

Report Title:

Participation of Children and Young People Report 2021- 2022

Date	Aug 2022	Author	Sarah McCluskey
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Recommendation/Decision required

Information report.

Background:

Introduction, strategic context, and background

Since 2000 B&NES has been signed up to (Article 12, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) which states:

“Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child’s day-to-day home life”

Listening and acting upon the Voice of the Child underpins all our work and is one of the four Outcomes of our Children and Young People’s Plan CYPP

Section A - Overview of the Participation and Engagement work undertaken between April 2021- Mar 2022 with children and young people who are service users of B&NES Commissioned Services, Health and Social Care

Section B – Overview of Participation of Children Looked After within Children’s Social Care

Section A

Provider

Off the Record

Length of Commission

(3+2) 31/03/2026

Service

Participation

No of service users actively engaged

JICC	11	SICC	5	Care Leavers	5	Youth Forum	6
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Key highlights:

Summarized from Monitoring

Junior in Care Council

- Creating designs for Health Care Leaflets
- Promotion of the JICC
- Support for younger children new to being in care.
- Range of activities eg, Circus Skills and trampolining
- Increased frequency and timing of sessions.

Senior in Care Council :

- Promoting wellbeing and connection has been a theme throughout the year
- Input into the Bright Spots Coram Voice Survey
- Contributing to the feedback session given to practitioners
- Input into the Independent Care review and gave feedback to Josh MacAlister.
- Recruitment for new Development Worker.
- Recruitment of Young Ambassador
- Closer working with the CEC group.
- Transition of new members from JICC.

Care Leavers (Care Experienced Council CEC)

- Work undertaken terminology used around Care Leavers
- Jamie's Farm event in August 2021 and Dec 2021
- Range of outdoor activities mini golf, ice skating
- Presenting at Youth Networking Event
- Input into the Independent Care Review
- Planning for delivering a presentation for a meeting with Ofsted.

Young Ambassadors -

Young Ambassadors are care experienced young people 18-25 employed and supervised by Social Care but who will work with OTR to support with the 'In Care Councils' and undertake project work.

- Two Ambassador (YA) were successfully recruited to the role during 2020-2021 but have now left their role to pursue other opportunities. Two new YA 's are now in post.
- Assisted with Junior in Care Council events.
- Promoting engagement of Care Leavers

Youth Forum:

- Developing new Participation Strategy for OTR
 - Starting new discussions re changes to the Youth Forum structure
 - Developing stronger links with young people from other groups and organisations.
 - Revised Participation Standards.
 - Bath Youth Networking Event.
 - Promotion
 - Choosing new campaigns including LGBTQ+ Pride Event
 - Updating website
- <https://www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk/youth-forum>

Key challenges:

COVID obviously impacted on the service during the first quarter but face to face delivery has now resumed and sessions have been run in person.

Amount of engagement /consultation requests to the groups – this was a challenge but has led to the development of a service request form which will be used by the Youth Forum and ICC/CEC to

determine which consultations they will engage with.

Service user quotes:

Youth Forum

- *'Making friends is half of what it's about... We need fun at this time, and it entices new people in'.*
- *'[the best part of being in Youth Forum this quarter has been] The new direction that it is being taken in, and the increasing size of the group.'*

IN CARE COUNCILS

Junior In Care Council JICC

'I like doing fun stuff like this'

'I live with my uncle at the moment, so we do different things to normal'.

I'm proud of myself because 'I'm brave'

What would make it better – 'MacDonald's!'

Senior In Care Council SICC

'I'd really like my sister to come along because she doesn't get out much and I think she'd really like it'. We haven't got on in the past but we're much better now'

sometimes you feel like you need to talk to someone and that's why you have SICC and other people that might have the same problems' '

I must say all the staff are amazing and always keeping an eye on us and making sure we are comfortable and welcome and safe'

Care Experienced Council CEC

'Young people need help at the right time in their lives, the earlier the better'.

It's good to be part of these things and meet other people in care as it can be a very lonely experience'

'We need more help around accommodation. It took me two years to get a place'. You need people supporting you until you're ready to move out'

Independent Care Review Comments

Key areas discussed were around.

- **Foster care** - the highs and lows
- **Respite** - the need for LOTS of it
- **Seeing family** (immediate and extended) and the reality of what this looked like for them or rather the lack of offerings around seeing extended family and their acceptance of this as they *'didn't always feel like they could 'have a say about these things'.*
- **Social workers** - the turnover of SW's and how this was managed well or not, this really varied. Some described *'turning up to meetings to be unexpectedly introduced to new SW's' often at a time when they were feeling 'really angry and unable to cope with change'.* Everyone showed empathy for social care staff and on reflection said that *'they wouldn't have wanted to do that job and that it must've been hard'*. Notably the empathy was felt more with older members in the session who were not currently in care.
- **Accommodation** and access to services and support
- **Locations** Being placed out of area away from friends and the impact this had.

- **Isolation** and having to cope with rapid change.

Provider –Signis Reconstruct Independent Visiting

Length of commission - 3 Years

Service : To provide Children and Young People (cyp) in the Care of the Local Authority with emotional support, sound adult advice, and any help that aids their development. The visitor is independent of the local authority and of the other people who are involved in the young person's care.

The service is for cyp who have little or no contact with their family for more than a year or for whom it is determined that it is in the child/young person's best interests to receive this service.

No of service users actively engaged 15 – 18 per Quarter

Age 5-11

Age 11-18

Age 11-25

Key Highlights :

- Our Independent Visiting Service resumed F2F .
- We have increased our Staff Training
- We have been supporting current matches to maintain contact and requesting new referrals for our service. With restrictions having lifted many activities have returned to normal meaning the matches have different/ new things they can do together.

Key Challenges: Decrease in the number of Volunteers a national trend – partly due to continuing impact of COVID. We are looking at more creative ways of engaging volunteers.

