

Powys County Council Children's Services Children Looked After Strategic Framework

2018 – 2023

Version 1.1

Review date: April 2020



Yn agored a blaengar - Open and enterprising



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1. Foreword

*“This Children Looked After Strategic Framework outlines the vision, aims and principles to support the children and young people who are looked after by Powys County Council. We want to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and their families; by working in partnership we can deliver the services children and young people need to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives” – **County Councillor Rachel Powell, Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture***



“In Powys we are committed to working with children and their families in a way that ensures that children get the best possible start in life. This strategic framework outlines how in Powys we intend to do this. As the Director of Social Services, I want us to be ambitious for those children who do come in to the care of the Local Authority. The Council is committed to ensuring that as corporate parents, we support each and every child in our care to achieve their aspirations and full potential in life.

*This framework also highlights that Powys is adopting the Signs of Safety practice model. Our aspirations are to work with children and families, building on the strengths within the family and wherever possible and appropriate to do so, keeping the child in the heart of their family.”– **Alison Bulman, Director of Social Services***





“The child will be at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make.”

The purpose of this Strategic Framework is to improve outcomes for children looked after in Powys. We recognise that there are a number of key challenges and areas for improvement. This Strategic Framework will act as the overarching strategy for the 6 chapters that sit beneath it:

1. Permanence
2. Closer to Home and Edge of Care
3. Leaving Care
4. Sufficient Supply of High Quality Care Placements
5. Participation and Voice

The term ‘children looked after’ relates to any children who are looked after by a local authority, under the Children Act 1989 and the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014.

For our children looked after we strive to be excellent Corporate Parents, working with them to raise their aspirations to achieve their potential and ensure that their voice is heard throughout the duration of their journey through care. We will ensure that our children looked after have all the opportunities we would give to our own children through good access to high quality education, health, play, leisure, legal and social care services.

The decision to look after any child or young person is one that we take very seriously, and one taken only after all appropriate options for children to be cared for within their own families has been exhausted.

We know that transition into adulthood is not always easy, and for care leavers the transition can be more complex. We know how important it is that our children looked after are supported into adulthood in a seamless manner and provided with progressive And ongoing interventions. We want our care leavers to be confident, be able to access support, ensure that a majority are engaged in education, employment or training and have the opportunity to live successful adult lives.



2. Introduction

Powys' pledge to children looked after has been developed collaboratively through engagement with Powys Youth Forum, children looked after, professionals across Powys County Council and the Corporate Parenting Board.



3. Powys Pledge to our Children Looked After

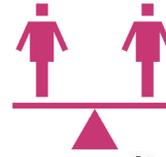




4. Principles



All children looked after will have their health needs met in a timely way, and be encouraged to make healthy lifestyle choices



Empower children, young people and families to be self-sufficient, respect their right to confidentiality, equality and diversity

25



This framework will relate to all children looked after and care leavers in Powys, including those placed out of our geographical area up to the age of 25

This framework will uphold the rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and will promote awareness of these rights to our children looked after



Preventative services and early help to support children in need and their families should be provided on a multi-agency basis and in ways that give them every chance to stay together, including those children on the edge of care

The majority of children are likely to thrive and achieve good outcomes if they are cared for within a family environment. Residential care placements will be made only where the complexity of a child or young person's needs mean that they are unable to live within a family setting or where a young person is subject to a Court Ordered Secure Remand



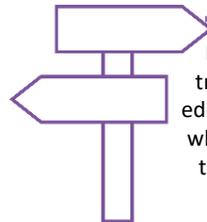
Placements should be local to enable children and young people to remain in their communities, maintain their networks and minimise disruption in their lives. Placement requests should be defined in terms of the child or young person's needs

Listen to the views and experiences of children and young people, involve them in decisions that affect their lives, recognise that the views of children and young people will inform our practice and shape service delivery



All children looked after of statutory school age should receive appropriate education provision regardless of their placement and ability to access school. Providing appropriate support to enable engagement in education is just as important as finding suitable care placements for children looked after

The responsibility for meeting the needs of children and young people looked after or at risk of becoming looked after rests across all services for children, including statutory and independent providers



Placements should support a positive transition to independence, adulthood, education, employment, and training and, where applicable, resettlement back into the community from custodial settings

Promote reflect practice so that we work in a way which encourages learning and ensures quality in all areas of our work

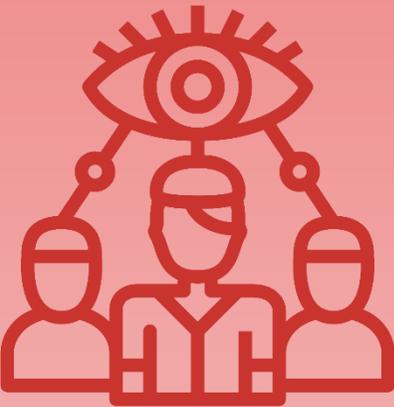


4.1 Signs of Safety Principles

Signs of Safety is a strengths-based approach which has been adopted by Powys Children's Services as the model to social work practice with children, young people and their families.

This approach supports our aspiration to achieve permanence for our children and young people through its emphasis on working collaboratively and transparently with families. The approach can often act as the catalyst that initiates behavioural changes within families.





5. Vision and Strategic Aims

“Working together to ensure that children and young people in Powys are safe, healthy, learning, fulfilled and have their voices heard, valued and acted on.”



To ensure that the overall Children Looked After Strategic Framework remains coherent and relevant, it is aligned to the core aims developed within Children’s Services and the Improvement Programme:

- 1. To support families to stay together** and reduce the need for children to be looked after, by focusing on services which provide timely help, build on a family’s strengths and prevent greater problems arising.
- 2. To manage risk confidently and effectively when providing support to families where children and young people need to be safeguarded or they are judged to be on the ‘edge of care’** by making sure that their needs are accurately assessed and met effectively, with positive outcomes for them. This includes supporting families to avoid children becoming accommodated unnecessarily and by making private arrangements within their wider family networks so that children become looked after by the Council only where this is clearly in their best interests.
- 3. To provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high quality placements for children who are looked after** to meet the diverse range of their needs and circumstances.
- 4. To give children and young people clearly planned journeys through care and into adulthood** which remain focused on achieving care and support plans, prevent drift, enable them to be reunited with family and friends where possible, and have stable placements.



6. National Context



3 in 10 children in Wales are living in poverty



1 in 10 children in Wales will have a diagnosable mental health condition



Around **1 in 5** children in Wales have been exposed to domestic abuse



Every 4 hours a child or young person was brought into care in Wales last year

Fig 1.2 demonstrates that in 2016-17, there were 5665 children looked after in Wales, an increase of 0.09% from 2015-16 where there were 5615. In 2016, there were 18,990 children in need of care and support in Wales, a 6.08% decrease from 2014. The overall 0-17 population in Wales decreased by 0.06% from 629,609 in 2014 to 625,556 in 2016.

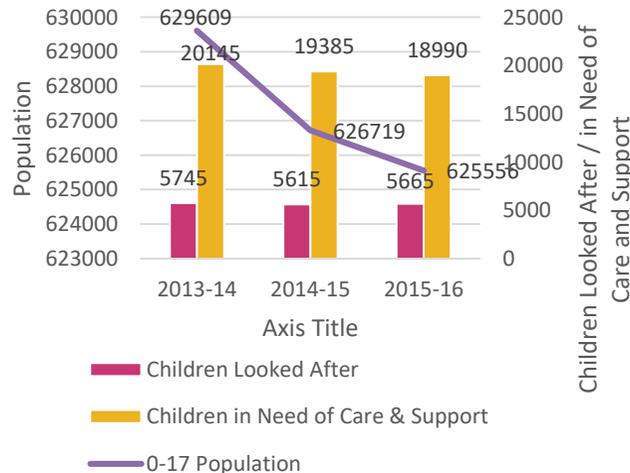


Fig 1.2: 0-17 population projections in Wales, children looked after in Wales, and children in need of care and support in Wales



15% increase in children looked after in Wales since 2010, with a 5% increase on last year



149% increase in the number of court applications in Wales to remove children into care over the last nine years



12% increase in children on the Child Protection Register in Wales between 2010 - 2016



Fig 1.1 shows the projected population increase in the 0-17 age group across Wales over the next 20 years. Though we expect to see an initial sharp increase in this age group followed by a plateau, we can then expect to see a significant decline in the 0-17 population from 2028 to 2033, before reaching a further steady decline. Due to the initial sharp increase and the decrease to follow, the trend line remains fairly static with a marginal increase over the next 20 years.

