paula have been a pleasure to work with. Any issues are dealt with immediately. They are both friendly, professional and a credit to Family Placement."
Family placement carer

"I have always felt supported by my SFO and find her very easy to speak to".
Family placement carer

"L has met the children's needs and acted over and above the requirements of a foster carer"
LT Social Worker

"The placement met S's needs above and beyond the required level ."
Social Worker

"I get to go places with R and C but I get to go places by myself"
Child's consultation

Child Consultation. 57 forms were sent out and there was 21 respondents.

Question 1: Do you like where you are living now?

There were 17 positive responses, one negative response and 3 did not complete the box.

Question 2: Do you like the things you do with your carer?

There were 18 positive responses, 1 was negative and 3 made no reply.

Comments from children on what they liked included "playing in the garden", "going on holiday", "going out to eat", "Stagecoach and break dancing", "shopping for food", "going to the caravan", "talking to my carer", "riding my bike", "going to the club", "riding horses", "playing games" The feedback from the child who was not happy was investigated. The child had moved placement and had completed the consultation form with their social worker after the placement had ended. An investigation was held and the matter went to fostering panel. This is referred to in the complaints section of this report and in the Statement of Purpose.

Social worker feedback. A new consultation form started to be used in June 09. 89 consultation forms were sent out and 52 were completed and returned.

1/ Provide care in an environment that is safe, stable, healthy, supportive, stimulating, nurturing and provides a positive model of family life. 47 respondents 90% said that carers met the standard. 5 10% did not complete this question.

2/ Working closely in partnership as part of a team with health, education and social work professionals. 46 (88%) respondents said that carers met the standard, 1 (2%) replied part met and 5 (9%) did not complete this question.

3/ Demonstrate a high level of fostering skills and competency? 40 respondents (77%) replied that the carer met the standard. 12 (23%) did not complete this question

4/ Overall does this placement adequately met the needs of the child? 51 respondents (98%) were positive, and 1 (2%) was not completed.

Parents/Caregivers Consultations. These are sent when the placement is shared care or the parents still have regular contact with the child. 29 were sent out. There were 13 respondents.

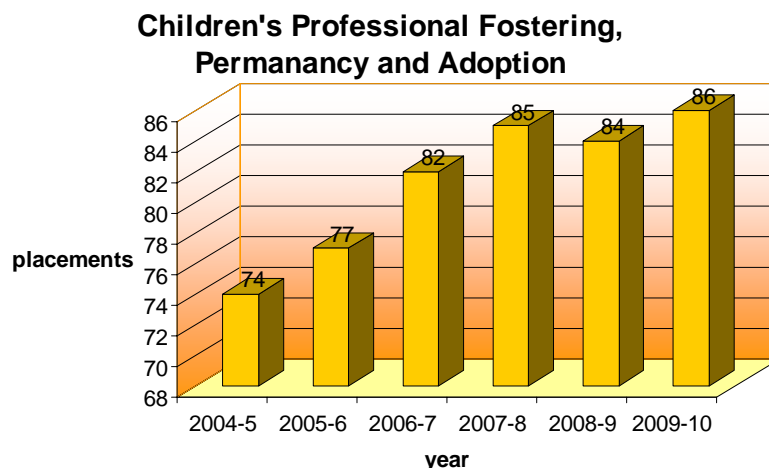
1/ Overall are you happy with the fostering service?

9 respondents (69%) were happy with the service, 1 (8%) was negative, and 3 (23%) said sometimes. The negative respondent is a parent who is very unhappy that her child is looked after.

2/ Does your child seem to get on well with the foster carer family? 11 respondents were positive, 1 said sometimes and one was negative.

Foster Carer consultation

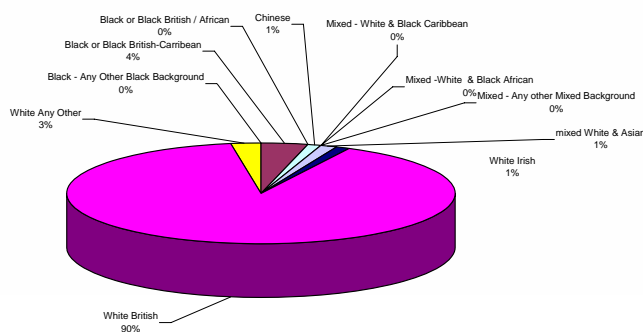
Unfortunately we are unable to collate this information for 2009 -10 as the administration worker had not processed the forms handed in at the review or following the review (only those returned prior to the review). This means there were only 17 responses on the database although the majority of carers had completed their consultation. This will be addressed for next year. The coordinator has sampled the feedback forms which were mainly consistently positive.