Service users quotes :

(Young people, Foster carers, Keyworkers)#

'He's fun and a good visitor for me. We do activities I like. I feel more confident I have liked all the visits, I'm looking forward to the London visit, which we are doing soon. I would give him 1000/10 !' Young Person - Dec 21

'He's into the same stuff as I am, like gaming. I have a PlayStation and we can talk about games and things we enjoy about it. It's made me more active. I'm getting more exercise now and have someone to talk to about stuff.' Young Person- Dec 21

'Yes it's been very positive indeed, X is a brilliant visitor for Y. She is supportive, reliable and they get on really well. Y was a little reluctant at first, but they get on really well, they've been clay pigeon shooting, climbing and out for food. They do a great mix of visits. It's given Y a new outlook and Y has time away from her younger sister which is important for her.' Foster Carer -Jan 22

'It helps having another male in his life, they get on really well. A is a talker and C isn't, so it works really well. C looks forward to it. It's helped his confidence, they got a bus together. A takes him out for a long time, sometimes 3 to 4 hours.' Foster Carer -Dec 2021

'He likes the same things as I do and we do fun trips out, I like all the visits.' Young Person Dec - 2021

'Yes they do a good mix of activities. L is a good visitor for D, he lets D choose the activities they do and is reliable and friendly. D looks forward to the visits which is a good sign and always comes back in a good mood. I think it's a really good service' Foster Carer - Dec 2021

'Yes it's been really good for F. He gets to go out and do activities he enjoys. N is really reliable and

<p><i>always turns up when she says she will. It gives F someone that makes him feel cared for and supported. It definitely makes a positive impact.</i></p> <p><i>Yes they do a good mix of activities which F enjoys.’ Key Worker - Jan 2022</i></p> <p><i>‘F is kind and nice and easy to get on with. She is a really good visitor for me</i> <i>She helps me get things off my mind. I can speak to her about things which helps me. She is kind, sweet and caring.’ Young Person - Jan 2022</i></p> <p><i>‘It’s fun, he’s funny. We normally go cinema, we saw Doctor Dolittle and a couple of Marvel movies which were really good. It’s helped me in a lot of areas, I would say in all the ones you mentioned. Now I know how to make music and use a laptop.’ Young Person - Jan 2022</i></p> <p><i>‘Yes, P’s great, I’m a single carer so having a positive male role model for R makes a big difference. I think he is much more forward in saying how he feels now and what he wants to do. It’s made a big difference in his confidence.’ Foster Carer -Jan 2022</i></p>
<p>Provider: WECIL</p>
<p>Length of Commission: 3 years plus 2</p>
<p>Service - Befriending service for disabled young people</p>
<p>No of service users actively engaged</p> <p>30</p>
<p>Key highlights</p> <p>Face-to-face support resumed with the majority of visits taking place in-person, following thorough risk assessment process.</p> <p>Two successful family events took place in the Summer during (one in Bath, and another in Stockwood).</p> <p>Service offered all families from the linked and enquiry list free tickets to see a pantomime. This was well attended and gratefully received.</p>
<p>Key challenges</p> <p>There has also been a noticeable recent drop in volunteer applications, perhaps owing to the lessening of Covid restrictions and those previously on furlough resuming work, coupled with fewer students able to commit to volunteering at present, as noted above.</p>
<p>Service user quotes</p> <p>“D is visiting regularly, and R is getting to know him much more now. This is fantastic to see the difference in R. Making connections with someone out of his family unit is having such a positive impact on our family. Thank you so very much.”</p> <p>“Thank you so much for your continued support. Time2Share@WECIL has been a lifeline through this difficult year.”</p>

"I am always amazed that the volunteers offer their time to us. We are so grateful for everything that you do."

C (volunteer) is amazing. She has given so much to E (young person). It is wonderful to see".

"Any support that the volunteer can give us is a lifeline. It is so lovely for our boys to have interactions with someone outside of the family, doing the things that they enjoy."

Professionals:

From DCT after making a referral to the befriending team. "Thank you for your help with this matter. It means a lot to the family and any support that you could offer would be gratefully received."

Volunteers:

"Volunteering has really improved my confidence and has improved my understanding of other people's lives. I think I have helped (my befriender) to feel less isolated and given her something to look forward to each week as she was unable to do many things due to the pandemic. The support has been fantastic - the organisation has made me feel very valued" ~ Volunteer Befriender (Bath)

"I just received the certificate you issued earlier this month since it was waiting for me at home. Thank you so very much, some of my best memories of the year include some of the online socials we all attended!
" ~ Volunteer Befriender (Bath)

"The training was very useful, especially knowledge on how a disabled person could sometime be mistreated unintentionally due to lack of understanding of an abled person. The breakout rooms were useful for small group discussion and to get to know people better" ~ Trainee Volunteer

Provider

Bath Area Play Project (BAPP) Short Breaks respite

Length of Commission: 3 years

Service

Targeted holiday provision for disabled children & targeted term time provision for disabled children
– Short breaks

No of service users actively engaged

Holiday scheme: estimate 130
Term time only estimate 125

Age	5-11	x	11-19	x
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Key highlights

Short breaks provide invaluable support for disabled children, young people, and their families. It provides disabled children and young people with the opportunity to experience new relationships, environments and positive activities which provides them with valuable social skills and independence.

The provisions are all running face to face now.

Key challenges

The challenges for the contracts are keeping adequate staffing levels. For example there has been an agreed reduction in days delivered in the Fosse Way holiday scheme as they were finding it increasingly difficult to staff. NAS have also cancelled a number of sessions at short notice. The other issue raised by providers is the increase in cost of living on a limited budget. There is also an increase of complex needs linked mainly to behaviour.

Service user quotes

'I enjoyed making the pancakes, it was good to cook them a different way'
H 'I was pleased with my lava lamp' J
D said he loved the dart board,
A enjoyed biscuit decorating and arts and crafts

Quotes from Parents

24 parents completed the BAPP Annual Evaluation Form; 92% citing improvement in social skills as a result of using the Clubs.

All parents said there had been some or a big improvement in their child's emotional well-being since attending

"It's just lovely to have something positive for them to attend, as most mainstream activities are impossible, she would just be bored at home"

"She loves having a club of her own. She likes that she has made friends. It has also shown my husband how confidently she can move schools to a special school in the near future."