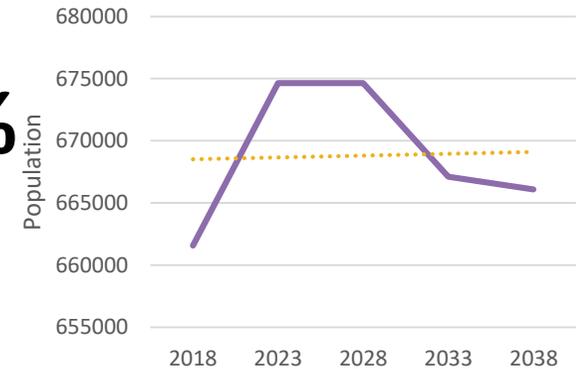


Fig 1.1: 0-17 population projections in Wales 2018 – 2038

There are around 630,000 children and young people living in Wales. This includes:

- Nearly 16,000 children receiving care and support from Welsh Councils
- Just under 6,000 children who are looked after by Welsh Councils



7. Local Context

5197 square kilometres is the size of Powys, covering a quarter of Wales

16% of households are thought to be in fuel poverty

11% of children in full-time compulsory education are entitled to free school meals, compared with the Wales average of 17%

13 authorities border Powys, both in England and Wales

There is only **1** town with a population of over **10,000** in Powys

11% of children in need of care and support in Powys have mental health needs

23,990 people aged 3+ can speak, read and write Welsh

24,000 children and young people under the age of 18 live in Powys

85% of children in need of care and support in Powys have up to date child health surveillance checks (age 0-5)

7 children in every school class of **30** will be experiencing poverty

132,515 people living in Powys, **4.2%** of the Welsh total

85% of children in need of care and support age 5+ in Powys have up to date dental checks

17% of children in need of care and support in Powys have up to date immunisations

210 children looked after in Powys as at 31/03/2018

22% of children in need of care and support in Powys receive support from the Youth Offending Team

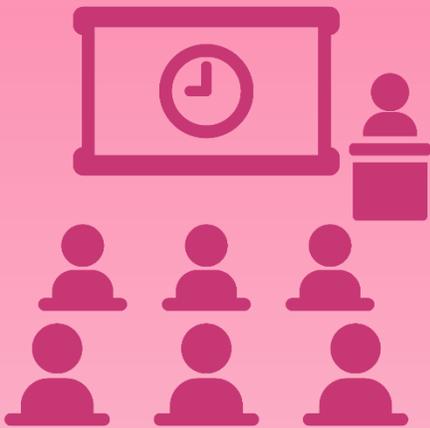
5% of children in need of care and support in Powys have substance misuse problems

21.47% of children in Powys are considered to be living in poverty

13% of children in need of care and support in Powys have an autistic spectrum disorder

This Children Looked After Strategic Framework sits within a national and local context, is determined and driven by legislation and guidance, together with other strategies and plans of our partner agencies. We all have a statutory responsibility for achieving better outcomes for our children looked after. The geography and demography of Powys presents particular challenges in delivering services to our children looked after. Due to the vast area that Powys covers, children can be placed within county borders, however this could be more than 50 miles away from a child's home. Alternatively a child could be placed 5 miles away from home yet this could be in another county or country from the child's home community. The geography of Powys also poses challenges for workers undertaking statutory visits and reviews for our children looked after due to some of the long distances needing to be travelled.





7.1 Educational Attainment

The negative impact of poor educational attainment of children who are looked after can, and often does, result in these children failing to take advantage of opportunities to progress to post-16 education, training and meaningful employment. The majority of children who have spent time in the care system are from families who are unable to provide a level of care that meets their emotional and wellbeing needs. The life of a child looked after is often characterised by trauma and stress in their home life. The continuum of learning is often interrupted by foster placement changes and time out of school. This lack of continuity is why all relevant parts of the system must act in a coordinated and coherent way to ensure significant changes in the life of the child are minimised and managed sensitively, always with the child at the centre of decision making.

There is a clear link between lower educational achievement and general wellbeing. If learners are unhappy, anxious or have difficulty forming relationships they are unlikely to perform well and are likely to achieve poor outcomes. The most recent data in respect of educational attainment for our children looked after in Powys is detailed below, and compared with all children across Powys from 2014 – 2017. It is concerning to see the stark difference between educational attainment figures for children looked after compared to all children in Powys.

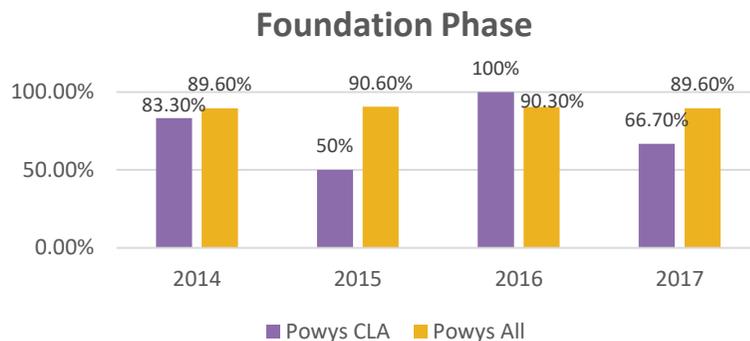


Fig 1.3: Children Looked After in Powys educational attainment compared with all Powys Children for Foundation Phase

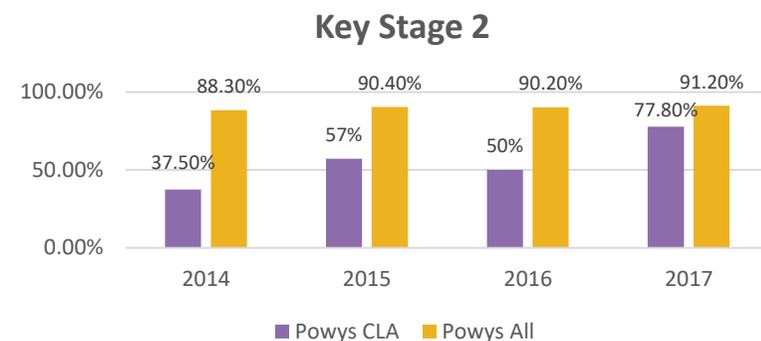


Fig 1.4: Children Looked After in Powys educational attainment compared with all Powys Children for Key Stage 2

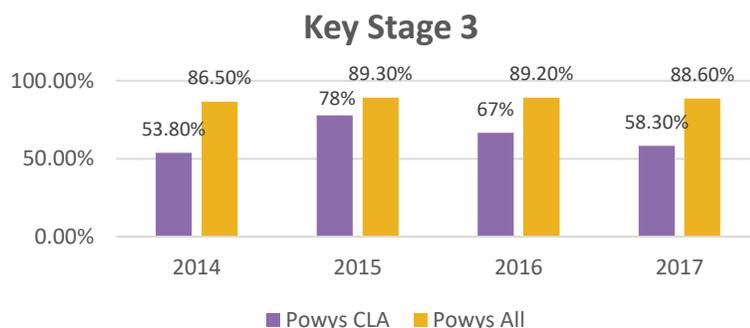


Fig 1.5: Children Looked After in Powys educational attainment compared with all Powys Children for Key Stage 3

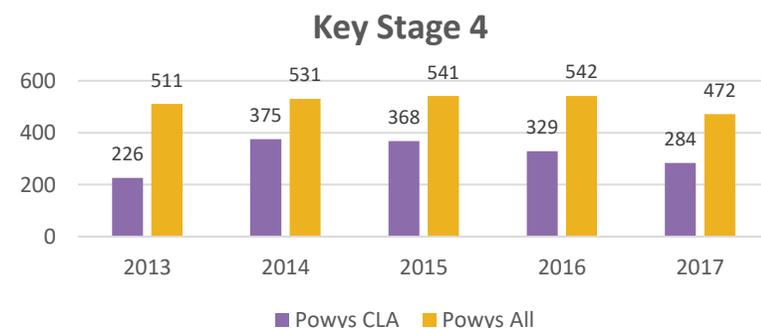


Fig 1.6: Children Looked After in Powys educational attainment compared with all Powys Children for Key Stage 4



7.2 Inspection of Powys Children's Services by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)



An inspection of Powys by the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in July 2017 looked at the quality and effectiveness of Children's Services. It examined how children and families access help, care and support services and how well care and support is provided to meet their needs and keep children safe. The inspection also considered the quality of leadership, management and governance arrangements to develop and support services for children and young people.

