

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	19 January 2017
Officer	Director for Children's Services
Subject of Report	Apprenticeships in respect of Looked After Children and Care Leavers
Executive Summary	<p>The Ofsted inspection report of Dorset County Council looked after children and care leavers included a recommendation concerning the development of a full range of opportunities for work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships for care leavers to increase the number who are in employment, education or training.</p> <p>DCC currently offers work experience to looked after children and care leavers and has agreed a small pilot cohort to undertake traineeship. Looked after children and care leavers are guaranteed an interview for an apprenticeship, but the final decision on which applicant to employ is determined by the recruiting manager.</p> <p>A pilot project was completed in summer 2016 that offered four 16 year old looked after children DCC work experience. Two successfully completed the work experience. The pilot established a Dorset model of work experience that accounts for the complex and vast range of needs of the young people and can support them appropriately to make it a successful experience for the young person and also for the managers who offer work experience.</p> <p>This academic year the scheme has been expanded; sixteen Year 11 Virtual School pupils will shortly be approached with an offer of DCC work experience with in July 2017. During the Spring term Year 10 pupils will also be approached with an offer of work familiarisation in preparation for their Year 11 work experience. The 13-25 Care & Support team and Ansbury Guidance have started to assess and identify NEET 16 -21 year olds who are either looked after children or care leavers who would find DCC work experience or a Traineeship as a suitable next step. Progress on this work is reported to the Virtual Schools Governing Body on a termly basis with report back to Corporate Parenting Board every six months.</p>
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>N/A</p>

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<i>Please refer to the protocol for writing reports.</i>	Use of Evidence: Local evidence used appropriately. No national data available.
	Budget: N/A
	Risk Assessment: N/A
	Other Implications: Corporate Parenting
Recommendation	The Committee note the information in this report, consider and debate those issues highlighted and decide how it would like to progress matters going forwards.
Reason for Recommendation	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the activity taking place to promote apprenticeship opportunities to Care leavers and Looked After Children. The SOSC endorse the established reporting process.
Appendices	None
Background Papers	A guide to Apprenticeships Project plan for Work Experience and Apprenticeships for Dorset Looked After Children (v4 14/12/16)
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1. Background

1.1 The Ofsted inspection of looked after children and care leavers report included a recommendation concerning the development of a full range of opportunities for work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships for care leavers to increase the number who are in employment, education or training.

1.2 DCC are currently able to offer work experience to looked after children and care leavers and have agreed a small pilot cohort to undertake traineeship. Looked after children and care leavers are guaranteed an interview for an apprenticeship, but the final decision on which applicant to employ is determined by the recruiting manager. This is in line with usual HR recruitment practices. DCC are not currently employing any looked after children or care leavers as Apprentices. Whilst the scheme has been running for some years we have not

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collected information on the number of care leavers or looked after children who were employed via this route.

2. Development of DCC opportunities for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

2.1 A pilot project was completed in summer 2016 that offered four 16 year old looked after children DCC work experience, two successfully completed the work experience. One of the young people has since progressed to Kingston Maurward College where she is following a Public Services course, she is then expected to be offered an apprenticeship with Dorset Police.

This academic year the scheme has been expanded; sixteen Year 11 Virtual School pupils will shortly be approached with an offer of DCC work experience in July 2017. During the spring term the Virtual School will be identifying Year 10s to take part in DCC Work Familiarisation planned for the Easter holidays. The 13-25 Care & Support team and Ansbury Guidance have begun to assess and identify NEET 16 -21 year olds who are either looked after children or care leavers who would find either DCC work experience or a Traineeship as a suitable next step. Progress on this work is reported to the Virtual Schools Governing Body on a termly basis with report back to Corporate Parenting Board every six months.

2.2 The Head of the Virtual School and the Cabinet member for Learning and Skills have met a number of Public Sector organisations who have pledged to support Apprenticeships for looked after children and care leavers.

2.3 The pilot has established a Dorset model of work experience that accounts for the complex and vast range of the needs of young people. The model ensures that appropriate support is available for the young person, and their manager, to make it a positive and successful experience. The opportunity must facilitate the development of the young person's skills and attitude towards future employment to maximise their positive life chances. It is essential that we are confident that this model works before opportunities in DCC and other organisations can be offered.

3. Apprenticeship Policy

3.1 The Governments drive for more Apprenticeships is clearly identified in the Post 16 Skill Plan, DfE and DBIS, July 2016. Apprenticeships are to reach 3 million starts by 2020 and employers are to sit at the heart of the system. To realise this target a number of changes to the system have been identified.

3.2 The Institute for Apprenticeships will begin operating in April 2017. This is to be an independent statutory body responsible for ensuring the high quality of apprenticeships in England.

3.3 The introduction of an Apprenticeship Levy from 1 April 2017 for employers with a pay bill of over £3m.

3.4 A public sector duty will come into force that will require employers in the public sector to employ at least 2.3% of its workforce as apprenticeships. HR have identified that this will be approximately 92 apprentices within DCC. Maintained schools will also be included which will increase the number to 203 apprentices.

3.5 The DCC proposed model to be presented to DCC Staffing Committee for approval in January 2017 identifies upskilling the existing workforce plus a very small cohort of supernumerary apprentices at entry level 2 or below.

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3.6 DCC currently employs 41 apprentices on its internal programme, none of whom are looked after children or care leavers. They are employed in a range of departments; many of whom are Level 2 and Level 3 Business and Administration apprentices who work at County Hall within various different departments. Other current apprenticeships include: Level 2 & Level 3 ICT & Customer Services – Working at County Hall; Level 3 Children and Young People Workforce – Working at Shaftesbury Children’s Centre; Level 3 Vehicle Maintenance and Repair – Working at DWP; Level 2 & Level 3 Conservation Diploma – Working across the Rangers Services at Avon Heath Country Park, Durlston Country Park and Dorchester; Level 2 Leisure, Travel & Tourism – Working at Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre.

3.7 The Dorset Apprenticeship Forum was established in December 2016 to identify and promote opportunities for partnership working between agencies in the wider Dorset. It will assist the development of an Apprenticeship Scheme through a network of work placements within agencies across Dorset to encourage the entry of young people into public services and provide increasing employment opportunities enabling young people to remain in the county area. This is chaired by the Cabinet member for Learning and Skills.

4. Dorset looked after children and care leavers

4.1 Dorset looked after children and care leavers (including CWAD) at 1 January 2017

13 year old looked after children	28
14 year old looked after children	29
15 year old looked after children	37
16 year old looked after children	51
17 year old looked after children	64
18-21 year old care leavers	222

4.2 Dorset County Council does not currently have any looked after children or care leavers employed as apprentices.

4.3 As of 2 January 2017: 16 Dorset looked after children and care leavers are currently apprentices.

12 Dorset care leavers are currently on level 2 and level 3 apprenticeships. They are wide ranging and include: recruitment agency, engineering, business admin, bricklaying, retail, garage, compliance and finance, customer service, construction, plumber, hairdresser. One is a returner to the 13-25 Care & Support service who went to FE College and completed a level 2 course before progressing on to an apprenticeship while parenting.

There are four looked after children on Apprenticeships; these include working as a Nursery assistant, hairdresser, childcare and one at a special school.

4.4 National data on looked after children and care leavers who are Apprenticeships is not collated or published.

Director: Sara Tough
Director for Children’s Services
January 2017