"It has given our son some independence and extra confidence"

"She's a lot happier when she attends rampage on a Tuesday as since starting college she very isolated "

"He is more confident, sociable and expressive"

"She has become more socially confident"

Provider: Action for Children (Beaumonts)

Length of Commission: 3 years + 2

Service

Residential Overnight Service

No of service users actively engaged

Age

5-11

11-18

18-25

Key highlights

- Continued provision during covid – young people attended either individually or in small bubbles. The staff of Beaumonts and the young people who use the service have shown a great deal of flexibility, adaptability, and resilience
- The building has now been refurbished and meeting Ofsted requirements. Several internal doors have been widened/alterd along with three external doors, allowing easier access to different parts of the building, garden and Rumpus Room for young people who use wheelchairs. Other aspects of the building have been modernised to provide greater comfort and a lovely environment for the young people, eg the installation of a wet room with underfloor heating, a new kitchen with height adjustable surfaces.

- During the building closure the service maintained provision and young people were offered short breaks in the community. A wide range activities and outings were planned with young people and were a great success.

Key challenges:

The main challenges during this have been:

- Prevalence of the Covid 19 virus - The Covid 19 pandemic impacted the number of stays offered to young people
- Closure of the building for twelve weeks from the end of July.
- Staffing shortages, challenges filling vacancies-which is a nationwide problem. Existing staff have been covering additional shifts during this period, but there has been a reduction in the number of overnights being offered by the service.

Service user quotes:

The service is brilliant. The staff do all they can to meet the children's needs. I also like that they do nice things for the children such as ordering takeaways. I think the service is just fantastic".

"I think it is a really lovely service and I feel that he is safe and well looked after".

"Overall, the service gives really great support, and she loves it there".

Provider Black Families Education Support

Length of Commission: 3 + 2 years

Service: Information Advice and Advocacy

B&ME Education Support Service

No of service users actively engaged

18

Age 5-11

Age 11-19

18

Age 18-25

Key highlights

The Supplementary School delivered a series of sessions contributing to a partnership project with the University of the West of England, involving the creation of a series of podcasts broadcast through the Imperial Voice radio Station exploring and celebrating Black History through looking at the life and impact of Emperor Haile Selassie on the City of Bath.

Development of the **Race Equality Charter for Schools** and the official launch webinar-

Development Manager did a presentation and the Education Coordinator and two young people from the Supplementary School took part.

Delivering race equality training for schools.

Supported and enabled young people to participate in local decision making, contributing to a collaborative Youth Sharing Event in February along with other local youth centred organisations B&NES Council Officers for participation and the Cabinet member for children's services. The event contributed to the future development of youth participation in the area.

Key Challenges:

- Delivering face to face during the pandemic in line with school health and safety guidance and requirements in relation to safe working and Covid 19.
- *"The Black Families Education Support Group has been amazing support through very difficult times while my daughter was victim to racial abuse, harassment and daily micro*

<p><i>aggressions at her school in Somerset. The team were readily available for both practical support and to lend an ear. They offered excellent and timely advice and signposted me to extremely useful resources. They were able to guide and support me through two school appeals, both of which a team member attended to support my case and both of which were successful. Thanks to their help, my daughter is now looking forward to a fresh start in a new school. I cannot express my gratitude and relief enough."</i></p>
<p>Service user quotes:</p> <p><i>"Many thanks for all the amazing work that you are doing for all our children. We know that we have been very lucky to access some of your love, time, connections, listening and wisdom for one of our children. The difference you make is truly remarkable."</i></p> <p><i>'Jason has offered further support for the next step of going to the new school. Our family thank you for being there when we needed you.'</i></p>
<p>Provider: B&NES Carers Centre Length of Commission: 3+2 years</p>
<p>Service - Young Carers Service</p>
<p>No of service users actively engaged</p> <p>672 registered with service (min. will receive newsletter) 88 young people accessing short break activities</p>
<p>Key highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Bath Philharmonic - a group of young carers benefited from a weeklong music course. • Other activities included online cooking, crafts and outdoors archery and axe throwing. • Supported 25 children to go to Barton Camp for a daytime residential which they loved. • Ran successful virtual schools conference with 25 schools represented. The conference focused on creating action plans so that schools could better identify and support young carers in their setting. YCS worked in partnership with the Children's Society who will support schools through their schools' programme. • Successful summer of activities offering over 120 individual places across July and August. • Time for You' days, which is our emotional support group offer- sessions at Bath City Farm. • Partnership with Freedom Church to provide 20 hampers to Young Carers families in need this Christmas. • launched a new website making it easier for Young Carers to register and to register interest in breaks online.
<p>Key challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 young carers on a waiting list for Needs Assessments, as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, school closures and increased referrals. • The needs of a significant number of young carers have been complex due to the impact of Covid-19 on them and their families. We have seen an increase in the number of referrals

<p>and discussions with early help and Children's services and requests to be involved case reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seen rise in referrals to the service, and currently 150 more young carers registered than commissioned to support. As resource is limited, service adapted to ensure help and support to those who need it most. Good communication with Contract Manager around this challenge. Have put in place new referral/registration process to enable service to have a universal offer for all young carers who register, while ensuring that a more intensive service offered to those who need it most.
<p>Service user quotes</p> <p><i>Absolutely incredible! Thank you very, very much for making X so happy after a very hard year. He hasn't stopped talking about it all since he got"</i></p> <p><i>"So nice to see my daughter come home with such a huge smile and excited to tell us all about her day out"</i></p> <p>Feedback – 26 Young Carers completed summer activity feedback:</p> <p><i>"Both kids had great fun and eldest showed determination whereas would normally just give up trying!"</i></p> <p><i>"It was fun to try something different that I haven't tried before."</i></p> <p><i>"It was really good fun and want a chance to do it again"</i></p> <p><i>"My child had a fabulous time!"</i></p> <p>Mum gave feedback in person for YC WB session and Picnic & Play- <i>YC had a fantastic day, can't wait to do it all again and was beaming about all of the things that she got to do. Thank you so much with providing us with the opportunity for YC to have fun and to make a break. Please pass on my thanks- it means so much to us that this is here for her.</i></p>
<p>Provider: SARI</p> <p>Length of Commission: 3 plus 2 years</p>
<p>Service</p> <p>Cultural Diversity and Equalities Work with schools and Children's Social Care</p>
<p>No of service users actively engaged</p>
<p>Key highlights:</p> <p>Contributed to work around Race Equality Charter for Schools. Director did a presentation on the live launch webinar</p> <p>Supported the development of the Incident Reporting Portal (RID).</p> <p>Appointment of Outreach Development Worker for B&NES (funded by National Lottery)</p> <p>Resumes face to face work with schools and young people.</p>
<p>Key Challenges:</p> <p>Covid-19 related containment measures continued to cause some degree of disruption in SARI's education work</p>
<p>Service user quotes:</p> <p><i>'The whole consultation has aided my understanding and given me a platform from which to complete more learning both with this family but also others in the future, the session was excellent.'</i></p>

