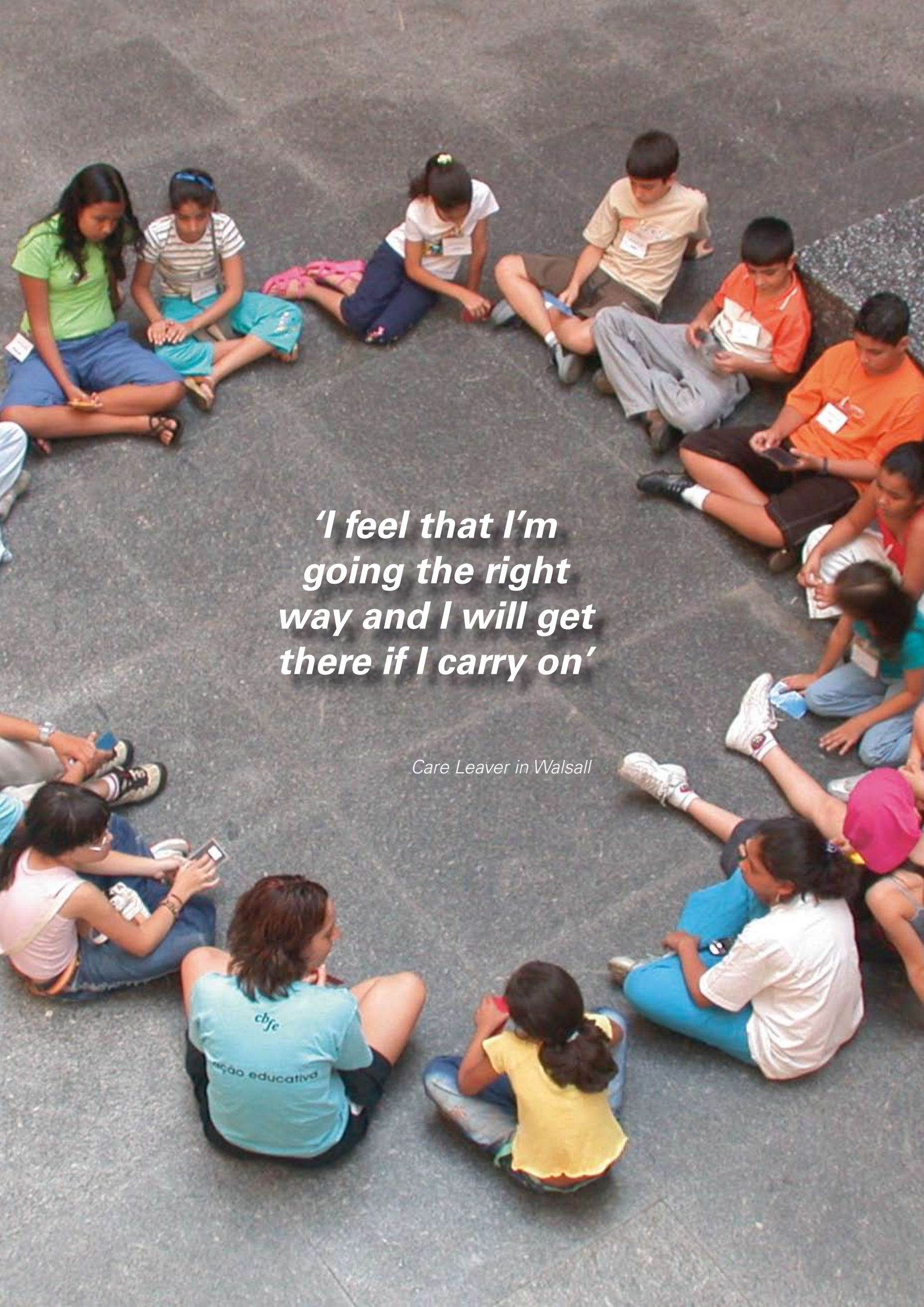


Corporate Parent Strategy 2007

Walsall working together



Walsall Council

A group of approximately 15 young people, mostly teenagers, are sitting in a circle on a grey paved surface. They are dressed in casual clothing, including t-shirts, shorts, and jeans. Some are looking at their phones, while others are looking towards the center of the circle. The scene is captured from a high angle, looking down at the group. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

