

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 23 SEPTEMBER 2014

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR ANGUS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - PEOPLE

ABSTRACT

This report advises members of the educational outcomes for looked after children and young people in 2012/13.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- (i) note the content of this report; and
- (ii) request that progress on the educational outcomes for looked after children is monitored by the newly constituted corporate parenting board.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Our children and young people are confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens
- Individuals and families are involved in decisions which affect them
- Individuals are involved in their communities

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Under the provisions of the [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#), 'Looked After Children' (LAC) are defined as those in the care of their local authority. Most children who are looked after in Scotland will be subject to a compulsory supervision order. This is a legal provision made by a Children's Hearing, the effect of which gives a specific local authority the responsibility for supporting the child or young person. The compulsory supervision order will have conditions attached, such as what support the child or young person is to receive, where the child or young person is going to live, and with whom the child should have contact.

3.2 A child or young person can be **looked after at home** where the child continues to live in their regular place of residence (i.e. the family home) or **looked after away from home** where the child is cared for away from their normal place of residence, by foster or kinship carers, prospective adopters, in residential care homes, residential schools or secure units.

3.3 The Scottish Government's statistics publication: Education outcomes for Scotland looked after children, 2012/13, published on 17/06/2014 presents national information on the education outcomes of young people who were looked after at any point during 2012/13 and who left school during that academic year.

3.4 The report highlights that in the academic year 2012/13 nationally:

Looked after school leavers	All school leavers
85% leave school aged 16 or under	30% leave school aged 16 or under
86 average tariff score (a 19 (27%) point increase since 2009)	407 average tariff score (35 point increase 2009/10)
62% in positive destination (a 17% increase since 2009/10)	90% in positive destination (a 5% point increase since 2009/10)
90% attendance	94% attendance
209 exclusions per 1,000 (a 43% fall since 2009/10)	33 exclusions per 1,000 (a 27% fall since 2009/10)

The table above shows the percentage of outcomes as a comparison between looked after school leavers and all school leavers. In general, outcomes for looked after school leavers are significantly poorer than all school leavers.

3.5 Although there has been some improvement in recent years educational outcomes for looked after children and young people continue to be significantly poorer than for the population as a whole.

4. CURRENT POSITION

As at 30 June 2014 there are 270 looked after children and young people in Angus, 186 of whom are between the ages of 5 and 16.

4.1 Educational Attainment

4.1.1 The national statistics show that the educational attainment amongst looked after children has slightly improved over the past four years. However, the rate of improvement has been greater amongst non-looked after children. In general, average tariff scores, (the higher the tariff score the higher the level of qualification attainment), have been increasing in recent years but the gap between looked after children and all children remains. This is reflected in the Angus table below:

Average Tariff Score of S4 Looked After Children Against all S4 Pupils 2009/2010 to 2012/2013

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
LAC Home	36	47	0	73
LAC Away	55	62	88	105
All LAC	49	58	88	97
NOT LAC	181	182	180	185

The table above shows the average tariff scores for looked after children are less than 50% for other children.

4.1.2 Research has shown that attainment can be influenced by the type of placement. Looked after children who experience only one placement have higher average attainment than those with more placements. A key focus in Angus is therefore to increase the number of foster carers and improve the level of support to foster carers in order to minimise the number of different placements children experience.

4.2 Post school destinations

A young person is said to have a positive destination if they are in education, employment, training, voluntary work or an activity agreement. The following figure highlights destinations for young people who are looked either at home or away from home or having previously been looked after within Angus. Looked after children are less likely than other children to go into positive destinations when they leave school.

Post School destinations for care leavers in Angus

Destination/Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Employment	3	0	1	4
Training	0	2	2	1
HE	0	2	1	1
FE	11	12	10	15
Volunteering	1	0	0	0
Activity Agreements	0	1	2	3
Unknown	0	0	0	0
Total Positive	15	17	16	24
Unemployed Seeking	18	13	6	6
Unemployed Not seeking	3	3	1	2
Total Other	21	16	7	8

The table above details the post school destinations for care leavers between 2009/10 and 2012/13. In 2012/13 24 out of 33 care leavers went on to positive destinations.

4.3 School attendance

- 4.3.1 Looked after children in Angus still have poorer attendance than other children, but percentage attendance is improving. There are differences according to type of placement. The highest rates of attendance are seen in children in residential schools and the lowest rate of attendance amongst children looked after at home. The statistics also suggest that children with more placements have lower rates of attendance.

Percentage Attendance of all Angus Primary Age Pupils and Looked After Children, 2009/10 to 2012/13

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Angus LAC at Home	93	91	93	89	94
Angus LAC Away	96	96	97	97	97
Total Angus LAC	95	95	96	95	96
Total Angus Not LAC	96	96	96	95	96
LAC Scottish Average	91.2	91.1	NA*	91.9	NA*

The table above shows the percentage attendance of all Angus primary age pupils and looked after children between 2009/10 and 2012/13.

Percentage Attendance of all Angus Secondary Age Pupils and Looked After Young People, 2009/10 to 2012/13

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Angus LAC at Home	63	73	76	70	74
Angus LAC Away	89	92	90	91	89
Total Angus LAC	82	88	86	85	84
Total Angus Not LAC	93	93	93	93	93
LAC Scottish Average	91.2	91.1	NA*	91.9	NA*

The table above shows the percentage attendance of all Angus secondary age pupils and looked after young people between 2009/10 and 2012/13.