Training for Social workers- ‘Yes it met expectations and exceeded. I got a number of new ideas to follow up over potential areas for recruitment of new foster carers’.
“The assembly and workshop were great, and the children got a lot out of it...The Year 6 children will be following this up by sharing what they have learnt in the workshop with the rest of the school next week in assembly”.

Provider: Southside and Bath Area Play Project
Length of Commission: November 2021 – October 2024

Service: Family Support and Play Service

No of service users actively engaged
476

Age 0-5 – 34, age 6-10 – 227, age 11-15 – 152, age 16-18 – 13, age 19-25 - 11

Key highlights

- The service supports Young Advocates and the BAPP (Bath Area Play Project) Children’s Participation Group to be involved in service design and development.
- The Young Advocates are currently completing a training programme that they helped design with subject titles they feel are relevant and useful for their personal development and for them to support their peers.
- For example, the Young Advocates recently gave feedback on a pilot Peer Mentoring Project and offered their lived experience of Mentoring to help the service adapt a programme suitable for young people.
- The service has a child friendly ‘Hello’ letter explaining the service, encouraging children and young people to share their thoughts and feelings, and providing contact details
- The service has a specific section on all Family Support assessments to record the child’s voice and their view of what the situation is they are living in and the support they think they or their parents need.
- The service ensures children are consulted with to get their voice at the close of the work to find out what was helpful, what not so helpful and their view of how things have changed as a result of the support they have received.
- The service has developed a Participation Policy to reflect participation practice.

Key challenges:

Capacity within the service since referrals for support have increased as a result of the Pandemic.

Service user quotes

- *“A Southside worker helped my brother stop being so annoying. He used to smash up my bedroom but talking to someone from Southside stopped him, I now have a tidy bedroom.”*
- *“I have grown in confidence since coming to the young advocates. My anxiety is better, and I have put myself forward more at school and I am now part of the athletics team and speak out in class.”*
- *“Southside helped my family. We explored the qualities we have as a family.”*
- *“I like coming to YAP, it is empowering and entertaining.”*
- *“Good to be included in the training programme, we were able to put across our ideas.”*
- *“Loved helping to present some of the sessions, any future projects happy to get involved*

with.”				
Provider: Mentoring Plus Length of Commission: New contract started March 2021 for 3 years +1+1				
Service: Mentoring Service for Vulnerable Young People				
No of service users actively engaged				
Age	5-11		11-18	30
Key highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved accessibility and opportunity for children and young people to provide feedback to each provision anonymously. This is accessed through a secure web link and young people are given space to provide both targeted and general feedback about the service they receive Every practitioner job description contains the following as standard under the General Responsibilities section: “<i>To promote and encourage the participation and empowerment of young people</i>” Youth Reps and Girls’ Group are service user advocacy groups, available to mentoring graduates, who meet weekly (YR) or monthly (GG) to share and give back to other young people what they learnt and experienced through mentoring. The groups take responsibility by co designing and planning projects of their choosing events, attending training and developing their own manifestos and calls to action. In the past year, M+ have employed participation leads for Girl’s Group, Youth Club and Mentee Activities groups, as well as an activities assistant. A Senior Practitioner has also just been recruited who will focus solely on participation. 				
Key challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M+ plan to start involving young people in the recruitment process Additional funding will need to be sought throughout the year to support activity groups Increased demand for services 				
Service user quotes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>My life was terrible before Mentoring Plus but now it is not. My personality has changed in a positive way since Mentoring Plus, I've been getting out the house a lot</i> <i>Mentoring couldn't be better. My mental health is better, I get more human interaction with my mentor, I get out more, I get fresh air</i> <i>Mentoring Plus has been good. The staff are friendly and helpful. Ian is good. I am disappointed it is coming to an end but I know where to go for support going forward</i> <i>I have more confidence since being mentored which I didn't think was possible!</i> <i>The way that you've helped me, my mental health and family, you've made it all better</i> <i>I think it's a really good idea for people like me to get away from their actual life. It's a great thing, who ever thought of it is amazing.... I've just become a better person because of mentoring</i> <i>it's not just going out with (mentor), you have helped me at school too and it has got better, they have actually listened to you</i> 				

Provider: Youth Connect South West

Length of commission: 4th November 2019 – 3rd November 2024

Service:

To provide targeted early help for children and young people aged 13 – 19 (up to 25 with SEND), living in Bath and North East Somerset who have additional or complex needs to improve their outcomes and reduce inequalities by.

- Helping young people overcome barriers to fully engage in education, employment or training meeting statutory duties as specified in the description of service.
- Providing support and interventions that will engage and challenge vulnerable young people to help them develop their resilience and make a positive difference to their lives and to their communities

No of service users actively engaged:

871

Age 5-11

Age 11-18 844

Age 18 - 25 27

Key highlights

- Feedback forms at the end of targeted service, young people brief on how feedback is used.
- Annual User survey, young people receive report on how the information was used.
- Young people's participation group discuss service issues. Annual User survey, young people responses used in service development through trustee board and participation group. Changes fed back through report.
- Young people's participation group, contribute to service development and delivery plans We have a space on the board of trustees for young people.
- Participation is a key component of Youth Work as professional practice and is in the core training for staff.
- Young people involved in budget setting and programme planning for their projects. Young people involved in designing their support plans.
- Young people sit on all recruitment panels for young people focused roles. We have allocated 18.5 hours of a staff's role to participation. YCSW funds its own participation group and funds travel and costs for the members.