In their report, CIW expressed serious concerns about leadership, management and practice in Powys Children's Services. The grounds for these concerns included:

The quality of professional practice

Staffing capacity and competence in front-line Children's Services teams

Lack of stability in management arrangements

Failings in corporate leadership

The Inspectorate concluded that, as a consequence, children were being placed at risk. The inspection report contained 29 recommendations (prioritised over one year) in respect of case management, staffing, leadership, assurance, workforce, and interagency/partnership working.

This Children Looked After Strategic Framework has been developed in response to the findings and recommendations of the CIW Inspection Report and forms part of the actions within the corresponding Improvement Plan.





Accurate management information and analysis underpins strategic development. We know a great deal about our looked after population, with the data detailed below as at 31st March 2018.

The reasons for children becoming looked after in Powys are categorised as:

- 150** abuse or neglect
- 23** family in acute stress
- 19** family dysfunction
- 9** parental disability or illness
- 4** disability or illness
- 3** adoption disruption
- 1** socially unacceptable behaviour
- 1** absent parenting

8. Profile of Children Looked After in Powys



There are 210 children looked after in Powys, within those 210 there are 53 sibling groups. The largest of those sibling groups has 7 children. As shown in fig 1.8, the majority of those children come from the main towns in Powys where there are larger clusters of population; Welshpool, Newtown, Llandrindod Wells, Brecon and Ystradgynlais. There are 2 children with no fixed abode and therefore have not come from any specific location within Powys. It is important to note that 42.58% of these children looked after are placed out of county.

Fig 1.7 below details the distance travelled per looked after child, from home postcode to placement postcode. The maximum distance a child is placed from home currently stands at 218 miles, with 46 (21.9%) children looked after placed 50 miles or more from home. *N.B. There are 7 children who have moved to adoptive placements or had no fixed abode and therefore excluded from the figures below.*

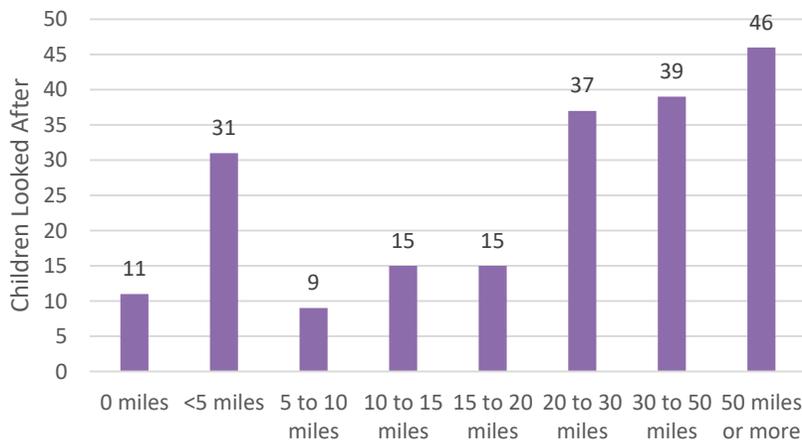


Fig 1.7 Distance travelled from home to placement



Fig 1.8 Powys Children Looked After home postcodes
All data accurate as at 31st March 2018

8. Profile of Children Looked After in Powys

From our analysis in fig 1.9, we know that the numbers of children looked after in Powys have remained consistently higher than our comparator authorities for a number of years, with the exception of Carmarthenshire where there is a larger overall population. When exploring the numbers of children looked after in Powys per 10,000 population in fig 2.0, it is still evident that Powys has less children looked after than the Wales average, however has increased more rapidly per 10,000 population over the last 5 years than our comparator authorities. Despite this, fig 2.1 demonstrates that there has been a sharp increase in children looked after during the last financial year 2017-18. There has been an increase of 33% from 153 children looked after in 2012-13 to 210 in 2017-18. Since the CIW Inspection in 2017, there has been an improvement of Social Work practice across the service which explains the more recent sharp increase in children looked after. Of the 210 children looked after, 17 of these (8.1%) have a disability. This number has continued to increase significantly, with 236 children looked after cases as at 12th October 2018.

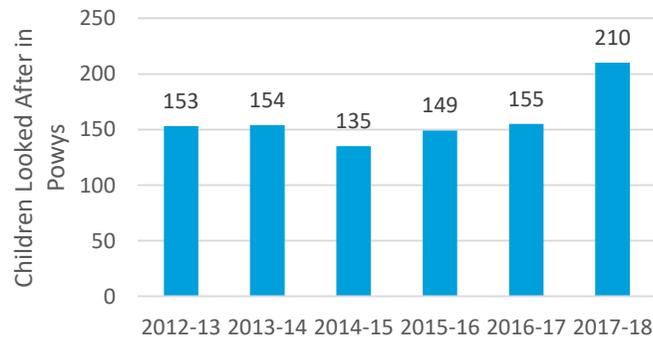


Fig 2.1 Total number of children looked after in Powys 2013-2018

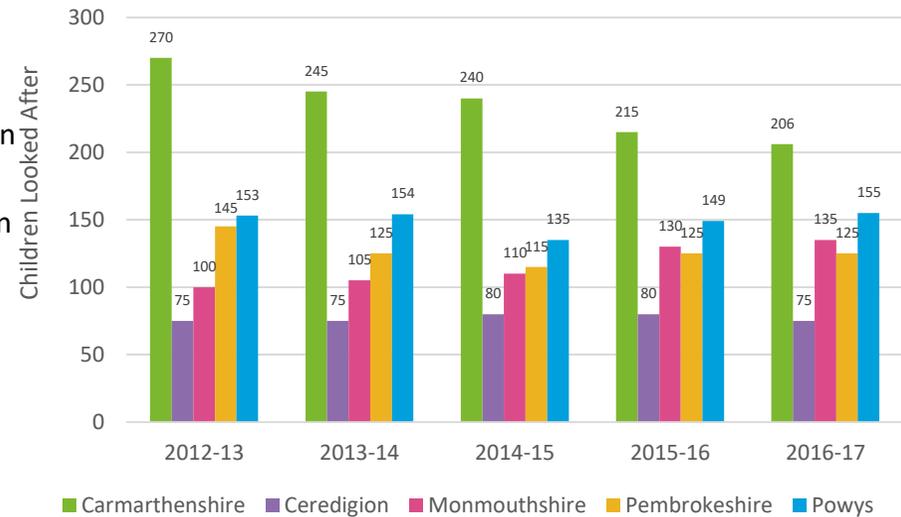


Fig 1.9 Children Looked After numbers in Powys and comparator authorities 2013-2017