***'I feel that I'm
going the right
way and I will get
there if I carry on'***

Care Leaver in Walsall

Corporate Parenting Strategy

"Walsall working together"





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Forward by Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Chair: Corporate Parenting Group

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Forward

'Walsall Working Together' ***Why Corporate Parenting is important.***

The council takes very seriously our role as Corporate Parents for the children and young people we look after. We recognise that they are amongst the most vulnerable children in society and Walsall Working Together demonstrates our genuine commitment to continue meeting the challenge involved in giving our looked after children the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential and make a good start in adult life.

Our challenge is to ensure they are healthy and safe, have a chance to achieve at school, in training and employment, and that they benefit from leisure, sport and cultural experiences. We want them to be aware of what they can achieve and give them the support they need to help them reach the high expectations we have of them whilst at the same time encouraging them to have high expectations of themselves.

To meet this challenge, all parts of the council and its partners will continue to actively work together to ensure the right opportunities are made available to our looked after children and young people and their carers. Whilst we acknowledge the lead role our Children's Services have to play, we also recognise the important contributions that are being made by leisure services, regeneration and neighbourhoods. It is vital that officers and elected members continue to ensure that the council acts at all times as a good parent would in supporting and promoting opportunities for our children and young people who are looked after.

Elected members will expect to be kept regularly informed of progress, and will take an active part in visiting and speaking with our children and young people and listening to what they say in order to improve our services.

We are committed to making Walsall an excellent authority where learning and achievement are valued and are seen not only as a fundamental basis of a flourishing local economy but also as a route to personal achievement. Walsall's children and young people will be proud and excited about future opportunities. It is therefore vitally important that the children and young people looked after by the council leave our care with a sense of achievement, looking forward to a future where they will be valued citizens who are economically independent and able to contribute positively to the neighbourhoods and communities in which they live.

This updated strategy sets out the objectives and key actions under the Every Child Matters framework for 2007/08 and builds upon the Corporate Parenting strategy commenced by the council in 2004.

Progress will be monitored by the corporate parenting strategy group, the children and young people's performance and scrutiny panel, and through regular reporting of key indicators to Cabinet.



Councillor Zahid Ali
Cabinet Member for Children's Services



Councillor Eddie Hughes
Chair: Corporate Parenting Group

Chapter 1

Who are our looked after children?

The term 'Looked after' is applied to a child for whom the Authority is providing accommodation, either by a Court Order or in agreement with the child's parent or guardian. Children with disabilities who receive a regular series of short breaks are also classed as Looked After.

A child may become Looked After as a result of temporary or permanent problems facing their parents, as a result of abuse or neglect of the child or because of the child's problematic behaviour. Families and communities facing poverty and social breakdown are more likely to need children to be Looked After by the Authority.

Looked after children and young people are individuals and they come from all walks of life and have different aspirations, ambitions and identities. Many looked after children are at greater risk of social exclusion than other children of similar age. Going to live away from home is not easy for any of us especially when you have not done so before. Many adults would probably struggle to cope with these circumstances and yet often there is stigma associated with being looked after, where children can be seen as troublesome or badly behaved and this can make children feel excluded from normal activities and opportunities.

Consequently, all agencies within a Local Authority have a responsibility and a positive role to play in enriching the lives of children and young people who are looked after by the Authority.

Chapter 2

The role of Corporate Parents

As Corporate Parents we want to help the children of Walsall who are currently looked after to thrive and reach their full potential.