Key challenges

- Capacity within the service since referrals for support have increased as a result of the Pandemic.

Service user quotes

Taken from contract monitoring data 2021/2022.

- *"I've turned into a better version of myself and feel so much happier."*
- *"Made me so much stronger in myself and brought my family back"*
- *"Hi, thank you so much for running the groups and coming to see me in Writhlington. i really appreciated everything you have done and you have made me into such a stronger person and I'll be forever grateful for all you have done for me :)"*
- *"thank you for seeing me today, I asked my sister if I could stay at hers and she said yes so that's a good sign" (relationship had broken down)*
- *"It's been good to have a space that's about me, and to get support for my family."*
- *"Its (the service) helped me know how to cope with things. i liked the breathing exercises and the groups."*
- *"I can go into town efficiently to get where I need to be. I am a bit more open talking about feelings. S is nice and understanding"*
- *"I feel like you've helped me the most that anyone ever has. You've given me like the most direction, so you've been helpful."*

- *“Thank you. For everything.”*
- *“it’s given me an understanding of what support is available, how i can support myself and time to process what i want to do next. It’s helped me in school on the bad days when i couldn’t find the words; S gave me a voice”*
- *The work was supportive and helpful*

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Provider: Oxford Health NHS Trust

Length of Commission: 7 years

Service:

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

No of service users actively engaged:

Key highlights

Supporting Service Design: Participation is embedded within strategic groups operating across BSW including Clinical Advisory group, CAHTS Project working group, 16-25 Platform subcommittee and BSW Governance board. This helps to ensure the voice of children young people and their families is an integral part of service design and development.

Shaping the design of the new Crisis and home treatment service (CAHTS): Following their involvement in developing the initial service specification young people were then consulted about the service structure and how CAHTS should fit with existing provision. We also shared our groups top tips on accommodating the needs of autistic young people to be used in the ASD training the team were providing for staff in the new CAHTS team

Contributing to the development of the 16-25 pathway: In October 2021 the views and experiences of young people were included in a presentation to the 16-25 Sub-committee board, outlining Oxford Health’s vision. Voice clips from young people were shared, ensuring their experiences were reflected as well as their hopes for the future.

Referral criteria: In Autumn 2021 the CAMHS referral criteria were reviewed and once a draft was agreed, we set to work on developing an accessible version for young people and their parents/carers. The Clinical Advisory group approved the young people’s edit and we hope it will provide greater clarity as to the circumstance in which a young person could expect a referral to CAMHS to be accepted. At the same time, whether CAMHS is appropriate or not, we want to encourage young people to contact CAMHS because we can help them access alternative support and avoid their difficulties becoming more severe or entrenched. We also considered how best to communicate referral information and agreed a short film/s would work well and could be shared widely through the trust YouTube channel and website, as well as through local websites and social media accounts. An initial meeting has now taken place with a local film production company, and we hope to start work on the project soon

Developing Local Participation:

In BaNES there are several active youth Participation groups and in 2021 Bath Mind invited a number of these organisations to form a planning group, after they were successful in securing funding to undertake a wellbeing project with young people across BaNES. The group included a range of third sector providers, including Mentoring Plus, Off the Record, Boys in Mind, as well as the council and ourselves. An initial youth sharing event was planned for February 2022, offering local youth groups and young people the opportunity to showcase some of the participation work they have been involved in and network with other groups and organisations. The Participation team was delighted to be part of this event, celebrating the wide-ranging, youth participation taking place

across BaNES. Children and young people from organisations including, Off the Record, Project 28, Black families in Education, Boys in Mind, Room 627 and Youth Connect made presentations about their service and their participation and achievements alongside our Participation team. Ian, one of our young people outlined some of our key achievements and showed a short film, featuring some of the group, outlining the value of participation, both for participants and for CAMHS. Bath Mind hosted the evening and feedback was very positive, from all those attending.

Key challenges:

Two young people, one 16 and one 19, presented their own stories, one about the difficulties of accessing CAMHS and feeling that she wouldn't get support until she was sick enough. The other talked about the challenges of dealing with anorexia during Covid and repeated hospital admissions. Their accounts were both heartfelt and unflinchingly honest and many of those attending said how much they appreciated the young people's bravery and insight.

- Parent/Carer participation: The first meeting was very positive, with those present sharing very openly the challenges of supporting children who are struggling with mental health issues. They appreciated the space to talk with others with the same challenges. They also enjoyed hearing from Catherine, an older member of the Participation team who joined and provided the perspective of someone who has used CAMHS during her teens. They valued her input and appreciated the opportunity to ask her questions.

Service user quotes:

"Participation is about young people and CAMHS staff being able to work together as a team, so that the help a young person gets is right for them." (Holly 19)

"My transition worked quite well as I had a bit of overlap and a few sessions with my adult person while I was still with CAMHS, but it can be frustrating, particularly if services use different online system - you end up having to go over stuff you've already talked lots about and that can feel quite overwhelming"

"I was also able to gain a lot from it as well as everyone else, such as possible new opportunities if I reach out to the groups that were there, but it was also simply amazing to hear that my generation is so active in supporting mental health and other issues that I also feel strongly about!"

"I've enjoyed being part of the Participation team, especially as I get to share my experience as a trans person who has accessed CAMHS. I have been able to let people working in mental health care know things I wish the people responsible for my care had known. Health care for trans people is often so ineffective and frustrating for us, due to the ignorance and lack of education and awareness about trans and other queer issues, so it's been good to be able to contribute to services becoming more inclusive through participation."

"More participation can only be good and I hope next year more young people will be able to share their experiences and shape the services they and their peers use." (Ian 20)

Provider: B&NES Connecting Families Team

Length of Commission: N/A (we are an in-house service)

Commissioner Public health collect our data but not do commission us as such

Service
Connecting Families

No of service users actively engaged

No of service users actively engaged we normally have 60 to 70 families engaged at any one time approx. 250 people at any one time. We work with people of all ages 0 to 100 years

Key highlights 2021 -2022

We have recently started a women's groups for the Afghan refugees to create a support network and share experiences with other women in their cultural community. This will really help to gain their voice as in the family home they are often the silent parent / partner.