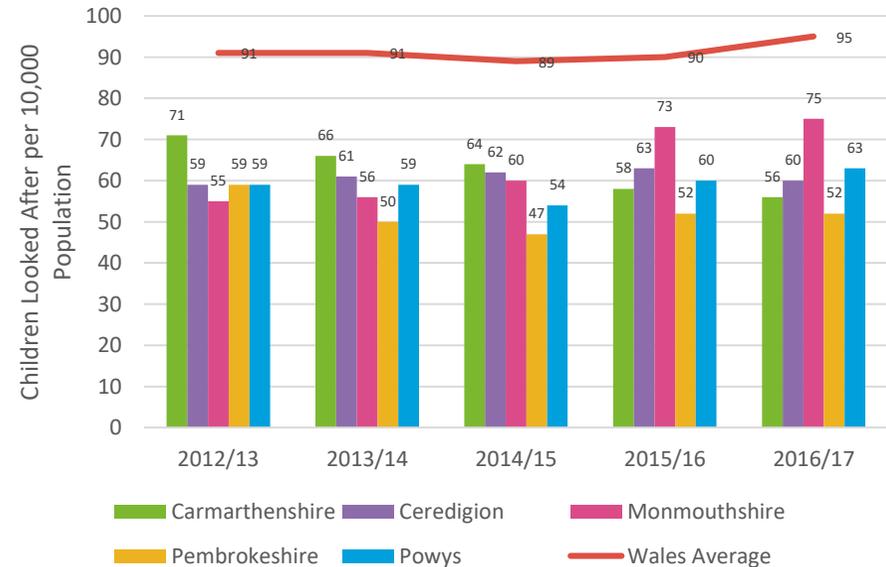


Fig 2.0 Children Looked After per 10,000 population in Powys and comparator authorities 2013-2017

8. Profile of Children Looked After in Powys

Fig 2.2 demonstrates the significant increase particularly in children looked after in the 0-4 and 10-15 age categories. There has been a 77% increase in children looked after aged 10-15 from 47 in 2013-14 to 83 in 2017-18. The children looked after aged 0-4 has seen a 1000% increase from 4 in 2013-14 to 44 in 2017-18. On a national level however, fig 2.3 shows that there has been little movement across all age groups over the years. The 0-4 age group has seen a

0.35% reduction across Wales from 2013-14 to 2016-17, whereas the 10-15 age group has seen a 6.91% increase from 2013-14 to 2016-17. As we know from analysis on the previous page, the rate of all-age children looked after per 10,000 population across Wales has remained fairly static over the last 5 years.

There is a concerning trend in respect of stability of placements for our children looked after within Powys. Fig 2.4 below shows a significant increase in the number of children looked after who have experienced 3 or more placement moves within 12 months, highlighting the requirement for more permanent and robust provision options within Powys. The average length of current placements for children looked after in Powys is 3 years and 3 months.

Fig 2.5 shows that 160 (76%) of children looked after were on the Child Protection Register prior to becoming looked after.

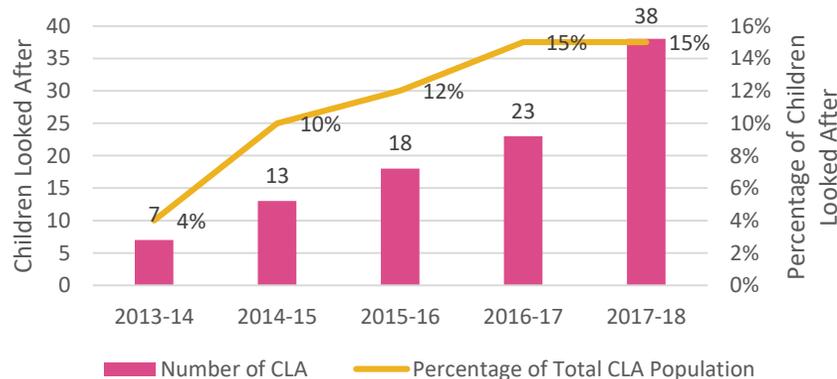


Fig 2.4 Children Looked After who have more than 3 placement moves per year 2014 - 2018

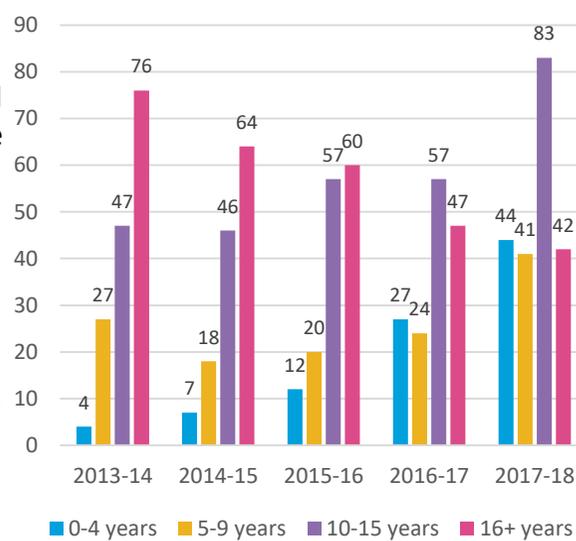


Fig 2.2 Children Looked After in Powys by age group 2014 - 2018

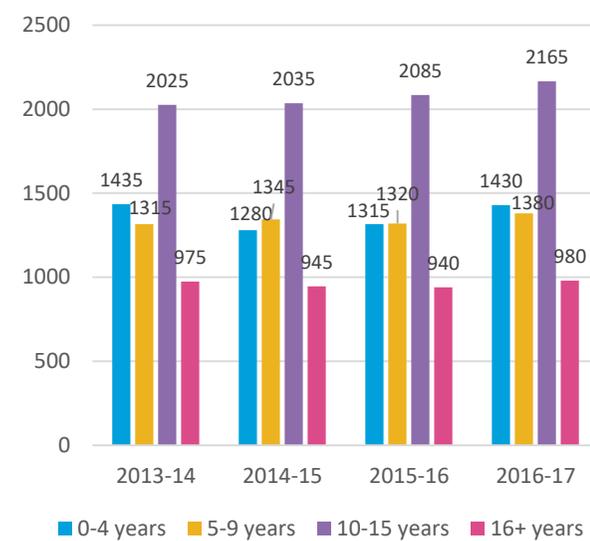
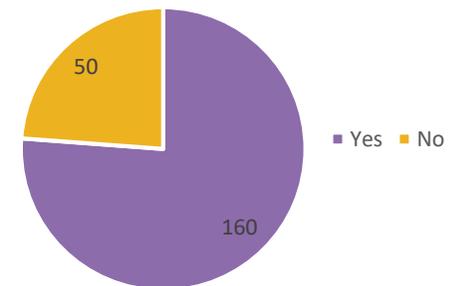


Fig 2.3 Children Looked After in Wales by age group 2014 - 2017

Fig 2.5 Children Looked After who have been on the Child Protection Register prior to becoming looked after



8. Profile of Children Looked After in Powys

Table 1 shows that:

- In 2020 we can expect to see a reduction in 15-17 year olds
- In 2025 we can expect to see an increase in those aged 13-17, but a sharp reduction in those aged 18
- In 2030 we can expect to see a general increase in all ages but a sharp reduction in those aged 18
- In 2035 we can expect to see a reduction in those aged 16 – 18
- In 2039 we can expect to see a sharp increase in those aged up to 16, and then a reduction in those aged 16-18

| Age | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 | 2039 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| 0 | 1191 | 1165 | 1074 | 992 | 950 |
| 1 | 1195 | 1186 | 1101 | 1015 | 967 |
| 2 | 1212 | 1215 | 1139 | 1051 | 997 |
| 3 | 1230 | 1239 | 1176 | 1086 | 1026 |
| 4 | 1243 | 1252 | 1207 | 1116 | 1051 |
| 5 | 1256 | 1264 | 1237 | 1147 | 1080 |
| 6 | 1275 | 1269 | 1258 | 1173 | 1104 |
| 7 | 1327 | 1274 | 1276 | 1200 | 1128 |
| 8 | 1334 | 1280 | 1287 | 1224 | 1151 |
| 9 | 1406 | 1282 | 1292 | 1228 | 1173 |
| 10 | 1373 | 1284 | 1293 | 1265 | 1194 |
| 11 | 1375 | 1296 | 1290 | 1279 | 1212 |
| 12 | 1466 | 1349 | 1297 | 1298 | 1240 |
| 13 | 1371 | 1357 | 1296 | 1303 | 1258 |
| 14 | 1383 | 1434 | 1313 | 1323 | 1293 |
| 15 | 1424 | 1429 | 1338 | 1348 | 1333 |
| 16 | 1422 | 1438 | 1359 | 1353 | 1350 |
| 17 | 1362 | 1500 | 1392 | 1339 | 1343 |
| 18 | 1380 | 1356 | 1351 | 1278 | 1284 |
| Total | 27416 | 54310 | 80316 | 105369 | 129542 |

Table 1: Powys population projections 2020 – 2039 for children aged 0-18 years

There is significant diversity within the sources of referrals for children looked after within Powys.

