

Trafford's Looked After Children – Market Position Statement



Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to support the market in understanding the needs of Trafford's Looked After Children population. It will articulate what the priorities are for Trafford's Looked After Children across the areas of Fostering, Residential, 16+ and Education placements. This will include the highlighting of any gaps in the market along with other issues across the aforementioned areas.

Trafford is currently seeing an increase in the numbers of Looked After Children. Between March 2016 and March 2017 the number has risen by 16% to 384. Trafford's priority is to place our Looked After Children in the most appropriate provision to enable them to thrive.

Key Priorities - Overall

- To place Looked After Children within the Trafford area unless appropriate to place outside of the boundary. This is important due to the need to ensure wider Trafford services are readily available for our Looked After Children.
- To work with providers around quality assurance to ensure the best possible provision is available for Trafford's Looked After Children.
- To return children back to a family environment where this is appropriate.
- To continue to build positive relationships with both existing and potential future service providers.
- For the views of young people to inform placements that are made.
- To ensure that wherever possible, school places are not disrupted by placements.
- To ensure that there is enough sufficiency in all areas so that appropriate matching can occur.
- To work with providers who are able to achieve outcomes for young people as set out in their Care Plan.
- To continue to participate in regional market engagement initiatives.

Key Priorities – By Service

Fostering

- To recruit and develop internal foster carers and work with external foster care providers to support areas that Trafford needs to focus on. Specifically, these areas include:
 - Sibling groups
 - Young people aged 11-18
 - Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)

- Those with complex needs, including higher level emotional health and well-being needs.
- To ensure that Trafford's internal foster carers have a vacancy figure of between 10% and 20% in order to ensure good quality matching occurs.
- Increase the number of volunteer carers to help manage the demand for Trafford's Home from Home service.
- To continue to use independent fostering agency (IFA) providers who are signed up to the Placements Northwest framework and take an active role in the design of a new foster care Dynamic Purchasing System for the North West region.
- To develop relationships with providers who have fostering households within the borough so that we can maximise access to local placements.
- To work with providers who are interested in supporting more complex young people and identify how we can create fostering options for them.
- To focus on providers who are rated as either good or outstanding.

Residential

- To work with external providers around the specific needs of our residential Looked After Children. This includes:
 - Mental health issues, such as trauma, anxiety and self-harm.
 - Young people who have suffered domestic abuse.
 - Those with poor educational attainment.
 - Missing from home.
- To work with providers who support the step down of young people back into a family environment as we intend to reduce our current number of external residential placements.
- To continue to use external residential providers who are signed up to the Placements Northwest framework and the new residential Flexible Purchasing System for the North West region.
- To develop relationships with providers who have local provision in neighbouring boroughs so that we can maximise access to local placements.
- To work collaboratively with residential providers around quality assurance visits and to support providers to improve practice where necessary.

16+

- To continue to offer a wide range of services to care leavers which are currently supporting the majority of care leaver needs. These services include Staying Put, Elstree Court, Forest Court and Supported Lodgings
- For more complex young people we will continue to work with providers on the regional 16+ Dynamic Purchasing System to develop innovative solutions.
- To tender the supported accommodation service currently delivered at Forest Court.
- To continue to provide supported accommodation for care leavers and youth homeless in current provisions.
- To work with partners such as THT to develop services that will meet an unmet need.
- To work collaboratively with care leaver providers around quality assurance visits and to support providers to improve practice where necessary.

Education

- Trafford is seeing an increasing number of Looked After Children for whom there is sometimes a struggle to find adequate residential education provision close to Trafford. In order to resolve this, alternative packages are being put together to better support children in Trafford. It is recognised that there may always be a need to access highly specialised provision out of borough for children with the most complex needs.

To explore the need for specialist provision for LAC secondary pupils with Autism who need to be able to access mainstream provision. We are currently working towards increasing the range and type of ASC education provision and commission therapeutic support in partnership with parents as part of the wider offer.