

Children's Services Committee

Report title:	Annual Review of Norfolk's Residential Children's Homes Service
Date of meeting:	13 November 2018
Responsible Chief Officer:	Sara Tough Executive Director Children's Services

Strategic impact

Annual Approval of the Statement of Purpose of Norfolk's Residential Children's Homes Service and a Summary Review of the Year September 2017 to August 2018.

Members in their role as the registered provider of these homes are required, under law (Children's Home Regulations 2015 (as amended); Care Standards Act 2000), to approve each children's home's Statement of Purpose and Functions.

It is a requirement that each of our children's homes has a clear Statement of Purpose which details the aims and objectives and how the standards will be met. The nine standards are:

- Quality and purpose of care standard
- Children's wishes and feelings standard
- Education standard
- Enjoyment and achievement standard
- Health and well-being standard
- Positive relationships standard
- Protection of children standard
- Leadership and management standard
- Care planning standard

Each home must also provide a guide for children which explains the purpose of the home, the complaints procedure and access to advocacy services. Each home's Statement of Purpose is available on Members Insight and hard copies will be in the Members' room.

Executive summary

This paper reports to Members on the performance of and outcomes achieved by Norfolk's Residential Children's Homes Service.

The key performance outcomes achieved for the service this year (September 2017 to August 2018) are:

- Ofsted inspection outcomes which are above the national average.
- The service has contributed to reducing the number of looked after children placed out of county provisions, returning Norfolk's children to Norfolk and reducing placement costs.
- Individual placement costs are reduced due to high occupancy levels across the service.
- The service continues to be financially competitive, with managers constantly reviewing the most cost-effective ways of providing high quality care for our young people.
- The service continues to provide and facilitate education for the young people we look after, supporting young people to identify goals for their future and achieve economic wellbeing.
- Our short breaks services have worked with families on the edge of care, offering support and respite to promote families staying together and reducing the number of children becoming looked after.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- **Scrutinise the information within the report.**
- **Challenge the service on the performance and outcomes achieved.**
- **Recommend the approval of the Statements of Purpose and Functions for all the Local Authority children's homes to Full Council to comply with the Care Standards Act 2000.**

1. Proposal (or options)

- 1.1** Members are asked to scrutinise the information within the report and provide challenge to the service to ensure continued positive outcomes for Norfolk's children and families along with internal performance improvement.
- 1.2** Members are asked to recommend approval to the Committee of the Statement of Purpose for the Residential Children's Homes to comply with the Care Standards Act 2000.

2. Ambition

- 2.1** We strive to provide high quality care that is tailored to the needs of each individual young person. Our skilled and dedicated teams of practitioners, qualified social workers and managers act as good role models, using training and theory to inform their practice. Our ambition is that, through this individual approach and targeted support, young people in our care will be safe, happy and well cared for. Through respect for themselves and others, they will be able to build meaningful relationships, now and in the future. We support young people to identify aspirations and endeavour that each young person achieves a well-rounded education, incorporating academic and vocational qualifications as well as vital life skills. We provide a secure base and promote appropriate attachments to assist them in successful transitions to independence. We aspire for young people in our care to be the best version of themselves in everything they do.

2.1.1 We aim to do this in a way that is financially conscious, using a systemic approach from the start to plan for the best outcomes for young people, ensuring they are in the right placement for the right amount of time.

3. Evidence

3.1 The Norfolk's Residential Children's Home Service currently has six children's homes, three residential short-breaks children's homes and five supported flats. We work closely with other statutory and voluntary sector services supporting children and families in need. Accommodating children is always a last resort and the authority must be satisfied that the care threshold is met. Over the past year, the service has accommodated the majority of young people referred to us, unless their risk assessment identifies that the placement in Norfolk's Residential Children's Home Services would not be suitable. We continually review and adapt our services based on feedback from young people and other professionals, to ensure they meet the needs of all young people including those with challenging behaviours. Service development is discussed monthly at Residential Managers' meetings.