Our analysis of referral sources is detailed in table 2, and shows us that the highest number of referrals for children looked after in Powys come from the Police (30%), followed by Health Professionals collectively (22.38%).

| Referral Source | Count |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Police | 63 |
| Schools | 25 |
| Powys Children's Services | 16 |
| Other Local Authority | 15 |
| Midwife | 12 |
| Nurse | 11 |
| General Practitioner | 10 |
| Health Visitor | 10 |
| Voluntary Agency | 10 |
| Relative | 8 |
| Probation | 7 |
| Parents | 6 |
| Anonymous | 4 |
| Neighbour | 3 |
| Housing | 2 |
| Health Social Worker | 2 |
| Speech and Language Therapy | 1 |
| Care Staff | 1 |
| Guardian | 1 |
| Mental Health Practitioner | 1 |
| NSPCC | 1 |

Table 2: Referral sources for Children Looked After in Powys

8. Profile of Children Looked After in Powys

Fig 2.6 and 2.7 demonstrate the age profiles of the biological parents of our children looked after in Powys. Analysis of these profiles tells us that the largest age gap between mother and father is 28 years. 23.3% of fathers to our children looked after are not known.

Fig 2.8 displays the range of ethnicities of our children looked after, with 89% of these White British, which is to be expected as there are minimal ethnic diversities across Powys.

Fig 2.9 shows the number of children looked after placed in Powys from other local authorities, and where they have originally come from. There are 114 children placed in Powys who are looked after by other Local Authorities. The majority of these children have come from the mid region of England as a number of these authorities border Powys. There are also high numbers of children placed in Powys from South East Wales and South West Wales due to the neighbouring authorities surrounding Powys.

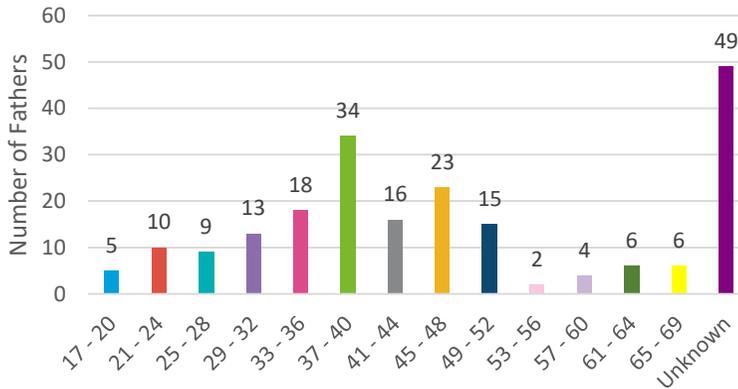


Fig 2.6 Age profile of Children Looked After biological fathers

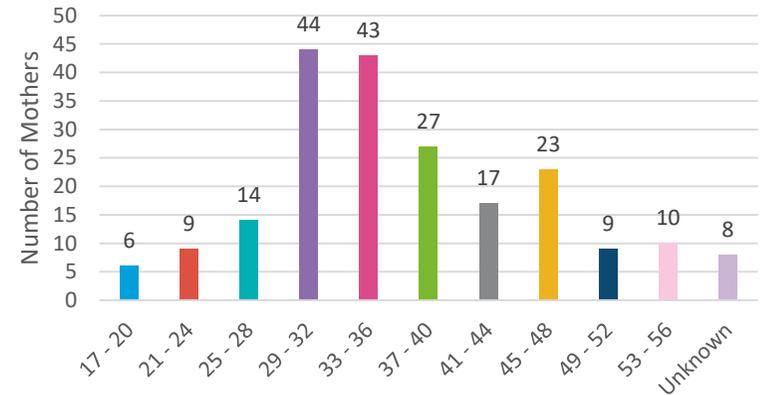


Fig 2.7 Age profile of Children Looked After biological mothers

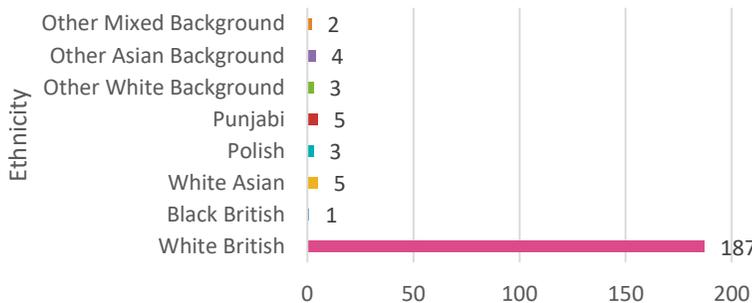
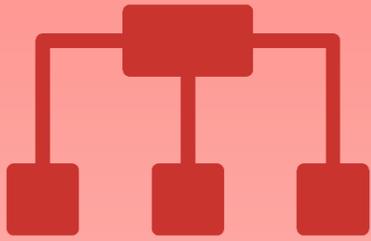


Fig 2.8 Ethnicity of Children Looked After in Powys



Fig 2.9 Children Looked After placed in Powys by Other Local Authorities



9. Structure and Approach to the Development of the Children Looked After Strategic Framework

As a Council we strive to do the best for children in need of care and support. The unprecedented increase in the numbers of children being looked after in Powys has been significant over a relatively short period of time and exceeds the national increases in Wales. The implementation of a Children Looked After Strategic Framework will be instrumental in tackling some of the challenges faced by this increase and achieving better outcomes for the children who are placed in our care. Due to the span of work needed to be considered and implemented in relation to children looked after in Powys, we have adopted an approach whereby we will implement an overarching Children Looked After Strategic Framework with six themed chapters sitting underneath as follows;



For each of the themes we have adopted a signs of safety, strengths based approach to help demonstrate from the outset what is working well in Powys, what we are worried about and what needs to happen moving forward. The themed chapters will specify in detail the priorities and strategies which will be adopted for each area and the detailed measures for each chapter. These chapters are workable documents, clearly setting out our objectives so that they are understood by all. Effective, meaningful engagement is fundamental to the success of any strategy. Engagement with children and young people in the development of the strategic framework has been undertaken utilising a robust engagement methodology (appendix one) so as to ensure that we incorporate what matters to them, and that the Strategic Framework helps to meet the needs of children within Powys. Further focused engagement will be undertaken for each of the themed strategies with stakeholders, including children and young people. The themed chapters will be prioritised and developed in the following order:

1. Permanence
2. Closer to Home and Edge of Care
3. Leaving Care
4. Sufficient Supply of High Quality Care Placements
5. Participation and Voice



9.1 Permanence



What is working well?

- Fostering Panel and Adoption Panel promotes safe, secure placements through robust operation and rigorous quality assurance.
- Independent Reviewing Officer service is improving and working towards providing Quality Assurance to care planning.
- Family and friends assessments undertaken in a timely way.



What are we worried about?

- Delay in children being adopted.
- Life story work, later life letter and narratives for children not being routinely undertaken.
- Matching of children and foster carers is constrained by limited number of foster carers.
- A lack of consistency for Children Looked after due to instability within the workforce.
- Insufficient number of Adoptive Families.
- Progress of Intensive Fostering Support.