* Note: Attendance and exclusion data is now only collected national every two years and explains why there is a gap for 2011/12 and 13/14.

- 4.3.2 Within Angus we aim to ensure that **all** pupils receive their entitlement of 25 hours education in primary and 27.5 hours education in secondary.

4.4 Exclusions

- 4.4.1 Looked after children are much more likely to be excluded from school than the average pupil. Children in residential accommodation tend to have higher rates of exclusion than those looked after within the community. Children looked after at home have noticeably higher exclusions rate than others looked after in the community. There is also a tendency for children with a greater number of placements to have higher rates of exclusions.

Exclusion Rate per 1,000 Pupils for Angus Primary Pupils Compared to Scottish Averages 2009/10 to 2012/13

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Angus LAC at Home	370	364	91	0	0
Angus LAC Away	274	88	76	59	47
Total Angus LAC	297	142	80	45	32
Total Angus Not LAC	17	9	8	4	3
LAC Scottish Average	123	96	NA*	64	NA*
Scottish Average all pupil	12	11	NA*	10	NA*

The table above shows the exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils for Angus primary pupils compared to the Scottish averages between 2009/10 and 2012/13.

Exclusion Rate per 1,000 Pupils for Angus Secondary Pupils compared to Scottish Averages 2009/10 to 2012/13

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
LAC Home	1125	615	590	811	513
LAC Away	763	311	200	188	316
Total LAC	872	378	313	360	381
Not LAC	63	44	40	29	28
LAC Scottish Average	642	588	NA*	335	NA*
Scottish Average all pupil	82	72	NA*	58	NA*

The table above shows the exclusion rate per 1,000 pupils for Angus secondary pupils compared to Scottish Averages from 2009/10 to 2012/13.

*Note: Attendance and exclusion data is now only collected national every two years and explains why there is a gap for 2011/12 and 13/14.

In response to the rise in exclusion of looked after children in Angus Secondary Schools a review of the exclusion process has been initiated.

4.5 Measures to support educational attainment of Looked After Children

In order to support the educational attainment of looked after children in Angus the following key measures are in place in Angus:

4.5.1 **Designated Managers for looked after children in schools.**

In January 2007, the Scottish Executive published 'Looked after children: We can and must do better'. As the corporate parent for vulnerable children, local authorities and partners are responsible for ensuring that looked after children achieve the same well-being and success that all parents wish for their children. This saw the introduction into schools of Designated Managers for looked after children. In September 2008, the Scottish Government published 'Core Tasks for Designated Managers in Educational and Residential Establishments in Scotland. Their key tasks being to:

- Communicate effectively
- Ensure the needs of looked after children and young people in school are met
- Advocacy on behalf of and consult with looked after children
- Promote the learning and development of looked after children

4.5.2 Each school in Angus has a Designated Manager. In primary schools this is usually the Head Teacher. In secondary it is a Depute Head Teacher or a Principal Teacher (Pupil Care and Support). Angus Council worked with staff to produce 'How good is our Angus School? - Focus on looked after children'. This toolkit aligns the 'core tasks' with the national quality indicators used to evaluate overall performance in schools.

4.5.3 LAC Teacher

Within Angus the Designated Managers are supported by a dedicated looked after children's Teacher whose remit includes supporting them to identify the educational needs of looked after children and ensuring that plans are put in place to meet these needs. This teacher also ensures that where a child or young person moves school that information on their educational needs follows them immediately. In Angus where a child or young person is received into care, or moves placement, the presumption is that they will continue in their original school where this is practical and is in their best interest.

4.5.4 Individual Education Plans

The Education (Additional Support for Learning Act) (Scotland) Act 2009 introduced the statutory presumption that every child or young person who is 'looked after' by the local authority has additional support needs. The presumption can be rebutted if a full assessment of the child's or young person's needs reveal that they do not require additional support to benefit from school education. Where the presumption holds, the authority must formally determine whether or not the child or young person requires a co-ordinated support plan (CSP). Within Angus all looked after children have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and all looked after children are considered for a CSP.

4.5.5 Managing School Exclusions

Preventing and Managing School Exclusion in Angus Guidelines were revised following the national guidance '*Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A positive approach to managing school exclusions*' in March 2011 and subsequently updated in January 2013. This guidance states:

'As part of the staged intervention and Getting it Right in Angus, the decision to exclude a looked after child or young person should be avoided and alternative solutions found, in consultation and collaboration with the lead professional and other agencies'.... Working towards a zero target, exclusion from school of this vulnerable group of learners remains a key priority for children's services partners across Angus'.

This approach has led to the significant reduction in school exclusion of looked after children in Angus detailed in section 4.4.

4.5.6 Tuition Fund

This fund was established to ensure that resources were available to meet identified educational support needs for looked after children. This fund allows foster carers to purchase additional tuition for looked after children in the same way that many parents seek additional tuition for their own children. It also means that specific additional educational costs can be met such as purchasing musical instruments for young people with an aptitude in this area or funding educational trips or excursions.

4.5.7 Corporate Parenting Board

Reference is made to report number 152/14 consider by Committee in April of this year in which Elected members approved the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Board. This Board has a key role in monitoring the educational outcomes of looked after children and challenging services to better support children and young people in the educational journey.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights

There are no Human Rights implications arising directly from this report.

Equalities

The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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