3.2 Our homes deliver a range of interventions to children and young people within residential care, depending on their individual needs:

- Norwich Road and The Lodge provide eight beds between them, offering emergency accommodation for children where there is an immediate need, following a crisis breakdown at home or at their current placement. This accommodation is used while an alternative, appropriate placement is sourced.
- Waterworks Road and Frettenham are two-bedded Emergency/Crisis Intervention Homes. The aim of the homes is to provide emergency and time-limited residential care. They are specialist homes for young people (male and female) aged between 8 and 17 years.
- Aylsham Road Short Breaks provides planned or short term stays of residential care to children and young people aged between 5 and 17 who are considered on the edge of care.
- Loki House is a four-bedded home offering flexible term accommodation to young people with targeted packages of care.
- Easthills is a long-term home which provides support and accommodation for 4 young people aged 8-17 until independence.
- Marshfields is a short breaks home providing 4 beds for children and young people who have severe learning and/or physical disabilities including children and young people with complex health needs and challenging behaviour.
- Linked Family's Short Breaks Fostering Service is linked to Marshfields residential home and has offered short breaks foster placements for children with disabilities.

- Foxwood is a 9-bed home (functioning 8 beds and 1 emergency bed) providing overnight short breaks for children with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and sensory impairments, aged 5 to 17 years.
- Our self-contained supported flats provide accommodation for 16 and 17-year-olds and help them prepare for independent living. The young people receive 37 hours of support each week by Children's Services staff with 24-hour (7 days per week) telephone support available. The four supported flats are managed in partnership with Broadland Housing, offering 4 bed spaces at any one time.

3.3 What Children and Young People say about the service

3.3.1 Listening to young people's experiences of care is incredibly important to us. We actively gather feedback from young people through keywork sessions and residents' meetings, as well as from families and professionals. This is considered at Residential Managers meetings to identify areas for development and to improve the service.

3.3.2 The following is a selection of comments about Norfolk's Residential Children's Home Service from children and young people who have been accommodated during the past 12 months:

3.3.3 *"I like living at Frettenham, the staff are fun and honest".*

3.3.4 *"My stay at Norwich Road was good fun, my favourite thing about the staff is that they listen. I would like more blackboards around the home to write on."*

3.3.5 *JC has been at Loki house over 3 years. In May 2018 it was his 17th birthday. The staff team at Loki and some of the young people arranged an evening out at an Indian restaurant in Norwich for him. The head of service LN also came along. JC was extremely appreciative of the effort made as nearly 20 people were there for him. He thanked the team and bought a thank you card to express his gratitude.*

3.3.6 *AS states Aylsham Road is great and loves coming here.*

3.3.7 *"Have a lovely nice time" (Young person accessing short-breaks at Marshfields)*

3.3.8 *A young person accessing short-breaks at Foxwood said she enjoys seeing her friends and there was nothing she didn't enjoy.*

3.4 Compliments

3.4.1 Each home has a feedback folder to capture positive experiences for children and young people. Please see some examples outlined below:

3.4.2 Operations Manager for YOT stated:

“The communication from the Norwich Road team has been second to none, thank you for all your help with the young people we are working with.”

3.4.3 Father of young person accommodated at Frettenham commented:

“Frettenham is overall a great care home with great staff, nothing more can be done to attempt to keep challenging children in a safe environment.”

3.4.4 Social Worker for two young people accommodated at Loki House stated:

“I’m very impressed with Loki House. The communication between myself and the young person’s professional network is always effective and timely. Management and staff design their approach to meet the individual child’s needs.”

3.4.5 A Social Worker thanked the Aylsham Road staff team for:

“A brilliant piece of work with LL who is a challenging young person.”