We have run several activities days / events which always help us to sit alongside and speak to children / young people and parents/ cares.

We also have added the voice of the child / young person to every family assessment completed in 2021 / 2022 which has enhanced the work we do and ensured that children and young people were heard.

We also had 100 % attendance from a service user on any interview panel for family key workers and their views and opinions feed into the process and taken very seriously and they influence the outcomes.

Key challenges:

We would like to set up a user group who we can consult about key changes but need some resource to help with this.

Service user quotes:

1st quote from a young person

I really liked drawing Walking Dead pictures with Amy. If I wasn't working with Amy, I would be feeling a lot worse than I am. I really liked the Wheels for All activity and would like to go to more activities.

**2nd quote from a parent**

I would still be struggling on mostly with H behaviour and not knowing how to keep the others safe, I could see what it is doing to them.

Just good how my family key worker has got these meetings so we can all sit around the table and discuss the next steps and hear from everyone at once.

Children's Centre Services 0-5

Provider: Bright Start Children's Centre Services Length of Commission: Internal SLA
Service: Bright Start Children's Centre Services
No of service users actively engaged Commissioned to support 174 children aged 0-5. Q4 returns show BSCC supported 287 children and their families during 2020 -2021
Key highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are asked about their experience of involvement in one-to-one work and groups; this contributes to the overarching feedback. • Learning activities are led by and tailored to the expressed needs of individual children, • Play diaries are created within groups to support children's learning and provide a voice. • Families are included in decision-making within groups about the activities they are involved in • Some groups are now delivered virtually as we found that this was the preferred option for parents/carers and supported attendance. • Where possible BSCC have included service users in recruitment such as being part of the interview process. However, due to Covid this has been limited as face-to-face group have reduced • BSCC have robust marketing strategy to support parents to access wider community and council services and increase their community participation •
Key challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take up and completion of a few courses following high volume of referrals has been low. BSCC looking into reasons • Feedback form being developed for parents receiving childcare placement funding
Service user quotes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It has given me reassurance about the bond with my baby and ideas on ways to play at home. M also made sure I was ok and looked at ways to help me cope. She passed me on to people who could give me the appropriate advice</i> • <i>It was a positive experience for P and for us. We felt well supported and it's nice to know that there is help there so that we don't feel so alone. We now feel more empowered to cope with P and her needs</i> • <i>I hope that you are well and truly recognised for the work that you do. To provide such a dedicated service especially through covid lockdowns is very special. I really hope that everyone who needs it gets access to your service. I really cannot thank you enough</i> • <i>My son's teacher is reporting a massive improvement in my son's behaviour he's remaining calm, and the teachers described him now as a bright and lovely kid we're all very pleased</i> • <i>I am so very thankful to you and all the team. You have been an amazing support to me and my family during the lockdown of recent months and especially during the past two weeks when we have been self-isolating.</i> • <i>I am a single parent with a 12-year-old and a toddler to take care of and I am also 21 weeks pregnant. Being unwell on top has been a challenge, but one that was made manageable thanks to your brilliant team and the wonderful innovation that is Food Club. I have been moved by the kindness and generosity that has been shown to me. This is just my story, and I know you will be making a huge difference to the lives of all the families you support. The service you provide is amazing and deserves to be acknowledged and celebrated</i> • <i>It was a great group, we felt listened to and the techniques will really help and were well explained. I am more reflective about my own parenting and my own behaviour and how I am a role model to my children. I have much more confidence in my parenting</i> • <i>A sense of support. No question too silly. Asking other professionals. Helping with day-to-</i>

<p>day problems. I have a friendly familiar person to turn to again if things unravel at home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have found the support to be invaluable. Has helped me immensely. Also, XX loved playing with (worker) and the sessions have been such great fun for me and XX. I feel so much more confident with aspects of parenting XX during difficult behaviour.
<p>Provider: Action for Children</p> <p>Length of Commission: Since 5/1/18. 3 years plus 2.</p>
<p>Service: Bath West Children's Centre Service</p>
<p>305 children supported in Q4 2021/22</p>
<p>Key highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact notes written after each visit include the voice of the child to record any child's comments or practitioner observations. • The support given is family led. The views of the child are taken into account and services are developed to meet the needs of the community • Action for Children have a national Participation and Engagement Officer- Sarah Reynolds who supports the involvement of children and young people. • The service has recognised that many families have required additional support to attend groups following COVID. Very young children have struggled with being in groups. Group planning reflects the lack of social opportunities young children have had during the Pandemic.
<p>Key challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children being supported are generally 0-5 and so voice of child is often interpreted through observation
<p>Service user quotes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I liked the course because it was safe. It was advice and not telling people what to do, thought I would feel judged but did not at all. It was voluntary contribution and no pressure • I just wanted to let you know as you were so good with working with us as a family. I always appreciated your support throughout everything. • Thank you so much for all your help, you really have helped us and changed our lives for the better. We appreciate your support and help and advice • I just want to say thank you for everything you do for us, and I am truly feeling stronger and in a good place. • I truly am going to achieve getting to baby groups next year for H and with your help Will do this! • The staff are always friendly and happy to help if we need an extra pair of hands • Talking to you and being honest about everything going on I have felt so much better, emotionally you have help because you have made me realise it is not me • I don't know if I could have handled this if you didn't come into our life's, I really appreciate everything
<p>Mental Health Services 16 - 25 Support</p>
<p>Provider: Bath Mind</p> <p>Length of Commission: Data taken from period 19/01/2022 to 19/07/2022</p>