'Walsall Working Together' is the second stage of the Council's Corporate Parent Strategy designed to continue the creative use of resources to encourage social inclusion by ensuring that everyone plays a key role in supporting each looked after child.

Once a child is placed in our care, the duty of all Members and Officers of the Council, acting in our individual roles as corporate parents, is to seek for our Looked After children exactly the same positive outcomes that every good parent would want for their own children. This duty encompasses their education, their health and welfare, what they do in their leisure time and holidays, how they celebrate their culture and how they receive praise and encouragement for their achievements. This duty also extends to providing appropriate support once young people have left care in order to enable them to achieve independence in the community. This continued support should include looked after children's educational support post 16 years old.

Corporate parenting is a whole authority enterprise. It is not directed purely at those services targeted at children, but requires services across the Council, including housing, regeneration and leisure, to work together corporately and with partner agencies to achieve the best outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

In pursuance of this the Council has identified Corporate Parent Champions whose role is to ensure that their respective service plans reflect their specific actions to promote corporate parenting.

Directorate	Champion
Corporate services	Lois Stewart
Social Care and Supported Housing	Sue Byard
Regeneration	Tim Johnson
Neighbourhood Services	Tim Challans
Children and Young People	Pauline Pilkington

The principle of corporate parenting was first encapsulated in the "Quality Protects" programme. The Quality Protects Programme was about improving the well-being and life chances of those children who were looked after by local authorities.

As part of that programme, the Secretary of State for Health announced that:

"One of the aims of the Quality Protects programme is to assist councils to adopt a truly corporate outcome-orientated approach to parenting children who are looked after by them and supporting the parenting of other children in need."

The roles of Council's Executive and Scrutiny functions were stipulated in the Department for Education and Skills publication, "If this were my Child" in October 2003. (A Councillor's Guide to Being a Good Corporate Parent). Following this, in 2004, Walsall produced its first Corporate Parenting Strategy, which was completed in 2006.

The Children Act (2004) sets out the direction for a major programme of change, which is focussed on the 'Every Child Matters' agenda, and has heralded a change in the way Children's Services are delivered away from intervention towards prevention and services working together.

'Walsall Working Together' is based on the five outcomes under 'Every Child Matters'.

Chapter 3

Expectations of the Local Authority as a Corporate Parent

The Strategy seeks to:

- Provide care in homely settings and access to Education, Leisure activities, accommodation and other public services to which all children are entitled according to their needs.
- Provide appropriate care, structure and guidance to support the child's development and be a tolerant, dependable and supportive partner in the adult/child relationship.
- Encourage constructive and appropriate friendships.
- Celebrate and share our children's achievements.
- Recognise and respect their growth to independence by being tolerant and supportive.
- Provide consistent support and be available to provide advice and practical help when needed.
- Advocate and trouble-shoot on their behalf.
- Be ambitious for them and encourage and support their efforts to reach their potential, through education, training or employment.
- Celebrate birthdays and festivals within the individual child's religion and culture.
- Encourage and enable appropriate contact with family members where it is in the child's best interests to do so.
- Encourage them to feel part of the local Community through contact with local organisations
- Ensure access to appropriate health services

Chapter 4

Principles

Every Looked After child and young person has the right to:

- High quality placements
- A choice of placement to meet their needs
- Well trained and skilled staff and carers
- Timely decisions, robust plans and regular reviews
- Not to be treated differently because they are Looked After
- Access to good quality education
- Access to employment opportunities
- Access to good quality accommodation when they leave care
- High quality support after they leave care for as long as they need
- Access to sport, leisure and cultural activities
- Access to good quality health care which is flexible
- For their corporate parent to have ambitions for them
- To have their achievements recognised and rewarded
- To be safe
- To be respected

Chapter 5

Key legislation

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the overarching framework by providing the right of the child to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting him or her. (Article 12).

The Children Act 1989 sets out the main legislative framework delegating to the Local authority the task of parenting when a child is looked after away from his or her own family.