What needs to happen?

- Legal Service Level Agreements, communication with families and performance reporting arrangements need to be reviewed.
- Develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of the workforce in respect of Adoption.
- Develop a team of practitioners who have expertise for Children Looked After and Care Leavers.
- Develop and implement a matching process for Long Term Fostering.
- Review Special Guardianship Policy to ensure this order is included in all permanency planning.
- Implementation of Signs of Safety, to include family network meetings.
- Life journey work for all children.
- Develop and strengthen the adoption provision.
- Develop a permanency planning, matching panel.
- Ensure our care leavers have a voice.
- Multi agency approach to children's needs.
- Undertake a review of the circumstances of children currently looked after.



9.2 Closer to Home and Edge of Care



What is working well?

- Implementation of Access to Resource Panel.
- Corporate support and commitment to improve services for all our children looked after.
- All out of county children placements are being reviewed to ascertain if they can return to their own communities.
- Multi Agency Approval Panel.
- Strategic partnership relationships are improving.
- Development of Children's Rights Pledge.



What are we worried about?

- High numbers of children looked after.
- Significant number of children placed large distances away from home.
- Lack of consistent approach with family support services to prevent family breakdown situations.
- Our current commissioning, procurement and contract management for placements made outside of the 4C's contract including those with residential provision in Powys.
- Delays in children receiving appropriate education provision when living out of Powys.
- Capacity and support of in house foster carers.
- FGC and Edge of care service pilot not meeting needs of Children Services.



What needs to happen?

- Better commissioning arrangements with private residential sector within Powys.
- Implementation of Signs of Safety which adopt the family network meeting.
- Develop and commission a range of Family Support Services for children and their families including out of hours support.
- Develop a therapeutic fostering model.
- Increased recruitment and improved support for in house Foster Carers.
- Ensure children and young people have a voice.
- Agree and implement Children's Services restructure to include Edge of Care Provision.
- Implementation of Signs of Safety
- Ensure children and young people have a voice in the design and development of services.
- Progress Newtown project.
- Support the continued roll out of the reflect project.



9.3 Leaving Care



What is working well?

- Personal Advisors understand the Leaving Care Legal Framework.
- Personal Advisors have significant skills in working with young people.
- Care Leavers value the support of their PA's



What are we worried about?

- Personal Advisors are based within locality teams and not within a specialist leaving care teams and we have lost touch with some of our care leavers due to the earlier disbanding of the service.
- There is no clear policy with regard to the entitlement of care leavers in Powys and recording and reporting mechanisms for care leavers needs improvement.
- Transition arrangements for care leavers into adulthood needs improvement and opportunities for Care Leavers to remain in "When I'm ready" placements are limited.



What needs to happen?

- Dedicated leaving care team needs to be established.
- Entitlements for Care Leavers need to be set out clearly including those with complex or additional needs.
- Strengthen arrangements for Pathway and Transition Planning with better links to local housing, other accommodation providers Adult Services and other partners.



9.4 Sufficient Supply of High Quality Care Placements



What is working well?

- Fostering Panel promotes secure placements through robust operation and rigorous quality assurance.
- Most children who have been placed have been matched with adopters from within the Mid and West Wales Adoption Region.
- Mid and West Wales Adoption Region Recruitment Plan is being developed.



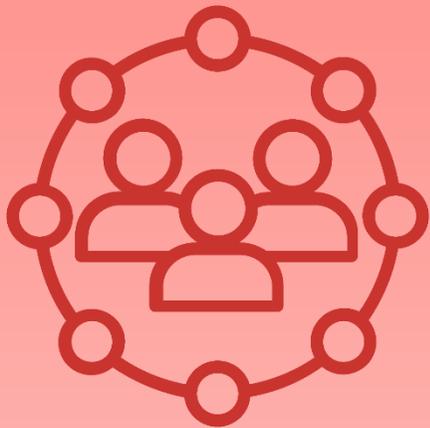
What are we worried about?

- Commissioning and monitoring of Independent Fostering Agency and residential placements.
- Instability of foster placements
- Therapeutic support services available for children in care and their Foster Carers.
- Condition of building at Bannau/Camlas.
- Accurate and timely data recording in relation to children looked after.
- Performance in relation to statutory looked after visits within timescale.
- Lack of consistent Care plans in place within 5 days of when a child becomes looked after.
- Lack of data in relation to educational attainment.
- Lack of approved adopters and foster carers (locally and nationally).
- Lack of choice in placement matching.
- Increased cost of adoptive and looked after placements outside of Powys.
- Lack of foster carers implementing “When I am Ready”.



What needs to happen?

- Develop and improve contract monitoring arrangements.
- Commission a comprehensive, flexible, affordable range of placement options.
- All Children Looked After and Care Leavers have an individualised Care Plan.
- Develop a therapeutic model to underpin our Fostering Service.
- Consider developing capacity at Bannau/Camlas to provide outreach support and emergency support.
- Raise awareness and improve uptake of the Independent Visiting Service.
- Increase uptake of the Active Offer.
- Ensure all children have access to appropriate education provision.
- Ensure all foster carers have an up to date Annual Foster Carer Review.
- Support the recruitment of adopters and in house Foster Carers.
- Provide appropriate support to our in house foster carers, including loans.
- Ensure children and young people have a voice.



9.5 Participation and Voice



What is working well?

- Independent Reviewing Officer service providing consistency, stability, scrutiny and Quality Assurance for care planning for children and young people.
- Quality Assurance framework to measure what good looks like.
- Auditing of children's files to evidence what good looks like.
- Children have access to an advocate from Tros Gynnal Advocacy Service.
- Children are visited by their Social Worker.
- Children have a voice through all of the above services.
- Health and Education services as well as third sector organisations participate within the child's journey.
- There is a Corporate Parenting Board which addresses the themes and trends around ensuring that children's needs are discussed.
- Boo Magazine circulated to all children in care.



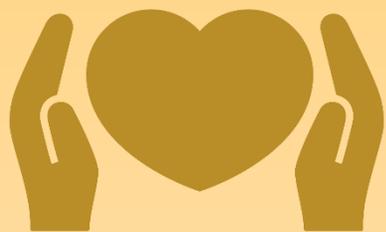
What are we worried about?

- No current forum for service user feedback about service delivery and changes.
- No current Participation Officer in post.
- No current and relevant Participation Strategy.
- No Corporate Parenting Board for children and young people.
- No representative from a young person or child who sits on the Corporate Parenting Board.
- No current voice for care leavers.



What needs to happen?

- A forum for service user feedback needs to be developed.
- A young person needs to be able to sit on the Corporate Parenting Board with a platform.
- Implementation of Signs of Safety.
- Care leavers need to have a stronger voice on service development and engagement.