3.4.6 Family member of a young person attending Marshfields:

Marshfields is “Brilliant, I couldn’t fault them”. “The garden is great and the fact it is one level is really important for my daughter as she has rods in her back and I would have been more worried with stairs.” “My daughter really likes the garden and the swing”. “The staff are really good and keep me up to date”. “I know she is safe when she is here and I don’t have to worry about her here” “We’ve been coming for years and have never had any problems.” “I know that they have had problems with staffing and things have gone pear shaped with appointing and that has led to cancellation and date changes”. “I couldn’t do without it”.

3.4.7 Parent of a young person attending Foxwood:

“Thank you to all the team for the care they provide for A, I have peace of mind when he is there.”

3.4.8 Parent of a young person accommodated at Waterworks Road:

Thanked staff for arranging a trip to a theme park, young person reported being really happy after not wanting to go out for a long time.

3.4.9 IRO of a young person accommodated at Easthills:

“I too would like to express my thanks for the excellent care that the Easthills staff have afforded AL. This was very evident during my recent visit to the placement and AL appeared relaxed and secure with the staff I met I am very aware that AL came to this placement on the back of a lot of concerns about his reported behaviour and worries

about how it would be managed. From the outset, he has been treated as an individual first and foremost. The communication from all the management and staff has been excellent and very child-centred. The report to the LAC review was realistic and balanced.”

3.5 Complaints

- 3.5.1** Each home has a complaints book in which all complaints are recorded. Young people have open access to a telephone should they wish to make a complaint at any time. Contact numbers for Ofsted, the Children’s Rights Director and Voice, and the independent advocacy service, are available to young people, as are complaints leaflets.
- 3.5.2** The homes’ welcome books, available in a variety of formats to make them accessible for all ages and levels of ability, provide information and advice on how to complain. All residential staff have mandatory training on complaints and there is a Norfolk County Council complaints team which can offer consultation and advice to both staff and young people.
- 3.5.3** Since September 2017, until August 2018, the service has received 31 complaints in total. Four complaints from neighbours due to noise from the homes, 20 from neighbours about young people’s disruptive behaviour in the community, and three due to cancelled care. In all instances, managers responded to the complaints and resolved the issues. Four complaints were received from young people making allegations against staff and other young people in the home. All of these were investigated and no further action was required. All complaints are responded to as per procedure in order to find resolution and improve practice where appropriate and build positive community relationships.
- 3.5.4** All young people have the opportunity to discuss any complaints with the manager and explore a satisfactory solution. At every house meeting, the young people are given feedback which is recorded. The managers have engaged with the local community to address any concerns and improve relationships, this has been supported by the local police community support officer when needed.

3.6 Service Development over the last year.

- The residential policies and procedures have been reviewed in line with the relevant statutory guidance and Ofsted framework to ensure we continue to meet requirements.
- A Signs of Safety Risk Assessment format has been implemented across the service. This has received positive feedback from Ofsted and our service is in line with the wider implementation of Signs of Safety across Children’s Services.
- Each home has a tailored Improvement Plan alongside the Regulation 45 Report. This is a 6-monthly evaluative review which Ofsted require.

- We have recruited more relief workers across the service, ensuring continuity of care for our young people and the ability to increase staff ratios when needed for more challenging young people.
- The management team have inspected private, regulated and unregulated provisions in and out of county alongside the Quality Assurance team to ensure all Norfolk's young people are receiving good quality care. We have also learned from this through observing best practice of others.
- More of our homes have taken part in and implemented the Result Model of working, which has been championed by the Department for Education.
- We have reviewed the training needs of the service to ensure training is of a good quality and all mandatory areas are covered in a timely manner.
- We have explored the possibility of having a psychologist attached to the service and will continue to research this further.
- We have embraced the new apprenticeship scheme for new staff and those who may be eligible for the new Social Work Apprenticeship. This is a cost effective and time efficient way for us to train eligible new staff.
- We reviewed internet access for all our homes as this was cited regularly in feedback from young people. All homes now have internet that young people can safely access.