The Local authority must -

- Accept responsibility for the children in the Council's care
- Make their needs a priority
- Seek for them the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own children

In order to do this, all Council services and key partners must work effectively to protect, encourage and support children.

The Children Act also requires local authorities to seek the views of children and young people and take their wishes and feelings into account in any plans it has for them. It sets out minimum requirements for formal reviews of their placements. The child should be encouraged to actively participate and express a view. Additionally the authority should ensure that children are visited, and that a clear complaints procedure is in place. It also requires other key agencies such as housing and health to assist Children's Services in the parenting role.

The Children Act 2004

The Children Act conferred a new duty to cooperate on key partners. These are the statutory partners who are required to work alongside the local authority and include NHS, Police, Schools, District Councils, Youth Offending Teams and Voluntary Sectors, to ensure the 5 outcomes of the Children Act are met. There are also other partners who do not have a statutory duty to co-operate with us but we will need to engage and encourage them to work with us to deliver the Children Act. These include schools and GP's.

The Act also gave the newly created Director of Children's Services a responsibility to promote the educational attainment of looked after children. It also required local authorities to identify a lead elected member for children and young people's services.

Guidance on the Health of Looked After Children places a duty on local authorities and Primary Care Trusts to ensure every child has a health plan that is regularly reviewed.

Similarly, Guidance on the Education of Children in Public Care requires social workers and designated teachers work together to ensure each looked after child has a personal education plan.

Chapter 6

Legal and Policy Framework

Walsall agencies, through the Children & Young Peoples Strategic Partnership, are committed to working together to promote and enhance the life chances of children who are looked after by the local authority. We believe effective 'corporate parenting' is an important element in promoting social inclusion and building the capacity of individuals, families and communities. This strategy supports the 5 key outcomes of 'Every Child Matters', ensuring children and young people are healthy, stay safe, enjoy life and achieve their potential

The 5 outcomes are

- **Being healthy**
- **Staying safe**
- **Enjoying and achieving;**
- **Making a positive contribution**
- **Achieving economic wellbeing**

It also supports Walsall's vision, particularly the following priorities -

Ensure all people are safe and secure

Make our schools great:

Make Walsall a healthy and caring place

Encourage everyone to feel proud of Walsall

Make it easier to access local services

Strengthen the local economy

Listen to what children and young people want

Transform Walsall into an excellent authority

In order to achieve these priorities we will have the same hopes and high expectations that any parent would have for a child and we will take every opportunity to support children and young people in achieving high standards of educational attainment, promote healthy lifestyles and ensure access to high quality cultural experiences.

This documents sets out the key strategic objectives we have set in relation to this commitment; how they will be realised through operational processes and how we will monitor our success.

This strategy is linked to key multi agency plans particularly the Walsall Children and Young People's Plan.

Chapter 7

Local drivers

In addition to and in support of the Council vision, Walsall's Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership agreed priorities within the children and young peoples plan and the local area agreement (LAA) including –

Being healthy

To improve access to health services and assessments for LAC, ensuring 90% have up to date assessments by 2007/08

Staying safe

To reduce the number of looked after children to 420 by March 2008;

To increase the percentage of under 16's looked after for more than 2½ years living in the same placement for at least 2 years or placed for adoption to 68% by 2007/08

Enjoying and achieving

To reduce the percentage of Looked after children who missed a total of at least 25 days schooling to 7.5% (PAF C24)