10. Provision

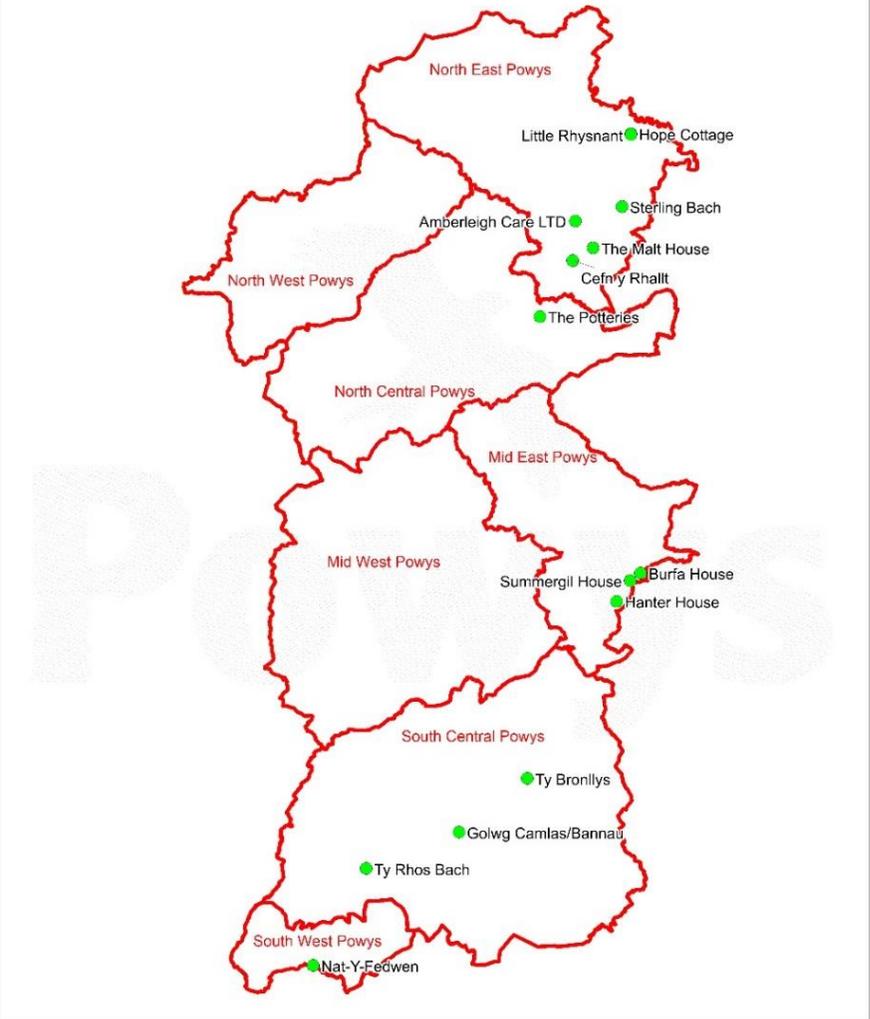
There are 14 children's homes within the county of Powys, one of which is owned and run by Powys County Council (Golwg Bannau/Camlas). Powys County Council do not hold block contracts with any of the independent homes.

With the exception of Golwg Bannau/Camlas, the residential provision within Powys is not currently utilised and children are being placed in residential placements as far away as London and Middlesbrough. There are 17 children placed in residential placements outside of Powys, and only 2 placed in county.

| Home | No. of Beds | Provision | Areas of Non Compliance Identified at Previous Inspection |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| Burfa House | 3 | Complex needs and challenging behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A). This is because less than 80% of staff members hold relevant qualifications. Regulation 4 (1). This is because the statement of purpose does not include all of the information listed in Schedule 1. For instance, it does not include the aims and objectives to be attained with regard to children or the arrangements for dealing with the review of their placement plans. Regulation 4 (5) ©. This is because the young person's guide does not include the address and telephone number of the Care Inspectorate Wales and the office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales. It also contains incorrect information that children can telephone CIW in relation to complaints. Regulation 33. This is because a suitable system has not been established to monitor, review and improve the quality of care provided at the home. |
| Cefn Y Rhallt | 2 | Challenging behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A). Improvement was needed in relation to the percentage of staff who are qualified. |
| Golfa Hall, Amberleigh Care Ltd | 12 | Looked after males who exhibit inappropriate or harmful sexualised behaviours | None |
| Golwg Bannau/Camlas | 9 | 8-18 year olds with a diagnosis of autism and associated behaviours | None |
| Hanter House | 4 | Complex care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A) This is because only 33% of staff members held relevant qualifications. Regulation 4 (1) This is because the statement of purpose did not include all of the information listed in Schedule 1. For instance, it does not include the aims and objectives to be attained with regard to children or the arrangements for dealing with the view of their placement plans. Regulation 33 This is because a suitable system has not been established to monitor, review and improve the quality of care provided at the home. |
| Hope Cottage | 2 | Mostly attachment disorder and challenging behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A). Improvement was needed in relation to the percentage of staff who are qualified in order to fully meet legal requirements. |
| Little Rhysnant | 1 | Complex needs | None |
| The Malt House | 2 | Challenging behaviour | None |
| Nant Y Fedwen | 4 | Challenging behaviour and learning disabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A) This is because they did not meet the requirement for the number of qualified staff at the home. |
| The Potteries | 4 | Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties | None |
| Sterling Bach | 2 | Emotional and behavioural disorders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A). Improvement was needed in relation to the percentage of staff who are qualified. Improvement needed in relation to Regulation 27 (4) (a) as the registered persons have failed to ensure that staff have received appropriate training to meet the needs of the young people placed. |
| Summergil House | 18 | An independent school, autism and associated difficulties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation 25 (1A). Improvement was needed in relation to the percentage of staff who are qualified. Regulation 27 (4) (a). Improvement was needed in relation to the frequency of staff supervision. |
| Ty Bronllys | 9 | Autism and associated needs | None |
| Ty Rhos Bach | 4 | Crisis intervention unit for complex care | None |

10. Provision

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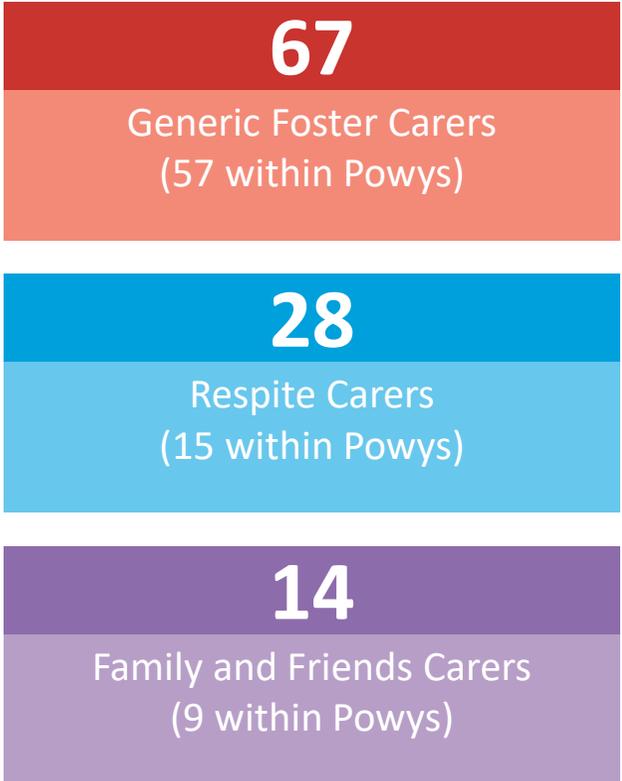
Cyngor Sir **Powys** County Council

Children's Care Homes and Locality

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Fig 2.9 shows where the children's homes are placed across Powys, with the majority of homes in the east of the county and minimal provision in the mid and west.

Additional to children's homes, Powys County Council have the following provision available to utilise:



A further detailed breakdown of which areas of the county have which provision, along with where our children looked after have come from and where they are placed, is available at appendices 2-8.