3.7 Ofsted Inspection Outcomes

3.7.1 Each residential home is inspected twice a year by Ofsted who conduct a full and an interim inspection. The latest judgement (as at the end of August 2018) from the most recent full inspection of each home is shown in the table below:

Home	No. of beds	Overall inspection findings	The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	How well children and young people are helped and protected	The effectiveness of leaders and managers
Marshfields	4	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Aylsham Road	4	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Foxwood	9	Good	Good	Good	Good
Norwich Road	4	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good

Loki House	4	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Waterworks Road	2	Good	Good	Good	Requires improvement to be good
Frettenham	2	Good	Good	Good	Good
Easthills	4	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good	Requires improvement to be good
The Lodge	4	Good	Good	Good	Good

The above table shows three Outstanding, four Good and two Requires improvement to be good Ofsted inspection judgements.

3.7.2 Ofsted has recently made changes to their inspections; if a home receives a grading of good or above then it will only be inspected on an annual basis, unless Ofsted have any concerns. In the case of the rating 'Requires improvement to be good' and below, the inspections will be twice a year.

3.8 Achievements for Young People

- Moved on successfully to long term, permanent placements in fostering.
- Participation in GCSE exams and functional skills.
- Gained a place in college to study catering.
- Began driving lessons.
- Working through independence tasks using Norfolk's Passport to Independence.
- Joined local boxing club.
- Helped to organise and run a Macmillan cancer coffee charity event baking cakes and raising nearly £200.
- Successfully gained a part time job working a local Farmers' Market.
- Reduction in criminal offences and higher participation in positive activities within the community. This was assisted by the use of Restorative Practice within the home.
- Building up confidence and being able to chair house meetings and put his views across and advocate for others.
- Successfully learning skills to regularly keep bedroom tidy.
- Learning how to budget and plan meals for the week.

3.9 Children Missing from Norfolk's Residential Children's Homes Service

3.9.1 A revised missing from care procedure has been implemented by the Residential Children's Home Service, which includes sexual exploitation, radicalisation risk assessments and an awareness and impact of County Lines on the young people we look after. All staff have had training in these areas.

3.9.2 Within our service, the definition of missing from care includes children and young people who leave the residential home without permission, those who do not return to the home at the agreed time and those who are absent overnight. Each young person has an individual care plan, which identifies strategies to implement for a young person who is absent without authorisation or is missing from care.

3.9.3 The table below shows the number of times children and young people went missing from Norfolk's Residential Children's Home Service in 2017/18, September to August.

Children / Young People Missing from Norfolk's Residential Children's Home Service

	2017/18 Sep - Aug
Number of times children / young people went missing	274
Number of children / young people who went missing	27
Number of overnight missing episodes	87
Number of children / young people who did not return at the agreed time or left without permission	104

3.9.4 This year we have seen an increase in the number of young people missing from care within the service. A substantial amount of the missing episodes above relates to a small number of the young people we have looked after. We have excellent links with MASH and the team around these young people to ensure the best strategies and safety measures are put in place to manage these episodes. We continue to work with partner agencies to address the risk of looked after children going missing and produced a working protocol to regulate practice. The service has built close working relationships with the Missing Persons Coordinator (police); Safer Neighbourhood Teams (police); Youth Offending Team; and Barnardo's and The Rose Project who are working in partnership to deliver the return home interviews.

3.9.5 Looked after children living in children's homes are particularly vulnerable to involvement in child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation. Over the past year there has been an increasing awareness and network of professional support and intelligence gathering around 'county lines'.

3.9.6 Our staff are aware of the warning signs to look for and use targeted keyworker sessions to discuss and raise awareness in the young people should they feel they are becoming at risk. Being informed and aware is key to effective intervention. One of the homes managers regularly attends multi agency networking meetings around the prevalent concerns and information

around county lines operations and child criminal exploitation within the county.

3.9.7 We regularly communicate with the newly set up Child Criminal Exploitation team, YOT, operation gravity, the police in general and social work teams around intelligence we receive from our young people. Finding out early about these links between young people who are at risk is vital to early intervention, preventing further criminalisation and vulnerability to being exploited.