Making a positive contribution

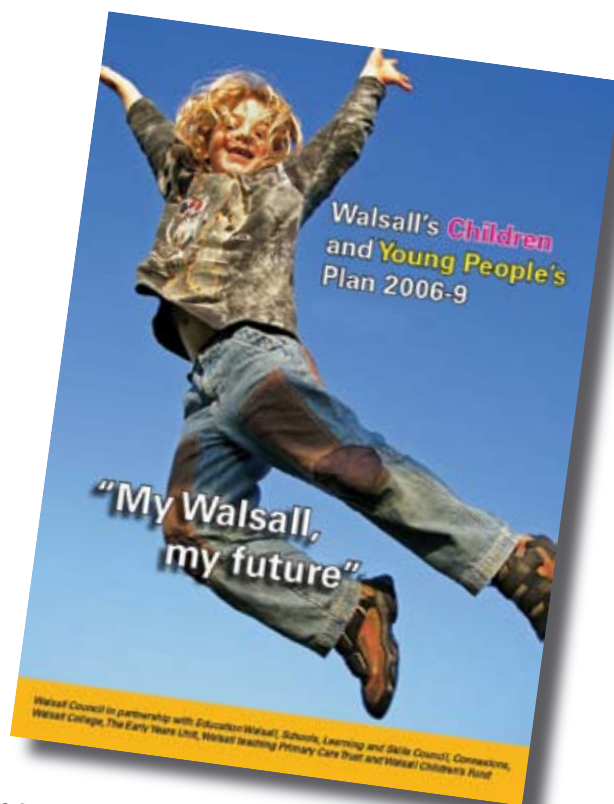
To reduce the number of young people placed away from Walsall in independent residential care to 22 by 2007/08 and in agency foster care to 75 by 2007/08;

To reduce the proportion of children newly looked after placed more than 20 miles from their home to 4% by 2007/08

The children's executive group will review progress against these objectives and update them for 2007/08.

Services to children will be determined according to a needs assessment and will be commissioned jointly where this is in the child's interest. Walsall Children's Services, Walsall tPCT and Education Walsall have agreed funding to establish a joint commissioning post to support the work of the Strategic Partnership.

Walsall's LAC are a priority for service in the jointly agreed CAMHS strategy with a focus on integrating services, expanding tier one and two services and reducing out of borough placements.



Chapter 8

Objectives

'I feel that I'm going the right way and I will get there if I carry on'
Care Leaver in Walsall (Consultation project, Education Support Team, 2005)

The overriding objective of corporate parenting is to ensure that the Local Authority and its partners act together as a 'good parent'. A 'good parent' is one who puts their child first, keeps them safe, listens to them, meets their physical, social, cultural, psychological, health, educational and emotional needs; fights on their behalf; develops their full potential and supports them through to independence

'Every Child Matters, Change for Children' (C4C) is a national programme of integration and service remodelling which puts children at the centre of service design and delivery. In order to better meet outcomes for children Walsall has established its own C4C programme which seeks to

- Integrate universal and targeted services at the front line where appropriate
- Integrate planning and processes
- Integrate governance arrangements through the Walsall children's Trust

Elected members have a key role to play in ensuring the local authority meets its objectives. This will be achieved through the scrutiny and executive arrangements, which includes quarterly reporting of key indicators (the balanced scorecard for children's services). Designated members also regularly visit children's residential units.

In addition to the elected members, senior managers from Children's Services which includes Education, Health and Social Care, liaise regularly to monitor the effectiveness of their provision to LAC.

Chapter 9

Achievements of the Corporate Parent Strategy 2004/06

- All looked after children have a Personal Education Plan
- 75% PEPs reviewed in the last 6 months
- Health Advisor for Care Leavers appointed
- All Walsall schools have a Designated Teacher
- Agreement reached between Steps to work and the Transition and Leaving Care team
- Connexions Personal Advisor for looked after children appointed
- Work Experience opportunities provided by the Council
- Employment co-ordinator appointed
- Further in depth consultation with 105 looked after children completed
- 650 looked after children, parents, carers and corporate partners attended three annual achievement awards events specifically for looked after children in 2006
- First equal in the country in the number of care leavers engaged in education, training or employment at age 19.
- Reduction in the number of children in out of borough residential placements from 45 in December 2003 to 24 in December 2006
- Looked after children and young people participated in a series of drama and arts projects within their local community.
- Provision agreed for looked after children to be entitled free access to the boroughs sports and leisure centres.
- Personal Health Fax for looked after children implemented



Chapter 10

Performance Indicators

The local authority and its partners must meet certain requirements in order to fulfil the expectation of the Government in improving outcomes for looked after children. Information is gathered in relation to a range of performance indicators which are designed to indicate whether services provided to children have achieved positive and enhanced outcomes for children.