Service: Wellbeing Service. Greenlinks; The University of Bath
54 Students engaged with gardening sessions 64 students engaged with terrarium making sessions for “Be well week” at the University.
Key highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bright and engaged group. Most are keen to learn and physically able. - Useful, well-equipped space with indoor area and kitchen. - Realistic budget set by the University for Purchase of resources.
Key Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging enough students to attend group regularly. - The weather. - Small gardening space with limited jobs each week, occupying larger groups can be challenging. - Maintaining the upkeep of the garden and watering of plants between sessions. - Maintaining a sustainable service during university holidays.
Service user quotes: ““ The garden makes me feel calm and tranquil, I have enjoyed being outdoors and being able to meet new people and learn new things in a relaxed environment” JN “The garden has always been my favourite place in campus and always brings me happiness. Every week I look forward to coming back to the beautiful flowers we planted ourselves and to harvest the vegetables that are growing vigorously under our love and care. It puts a big smile on me when I see the new flowers blooming and new fruits growing in our garden. I enjoy this rewarding way nature works and enjoy the peace we share with other nature lovers” SY
Provider: Bath Mind
Length of Commission:
Service: Access Community Mental Health
No of service users 08/07/22 – Currently actively working with 85 people, of which 17 are (16+).
Key Highlights: Access Community Mental Health launched in BANES in end March 2022, supporting people 16+ living in BANES. Supported 38 people 16+ since launch to 08/07/22.
Key Challenges: Supporting students moving out of area during holiday time and trying to find applicable services local to them.
Service user quotes: Service user (19) stated she was very satisfied with the service as it was effective and very personal, which is refreshing.

Provider: Bath Mind Length of Commission: Spot Purchase
Service: Community Support Service
No of service users actively engaged: Age 18 -25 7 Key highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Supporting one client to start an apprenticeship despite great anxiety. > Supporting a client who was previously virtually housebound to access the community; this has now increased in frequency to the point where we are looking for independent accommodation for this client. This is amazing life-changing progress. > Supporting a client to attend and manage the responsibilities of going to university. > Good multi agency working for many of these clients.
Key challenges: <p>Heightened anxiety due to Covid limiting the decisions made by a couple of clients so they have not felt confident to progress with accessing the community.</p>
Service user quote <p>"It is partly the support with organising, but then also stress management and a chance to talk through the week and come up with solutions. The value I've had from this service- I couldn't recommend it enough. This absolutely is so valuable - it helps me to organise my life. The weekly check in is invaluable. I find it hard to reach out for support so the weekly check in enables me to talk things through and it is extremely useful for organising appointments, things like G.P appointments- I find organising things difficult, so this is incredibly valuable."</p>
Provider: Coop Resilience Length of Commission: 1 year
Service: Safe Space at Bath Mind (16-25's) <p>Delivery of Mental Health and Wellbeing Support to 16-25's, in the form of a Peer Support Group facilitated by fully trained staff and volunteers, Peer Mentoring and Youth Counselling.</p>
No of service users actively engaged: 30 aged 18 -30 (with a reach of 100 plus, from the Bath Mind website, Outreach Work within Youth Connect settings and via Bath Mind attending wellbeing events at Bath College and Bath University
Key highlights Key highlights: Safe Space Group

- Weekly Peer Support Group meeting either face to face or across Zoom. The sessions encourage open conversations around MH and wellbeing and are all supported by staff fully trained in MH First Aid.
- Sessional work is delivered into the sessions, including creative theatre, nutrition and building healthy relationships with food and sessions with a videographer.
- Several young people have finished work with CAMHS and attend Safe Space to bridge the gap between CAMHS and Adult MH Services.
- There is good signposting within and beyond Bath Mind, including Counselling, Breathing Space and Peer Mentoring.
- There are a range of attendees with varying MH needs- OCD, ADHD, Autism, anxiety depression, eating disorders. This helps the young people increase their understanding of other people's needs and supports the development of compassion in each person.
- At the group's request, they have now organised two social gatherings (bowling and trampolining, engaging with what they consider to be 'normal' social activities with the support of Bath Mind, giving them confidence to do this unsupported in future
- Group Members have started to meet socially without staff.
- A drama group is due to begin across the summer of 2022, engaging 16-25's in Radstock where we have identified a need for young people to engage in something to improve their sense of wellbeing and purpose

Peer Mentoring Scheme

- 6 young people have accessed support from the Safe Space Peer Mentoring Scheme, 4 of these referrals were from CAHMS. The following was achieved:
 - *Practising interview skills and securing a new job*
 - *One young person has gone from extreme social anxiety, to now being able to attend the face-to-face Safe Space Group and access Breathing Space*
 - *Relaxation techniques to support a young person to manage her ADHD*
 - *Support to a Young Carer to help her develop her passions and create a life for herself outside of her caring role*
 - *Emotional support to a young person who is very isolated from family, who live in India*
 - *Work with a 16-year-old who is out of school due to anxiety, building self-esteem and confidence to engage in the wider Safe Space sessions*
 - *Support to challenge negative thinking and create gratitude lists with clients*

Youth Counselling

- 5 Young people have engaged in 12 weeks of Youth Counselling funded through this project, and there is a waiting list.

Key challenges

The time limited funding presents challenges in terms of growing the service, in particular the Peer Mentoring and Youth Counselling

Service user quote

I have only been accessing Bath Mind services since the start of 2022 and can confirm that the multiple different types of services they offer are helpful. I have mainly used safe space, breathing space, and peer mentoring. My main goal was to feel like there is always someone to go to, to help manage my ADHD better by creating a routine, and to try to relax more. All these resources have helped me to do so. When I have time, I would like to look at other services in Bath Mind as there are so many different opportunities that can adapt in the way you need them to. What situation brought you to Bath Mind? Seeking an environment where I felt secure discussing my mental health experiences, or alleviating them, at university.

☐ What have you hoped to gain? Finding a community where mental health or unity and understanding was not only accepted but encouraged.

☐ What groups/ services have supported you and how? The Bath Mind groups on campus, and

the Safe Space group in specific, have supported me by giving a sense of encouraging consistency in my weekly life, in addition to introducing me to an accepting group of various individuals and experiences.

- ☐ How things in your life (however small) have changed as a result of accessing these services? As stated, introducing to different or unfamiliar individuals or experiences, as well as maintaining a sense of stability in my personal and social life.
- ☐ Anything else you wish to say! Bath Mind has consistently been a force of support in my life, and that of personal friends within the group, and I have enjoyed interacting with various members. I have also witnessed the good done to several individuals in their personal lives, self-esteem, and capacity to understand other people, and I can acknowledge and must emphasise the good done by that as a result.