3.10 Physical Intervention and Positive Handling

3.10.1 All the residential staff have been trained in the Norfolk's Steps de-escalation and positive handling strategies. As per national guidance and local policy the Residential Children's Homes Service will only use restrictive physical intervention as a last resort when the young person places him/herself or others at risk of injury or may cause significant damage to property. If such risks exist, consideration is given to effective strategies that will be employed to minimise the risk.

3.10.2 For the period of September 2017 – August 2018 there were a total of 14 Incidents of physical intervention across the service, these were mostly in our emergency homes (8 interventions), 3 were in our CWD homes, and the other 3 were in the rest of the service. All restraints were necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the young people. All restraints carried out in the homes are reviewed by the Regulation 44 visitors and Ofsted inspectors and in all cases they agreed with the actions taken.

3.11 Significant Incidents Reported

3.11.1 Ofsted must be notified (Regulation 40 Notifications) of all significant incidents that occur in any residential children's home. The reasons for notifications for 2017/18 by Norfolk's Residential Services are shown in the following table:

Total Regulation 40 Notifications by Classification Type

Regulation 40 Notification Classifications	2017/18 Sep - Aug
Serious incident - police called to home	35
Serious complaint about the home or person in the home	3
Instigation & outcome of any child protection enquiry involving child in the home	8
Other incident relating to a child that the registered person considers to be serious	24
Total Regulation 40 Notification Classifications	70

3.12 Outcomes for Permanency

3.12.1 From September 2017 to August 2018 Norfolk Residential Children’s Homes Service have provided accommodation for 162 children and young people that reside in Norfolk. Of these, 109 were short term breaks, 38 children have moved on following interventions delivered by the service, and 15 are still currently accommodated:

- 4 young people returned home
- 6 to foster care
- 7 to independent living or supported lodgings
- 11 to other children’s homes
- 6 moved internally to our in house children’s homes
- 1 to specialist placement
- 2 to secure training centre
- 1 to Educational placement

3.13 Number of Children Accommodated in the Homes and their Occupancy Rates

3.13.1 The table below shows the occupancy rates for all residential homes since September 2017:

Occupancy Rates & Children / Young People Accommodated by Children’s Homes

	% Bed Nights Occupied	Number of Children/Young People Accommodated
Easthills Road	56%	8
Frettenham	100%	3
Loki House	100%	5
Norwich Road	58%	13
The Lodge	90%	22
Waterworks Road	100%	1

3.13.2 As Norwich Road and The Lodge offer emergency provision turnover is necessary to be able to have placement availability for unplanned admissions, but in some cases due to the level of need they have not run at full capacity.

3.13.3 Waterworks Road has at times been providing a single placement in order to meet the needs of the young person accommodated.

3.13.4 Easthills has also provided care for 2 young people, rather than 4, due to their complex needs.

3.13.5 The dynamics within any home are affected by the mix of young people. This can be both positive and negative. Over the last year there have been some occasions where we have had inappropriate matching for some of our young people. This has caused challenges both within our homes and within the local communities. This has had a detrimental effect on the experience of care for our young people, staff morale and Ofsted inspections. At times, this

matching has been unavoidable due to local and national shortages of sufficient and effective placements. Moving forward, we continue to be innovative in our approach to meet the needs of our more challenging young people.

3.13.6 Number of Children offered Short Breaks:

	% Bed Nights Occupied	Number of Children/Young People Accessing Short Breaks
Aylsham Road	79%	Offered short breaks for 36 children
Foxwood	78%	Offered short breaks for 42 children
Marshfields	77%	Offered short breaks for 31 children

3.13.7 In some cases, the occupancy rate has been affected in the homes due to the level of need and risk assessment of the young people. For example, we have taken young people in an emergency which has impacted on the group dynamic risk assessment which has meant that we have had to restrict the number of available beds in order to meet the needs of the young people already accommodated.