Professional Fostering Outcomes				
Outcomes	Disabled Children Under 18	Young People over 18 remaining with foster carers	Mainstream Placements	Total
No. of Placements	74	10	2	86
No. of Days Care (Minus Respite)	16079	1994	465	18538
No. of children using the service 1/4/09-31/3/10	67	10	2	79
Emergency Placements	3 emergency placements			
Children Placed - New To Scheme	12 children			
Waiting List / Referrals	3 children on the active referrals list			
No. of L/T carers on the register 01/04/2009	51 (includes carers who provide Short term/short breaks/Fostering Placements)			
No. of L/T carers on the register 31/03/2010	48 (includes carers who provide Short term/short breaks/Fostering Placements)			
New Carers Approved PFS Level 4 09/10	0			
Carers Changing Approval Level	3			
L/T Carers Deregistered 09/10	4			

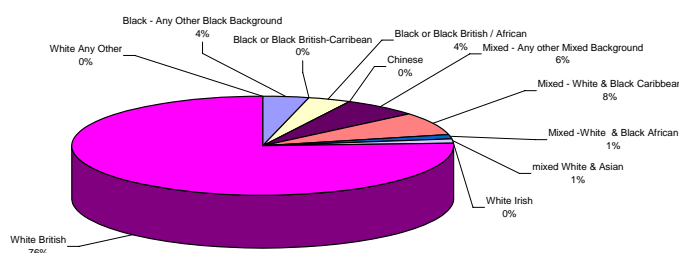
Ethnicity Profile		
Description	Children Using The Service	Primary Carer & Registered Partner
Black - Any Other Black Background	3	0
Black or Black British-Caribbean	0	3
Black or Black British / African	3	0
Chinese	0	1
Mixed - Any other Mixed Background	5	0
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	6	0
Mixed -White & Black African	1	0
Mixed White & Asian	1	1
White Irish		1
White British	60	72
White Any Other	0	2
Total	79	80
% from ethnic minorities	24	10

Ethnicity Profile: Primary Carer / Registered Partner



Black - Any Other Black Background	Black or Black British-Caribbean	Black or Black British / African	Chinese
Mixed - Any other Mixed Background	Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	Mixed -White & Black African	mixed White & Asian
White Irish	White British	White Any Other	

Ethnicity Profile: Children Using The Service



Black - Any Other Black Background	Black or Black British-Caribbean	Black or Black British / African	Chinese
Mixed - Any other Mixed Background	Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	Mixed -White & Black African	mixed White & Asian
White Irish	White British	White Any Other	

SGOs in Progress	7
SGOs Awarded 09/10	5
Adoption In Progress	0
Adoptions Completed 09/10	1

STRATEGIC TEAM GOALS 2010 – 2011 CHILDREN'S SERVICE

- To ensure that the key objectives and business plan of the Children's Family Placement Service is a good fit with the overall Business Plans for Children and Young People's Social Care, particularly in relation to disabled children.
- To organise a new participation day for disabled children. To learn from our last experience where children did not come despite careful planning and a range of facilitators with different communication skills. This time we will ensure that we get across the fun element with a "fun-day" or activity which combines an event that will be attractive to disabled children who use the service and an opportunity for children to help us scope our future services.
- To further develop and publicise a flexible menu of short breaks services to meet the challenges and opportunities of the era of "Aiming High for Disabled Children".
- To complete the review and update of all Children's Family Placement Procedures by rewriting the procedures for daycare and for the sitting service, and amending the recently updated overnight procedures to meet the requirements laid out in the DCSF Short Breaks; Statutory Guidance on how to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled children using short breaks.
- The coordinator to formally work with CSDMs and other relevant staff in CYPSC to implement the above guidance across CYPSC and to agree the processes and paperwork in respect of different short breaks services.
- To undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment of the Children's Family Placement Service using the guidance we have been given by our corporate partners. To ensure that the publicity group fully addresses the needs of BME communities in Leeds and that our services and carer profiles reflect this.
- To meet all the requirements and targets pertaining to our successful Aiming High Bid.
- To continue to monitor the impact of the CYPSC eligibility criteria on the Family Placement Short Breaks service, and to identify strategies to overcome barriers.
- To seek to target recruitment of short breaks carers on those with experience who can meet the needs of harder to place children. To explore any new ways of trying to recruit professional short breaks foster carers particularly those who are interested in taking children who need groundfloor accommodation.
- To continue to action the CWDC induction standards implementation plan for foster carers, including short breaks, and to ensure that we are on target for all carers being compliant by April 2011.
- To present an options paper regarding the assimilation of the short breaks service into Payment for Skills.
- To provide a training course in partnership with Pathway Planning, Transitions Team and Adult Social Care to train all relevant social workers, supervising fostering officers, professionals, and foster carers in the Policy and Procedure for Disabled Children/Young People in foster carer Post 16 years of age & Former Relevant Children Post 18 Years of Age.

- To demonstrate that 'in house' services can be best value as well as flexible and adaptable to the changing requirements of a large local authority department.
- To continue to develop Adoption and Special Guardianship for disabled children in Leeds, and to contribute to reducing the looked after children's population. To develop new strategies to recruit adopters for children under three with uncertain prognosis and to recruit more adopters for disabled children. To work with Adoption Section to discuss how we can better "Open Doors" to all adopters to the potential of adopting a disabled child or child with uncertain prognosis.
- To continue to pursue new ways of ensuring that the children using the service are consulted about their views and their opinions are taken into account when planning services.
- To ensure that Family Placement Service meets all the requirements of the phased introduction of ISA registration for Family Placement carers and social workers under the Vetting and Barring Scheme.