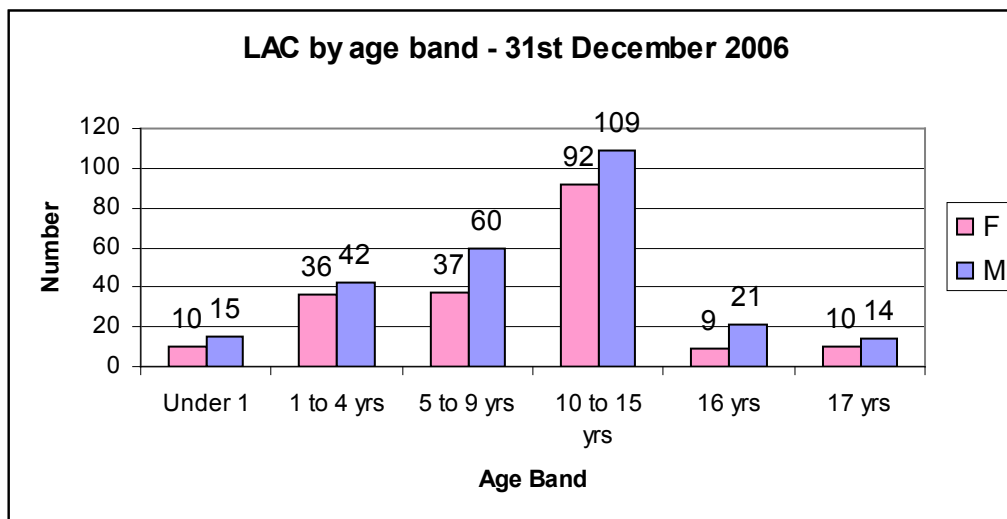
The information below provides a 'snapshot' of the numbers and characteristics of children looked after as at 31st December 2006.

At this date Walsall Council was corporate parent to 455 children and young people. Table 1 shows the age and gender of these children.

The majority of our Looked After Children were in family situations (foster placements - 316), but a significant proportion are placed outside the borough (OOB), in some cases as far away as Cornwall. There are also 24 in OOB residential placements, either residential schools or children's homes.

As at 31st December 2006 57% (261) were boys and 43% (194) were girls and 65% (298) were aged 5 to 15 years.