LD Support

Provider: Swallow

Length of Commission:

Service: Base House/Swallow Youth Group social activities

Personal Budgets

Base house is a training and respite house where people with learning disabilities and come and experience staying away from home. They are supported to practice, improve, and learn independent living skills as well as experience being supported by support workers and to have social interaction with their peers.

No of service users actively engaged:

Age	11-18 6x 13 + yp attend Youth Group	18-25 5 attend Base House
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Key Highlights

- Young people at both groups are making real progress

Key challenges

Funding - Our Youth Group funding has now ended with Children In Need. SWALLOW are now funding this activity out of our dwindling reserves- if funding is not found by Christmas this group will reluctantly end.

Referrals and funding agreements from social workers for Base House can be so slow and sometimes inappropriate for the level of support that we are able to offer.

- Recruiting new staff if proving *extremely* challenging (SWALLOW have never previously had issues with recruitment or retention – this this is now a real issue! – a crisis)

Service user quotes:

"I really do not want to stop attending Base House – I've loved it from the beginning."

Parent carer stated – the Base House is a credit to your amazing team – the only reason she is stopping attending is because BANE'S can't fund the STEPS programme and SWALLOW.

Section B

Capturing 'Voice of the Child' within Social Care. 2021-2022

Key Highlights

Care Outcomes

- Ongoing support and recruitment of Young Ambassador's.

- Young Ambassadors involvement in the CSC participation strategy, led by Leigh Zywek and including adult service users.
- To have clear guidance for staff and partner agencies on the language we use
- To further develop a Care Experienced Council
- To increase participation in the junior/senior in care councils
- Young Ambassadors to re-design our Pledge and Local Offer
- Social Care are facilitating a group called Building Bridges; this group is comprised of families that have had previous social work involvement. They are now working with Social Care to provide advice on what works most effectively when Social Care are working with families. They will eventually receive training with a view to becoming advocates for families involved with Social Care.
- To have a social media platform to aid communication with young people
- To have a Pathway Plan form and process that is tailored to the YP's needs.
- To contribute to the Corporate Parenting Group Meeting.
- To ensure information is accessible for children and young people who have different communication needs who are open to social care.
- To have a resource available for young people explaining the safeguarding and court process
- To inspect specific areas of the service from a YP perspective
- Links with FPT to explore consultation and participation opportunities with foster carers

Independent Reviewing Officer - IRO's

- The service continues to provide information to parents and carers about what they can expect when attending a child protection conference. Independent Chairs contact parents / carers ahead of conferences to ensure they feel prepared and have an opportunity to share their wishes and feelings and those of their children.
- Off the Record are notified of every child aged 11+ who is going to be discussed at an initial child protection conference so that advocacy can be offered. Independent Chairs and Advocates work together to ensure the child's voice is heard within the conference. The virtual delivery of child protection conferences means that for some children they have been able to attend part of their conference supported by their advocate.
- The Service is working with Off the Record to consider how we might be able to improve children's attendance and participation in conferences, as well as obtaining their feedback once they have attended a conference.
- A steering group has been reinstated with Off The Record, Children's Social Care and the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Service to consider issues related to advocacy for children subject to a child protection plan and child in care. The steering group will allow exploration of

children receiving advocacy, help identify reasons advocacy is not in place for children and allow promotion of advocacy across all three service areas. In turn it is hoped this will allow for good quality advocacy for all children involved in services.

- Children in care continue to be allocated an IRO within five days of the service being notified of them coming into care. Their allocated IRO will send them a personalised letter which introduces themselves, include a photo and provide information about what the role of an IRO is and what a child can expect in terms of their child in care review. Children are provided with their IRO's name, telephone, mobile and email address and encouraged to contact their IRO should they wish to.
- IRO's will offer to see children ahead of their review and arrange for this visit to be in line with the child's wishes and feelings. Some children requesting they go for a walk with their IRO to talk, have a hot drink away from their home, speak via video call or text message. IRO's seek to establish a good rapport/relationship with all the children they are allocated to. Child in care reviews and visits have in the majority since January 2022 returned to in person.
- In the recent Ofsted inspection (March 2022) inspectors deemed IRO's to know children's circumstances well and the oversight of a child's IRO was seen clearly recorded in the child's record.
- A child's review continues to be written directly to the child, with them in mind, with IRO's using language the child will understand. Not all review records will be shared directly with the child, for some children this isn't deemed appropriate in such instances IRO's will send a summary letter of what was discussed, highlighting a child's likes, achievements and their wishes and feelings. The Ofsted inspection deemed the outcome of a child's review to be sensitively written to children, capturing their opinions and these records are used to inform the child's care plan.
- The IRO service are keen to learn from those with lived experience, a care leaver has attended a team meeting to talk about their experiences as a child in care and the input of the IRO. This allowed IRO's to reflect on how they could further improve their input with children in care.
- The appointment of a new Young Ambassador within Children's Social Care is welcome by the IRO's and Independent Chairs, discussions are taking place as to how the lived experience of Young Ambassadors can help shape service delivery.
- The IRO service with input from the In Care Council produced recommendations in 2020 as to an information pack that should be made available to all children in care, the content of the information pack has been designed with input from the In Care Council and the Young Ambassadors. The information pack has now been approved and there is practice guidance in place setting out what information should be provided to children in care and when,

unfortunately children are not receiving this information from their social worker and this is an area for improvement. The IRO service will be considering the provision of the information pack to children as part of their review and making this part of recommendations where not provided.

Key Challenges

Care Outcomes

- Capacity and needs of Young Ambassadors – training is needed in some areas
- Prioritisation of work plan
- Funding for events
- To hold an In-Care Celebration even

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service

- Obtaining feedback from children, their parents and carers remains an area of focus for the service. Feedback systems have been introduced within the child protection service, but a feedback strategy needs to be developed for the IRO service.
- The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service is keen to strengthen its links with the In Care Council and hear directly from children in care as to the issues they feel should be areas of priority for the IRO service.
- The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service will be looking at the templates used across the service to see how these can be improved to become more accessible to children and their families.
- Input from those with lived experience is needed and consideration to be given as to how this can be achieved.

Report: July 2022

Author: Sarah McCluskey

Signed off CYP Sub Committee Sept 2022