

## **Short Breaks**

The Guidance around Children receiving Short Breaks was originally defined under the Children Act 1989 as care that lasts for fewer than 120 days per annum, with no period of care for longer than four weeks.

Following the introduction of the Short Break Statutory Guidance in 2010, for implementation in 2011 the guidance and process changed to:

Short Break care is defined as care that lasts for more than 24 hours, fewer than 75 days per annum, does not include a single episode of 17 days or more and is provided in one setting.

Following this change an internal review of the children/young people who were in receipt of short breaks under Section 20(4) of the Children Act 1989 took place in May 2010.

Those who do not come into this category will continue to be provided with accommodation under Section 17(6) of the Children Act 1989 and be reviewed as Children in Need by the Disabled Children's Team Manager and Assistant Team Manager.

There are currently **11 children** who are in this category receiving Short Break Care who would have previously been defined as LAC, who are now reviewed as Children in Need under Section 17 of the Children Act.

## **YOS Prevention Service**

The YOS Prevention Service provides a preventative service to those young people and their parents/carers where the young person is aged 8 – 15 years and is identified as being at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System. The Service receives referrals via the Early Intervention Hub or directly from agencies involved with children and young people who meet the 'at risk of offending' criteria.

Following a comprehensive assessment which considers a wide range of criminogenic factors, an Individual Support Plan is agreed with the young person and his/her parent/carer which addresses the risk factors to offending in each case. Young people referred to the Prevention service receive interventions delivered on a one to one basis, which are most closely related to their risk factors associated with offending and/or anti social behaviour. We have a range of resources specifically designed for working directly with young people which enable our case workers to address issues such as, substance misuse, negative peer group influences, and family relationship difficulties, problems in school, bullying, physical and mental health, and domestic abuse and anger management. The YOS parenting worker, works with the parents and carers of young people, setting out the plan of work needed to assist the parents/carers to make a positive impact in reducing their child's risk of offending.

We also work with other providers to develop pro social leisure activities which promote self esteem, teamwork and positive interaction with others. An example of this was film project that 5 of our young people took part in last summer and the film the young people made has now been nominated for a National award. During school holidays we refer young people to the WAYZ youth provision and John Nike

leisure facility and we have also had young people participate in football projects hosted by Reading Football Club. We are currently planning to work with the Youth Service to access the Duke of Edinburgh program for some of our young people.

At the end of the YOS intervention, an exit strategy to follow on from the work done is often necessary and will involve referral to local partner agencies.

The YOS Prevention Service makes a significant contribution to the overall aim of reducing the numbers of young people entering the Youth Justice System for the first time.

There has been a significant (40%) increase in referrals to this service in the past 6 months which has coincided with a decrease in the number of young people entering the Youth Justice System and the 4 YOS case managers are now all working with this group of young people as well as those young offenders on Statutory court orders. Prevention has therefore become part of our core business in YOS and we have welcomed this change of focus which is consistent with the Department's development of Early Intervention services as a priority in the last year.

Karen Roberts – Head of Youth

### **Commentary on Homeless Children and Young People.**

This indicator is monitored by the LSCB as an indicator of risk in relation to safeguarding. The figures shown in the LSCB Annual report relate to data for the financial year 2011 /12.

The comparative figures for 2011/12 and figures for 2103/14 are shown below, the figure in brackets identifies the actual number of children this related to for the 2013/14 figures.

***The calculation is based on the number of children and young people per 10,000 population under 18.***

	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
<b>2011/12</b>	14.7	18.7	21.0	28.3
<b>2013/14</b>	28.3 (77 chdn)	27.8 (74 chdn)	26.6 (71 chdn)	Not yet available.

Further information on homelessness can be sought from Clare Dorning – Head of Housing Strategy and Needs