Fig 2.9 Children's Care Homes in Powys



11. Key Enablers

Applying Robust Commissioning Methodologies



Needs analysis, service design, market development, effective contract monitoring

Models of Investment



By changing our service models, we will invest resources 'upstream' in early help and prevention with a view to supporting families to safely stay together and reduce the need for costly care placements

Workforce Development



We will ensure that the workforce has the appropriate skills, resources and tools they need to be able to demonstrate excellent practice and best support and safeguard our children, young people and families



Engagement, Listening and Co-Production



We will ensure that children, young people and their families have their voices heard and acted on at an individual, service and strategic level

Quality Assurance



An embedded Quality Assurance Framework, audits which identify areas of improvement and provide confidence in the quality of service delivery

Systems and Process Design



Clear pathways and systems to support effective planning and delivery

Cultural and Practice Change



Outcomes focused care and support planning, multi-agency/partnership working, focus on prevention and early help. Implementation of the Signs of Safety to support a strengths based approach to working with children, young people and families



12. Corporate Parenting Duty

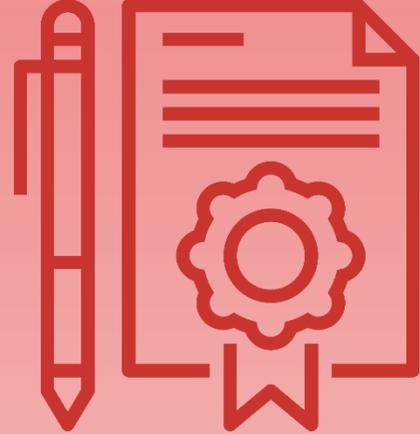
Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the role that local authorities and their partners play in relation to children and young people in and leaving care. The concept was first introduced by Frank Dobson MP in 1998 and has since been enshrined in legislation and statutory guidance, most recently in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

The Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture, the Director of Social Services, as well as the Head of Children's Services hold the overall strategic responsibility for leading improvements in corporate parenting, and for ensuring that children looked after are seen as a priority by the whole authority and its partners. The overall operational responsibility is held by Children's Services, with social workers and carers directly discharging corporate parenting duties on a day to day basis. Other professionals with responsibilities for delivering services to children and young people also hold responsibility for both safeguarding and improving outcomes for children and young people who are looked after. There needs to be a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to Corporate Parenting which are agreed and committed to by the Corporate Parenting Board.

There are various guidance frameworks in place which underpin the requirement for the duty of corporate parenting:

- Towards a Stable Life and a Brighter Future. Welsh Assembly Government, June 2005
- Welsh Local leadership Academy – WLGA Corporate Parenting, July 2012
- Welsh Assembly Government's Circular dated 29th September 2008
- The Welsh Government letter from Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services dated June 2012 including Annex A and B
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014



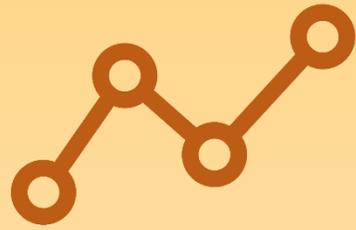


13. Legislation

The legislation which primarily impacts on children looked after and children looked after services that have influenced the development of the Strategic Framework are as follows:

- **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014** – Implemented in April 2016, Part 6 covers Welsh local authorities' duties to children in their care. (www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/contents/enacted)
- **Children Act (1989)** – the Act sets out many of the duties, powers and responsibilities local authorities hold in respect of child protection. (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents)
- **Adoption and Children Act 2002** – This Act updated the legal framework for domestic and inter-county adoption, and places a duty on local authorities to maintain an adoption service and provide adoption support services. (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/38/contents)
- **Children and Adoption Act 2006** – This Act gives courts more flexible powers to facilitate child contact and enforce contact orders when separated parents are in dispute. (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/20/contents)
- **Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016** – Makes provision for the registration and regulation of providers of social care including adoption and fostering services and advocacy services. (www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/2/contents/enacted)
- **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** – In 2011 the Welsh Government made the UNCRC law in Wales, with the Rights of the Child and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.
- **All Wales Protocol for Missing Children 2012** = (http://cysur.wales/media/109657/All_Wales_Missing_Child_July_2011_pdf.pdf)
- **All Wales Protocol for the Management of Young People Engaged in Sexually Harmful Behaviour 2012** = (http://cysur.wales/media/109689/Management_of_Young_People_Engaged_in_Sexually_Harmful_Behaviour_-_October_2012.pdf)
- **Multi-Agency Protocol for the Resolution of Professional Differences 2017** = (<http://cysur.wales/media/125905/Resolution-of-Professional-Differences-Protocol-APPROVED-190418-Eng-.pdf>)
- **CYSUR Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention Strategy 2015** = (<http://cysur.wales/media/125905/Resolution-of-Professional-Differences-Protocol-APPROVED-190418-Eng-.pdf>)
- **CYSUR Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) Meeting Terms of Reference 2017** = (<http://cysur.wales/media/128224/MACSE-Terms-of-Reference-APPROVED-Oct-2017.pdf>)
- **CYSUR Regional Thresholds and Eligibility for Support Document 2017** = (<http://cysur.wales/media/128224/MACSE-Terms-of-Reference-APPROVED-Oct-2017.pdf>)
- **CYSUR The Right Help at the Right Time Framework** = (<http://cysur.wales/media/119241/CYSUR-Thresholds-Eligibility-for-Support-A4-for-local-areas.docx>)

Success should be directly measured against the outcomes for children looked after. This is what good will look like:



14. Outcomes

The Voice of the Child



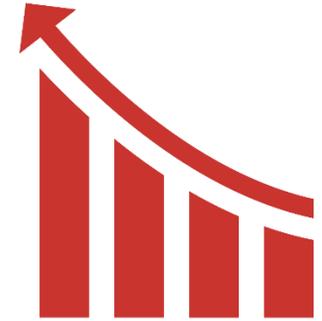
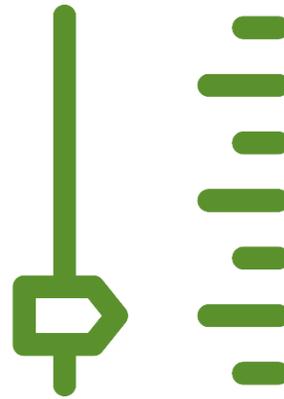
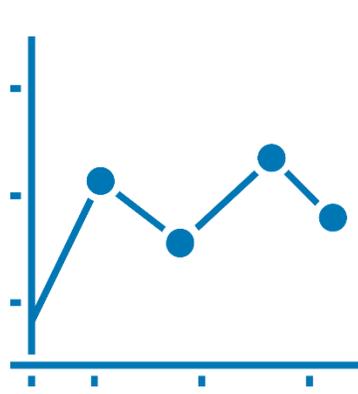
- Children and young people should always be involved in decisions about them and should feel listened to
- We need to listen to children to find out how they feel about the care they are receiving
- Children know about their rights under the UNCRC and are able to access them all to be healthy, happy and safe
- Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers should always ask themselves whether children know what is happening and have had the chance to have their say.

Our indicators of success will be:

- Children live with their families as long as this is safe and right for them
- Children tell us that they feel safe where they are living
- Children are healthy - physically and emotionally
- Children who need extra help to feel healthy and safe can access services that meet their needs
- Any services we commission for our children are high quality and available locally where possible
- All children and young people receive an Active Offer of advocacy support at appropriate times for them
- Teenagers have help and support with relationships and resilience, to prevent them needing to be in care wherever possible
- All of our children are supported to build the skills they need to live independently when the time is right for them
- Foster Carers and family/friend carers have the right training, help and support to look after our children
- Social Workers will meet children looked after regularly
- Each child has someone to speak to who they feel they can trust
- Independent Visitors are available to anyone who needs them and routinely offered
- We do not want our young people to end up in the Youth Justice System
- Children and young people are encouraged to be the best that they can be and pursue any interests that they may have, in education and after school
- Carers and Social Workers actively encourage and support children to achieve their ambitions
- Children will have access to health advice and support



14.1 Measuring Activity to Improve Outcomes



Key Performance Indicators:

- A growth in our in-house placements and a reduction of Independent Fostering Agency placements
- An increase in the number of children diverted from care through the provision of family support packages
- An increase in the numbers of children and young people reunified back to family safely
- A reduction in the numbers of children looked after that are placed more than 20 miles away from their homes
- Improvements in the quality and timeliness of looked after statutory visits
- Improvements in the quality and timeliness of looked after reviews
- A greater number of children attending reviews
- Improved educational attainment for children looked after and care leavers
- Improved training and apprenticeship opportunities for children looked after and care leavers, both in and out of county
- Greater placement stability and reduced number of placement changes
- Increased engagement and feedback from children looked after
- Young person membership on the Corporate Parenting Board
- Increase in referrals to advocacy services for children looked after
- Increased engagement from children and young people through the Children Looked After Forum
- Increased engagement from young people through the Leaving Care Forum
- Celebration awards for children looked after
- Children looked after receiving health assessments within statutory timescales