Table 1

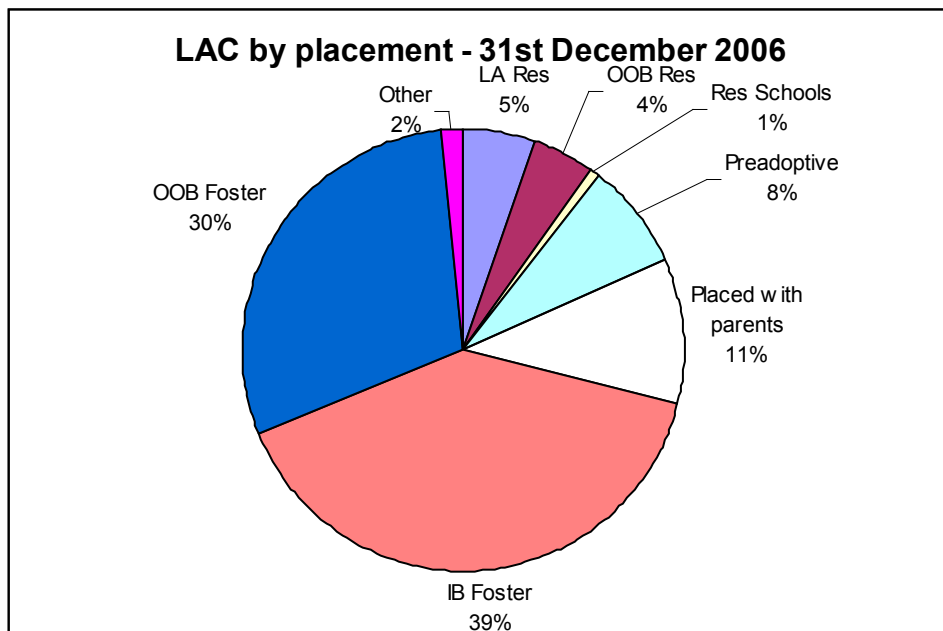


In Walsall we are seeing a significant rise in the number of babies less than one year coming into care. Interrogating the information has enabled us to distinguish these trends and develop strategies to target preventive services to teenagers and their families and to young families with younger children.

The majority of children are placed in foster care. A high proportion of children in care are placed with parents and we have been successful in revoking many orders over the last three years.

Table 2 shows the placement type as at 31 December 2006. Our strategy is to increase the number of Walsall carers thereby reducing the numbers of children placed in foster care outside of Walsall.

Table 2



The children were from the following ethnic groups

Ethnicity	Number	%
White (A1-A3)	346	76.0
Mixed (B1 to B4)	68	14.9
Asian (C1 to C4)	30	6.6
Black (D1 to D3)	5	1.1
Other (E1 to E2)	6	1.3
Total	455	99.9

Information on educational outcomes for Looked After Children are collected and submitted on an OC2 Return each year, in relation to children looked after for at least a year on 30th September. The first time this was collected was on 30th September 2000.

NB Comparative figures are not yet available for 2006; so comparative data from 2005 has been used.

Table 3 outlines the number of children, who have a statement of special educational need, and those who have missed 25 days or more for any reason. The table shows that the number of children who have a statement of Special Educational Need, and who miss 25 days schooling has stabilised.

Table3

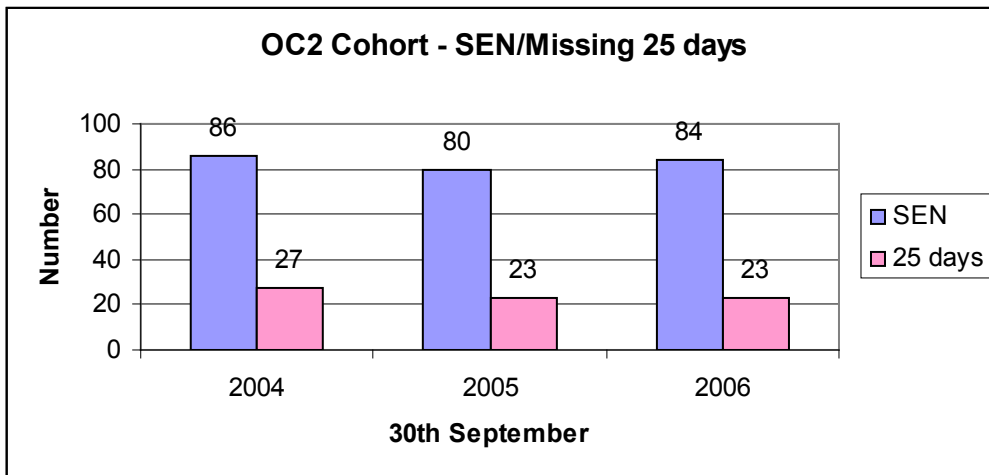


Table 4 shows that although more children sat the test the proportion of children who achieved level 2 did not increase.