4. Improvements made to our Children's Homes

What the managers have to say

- We received a donation of £5000 from Roundtable, this enabled us to improve the garden area, replace the shower table and purchase an Achiever bed so children who have complex health and physical disabilities can be included in the daily activities. We also installed hoists in a playroom and replaced bedroom furniture.
- The garden has been completely overhauled, providing the children with new play items such as climbing frame, slide, sandpit, fairy gardens, tables and chairs and child-friendly plant pots made from old tyres.
- The home was refurbished – redecorated throughout and new flooring laid where it was needed. Furniture was updated and the home given a more 'homely' feel.
- We are taking part in a pilot scheme and working as a therapeutic Children's Home, offering weekly sessions for children, monthly bespoke training, clinical individual staff supervision, monthly team supervision and parent sessions.
- The team received clinical supervision from a forensic psychotherapist. This helped them improve their practice, build their knowledge and resilience working with JC and ensured they had strategies in place to help him improve his behaviour and manage his sexual interests appropriately. Clinical

supervision is a great asset to any team as it can help staff work from stronger foundations, built in theory and evidence based practice, and encourages an ethos of therapeutic support and self-reflection. This has now finished but the manager has requested it from another service, awaiting outcome.

5. Future Development

- A holistic review of the service and each home to ensure we are meeting the needs of our children in care population and adapting our remit if necessary.
- Residential service to present to Children's Services Leadership Team our ambitions for the Service: 28 day unregulated emergency service; Multi-agency Assessment Service; Emergency CWD home; Therapeutic Residential Home; Increase of short breaks homes; Edge of Care intensive family support; Therapeutic farm environment.
- We plan to review the policies and procedures within the service and update the paperwork accordingly, becoming more streamlined and paper free where possible. We will work in conjunction with the Quality assurance team.
- Finding suitable education provisions for our harder to reach young people can be very difficult at times. We plan to develop our informal and alternative education provisions to meet this need.
- Nationally there is recognised gap in the market for 16-18 year olds. We plan to develop and manage the semi-independent living service for 16-18 year olds, providing a cost effective and efficient service with high aspirations for this cohort of young people.
- We are reviewing our training for de-escalation and positive handling and considering if there are other providers out there who may meet the ever-changing needs of the service better. This is particularly crucial for our CWD homes.
- We are hoping to offer more placements for student social workers as well as student police officers across our homes. We also continue to promote continued professional development for the staff we currently employ.
- Once again, we plan to increase the number of Relief Bank staff within the residential service to improve continuity for young people and to help with the expansion of the 16-18 service.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Financial Monitoring Information

6.2 Each placement in Norfolk's Residential Service children's homes in 2017/18 was on average £2583 per week. This compares favourably with the agency

placement costs of £3453 for the basic package of care, anything extra would incur further charges.

- 6.3** Following the last financial year, Norfolk Residential Children's Services finished the year within budget.

7. Issues, risks and innovation

- 7.1** The key challenges for the Service are:

- Ensuring the Service meets the Ofsted criteria and expectations.
- Ensuring that our young people have permanence plans that meet their needs.
- Assessing the group dynamics and matching process.
- Expansion is line with sufficiency report.
- Working alongside corporate strategies to ensure the residential services aligns with these.

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 8.1** As can be seen in the purpose and function documents, all our homes are committed to policy, procedures and practice which promote equality and address the poor outcomes for this group.

9. Impact on Children and Young People in Norfolk

- 9.1** Children's Services deliver a range of residential homes to meet the needs of young people who require residential care. As can be seen from the quality of care as judged by Ofsted, and our own quality assurance checks, our children's homes are having very positive effects on the outcomes achieved by our young people.

10. Background

10.1 Background Papers

The statement of purpose for each home is available on Members Insight.

10.2 Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained or want to see copies of any assessments, e.g. equality impact assessment, please contact:

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