Table 4 Key stage 1

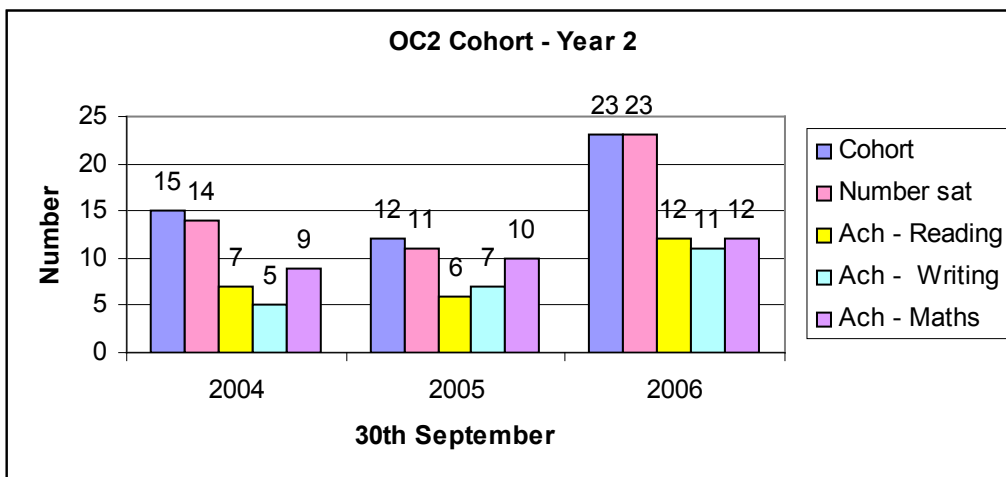
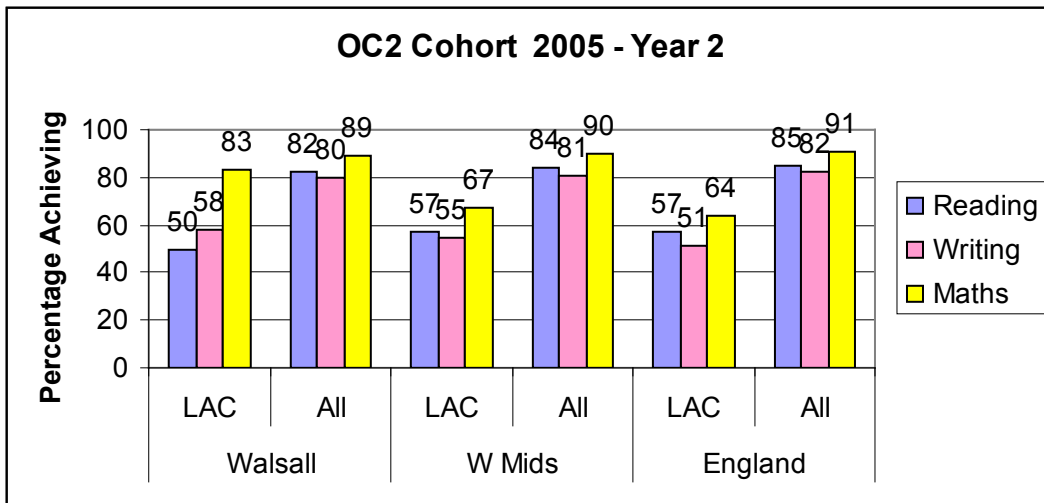


Table 5 shows comparative data in relation not only to the England and West Midlands average, but also the total numbers of children in Walsall. It can be seen that at this stage, the attainment of Walsall children who are looked after compares reasonably well with the averages for Looked After Children in West Midlands and England. However, the attainment of Looked After Children generally is poor compared to that of all children sitting the tests at this stage.

Table 5 - Key stage 1



Tables 6 & 7 sets out the attainment levels at key stage 2 and the comparators in relation to all children and England and West Midlands averages. Walsall's performance for Key stage 2 is below average when compared to the West Midlands and England averages across the subjects. However the numbers within this cohort are small and percentage differences can appear over-exaggerated.

Table 6 - Key stage 2

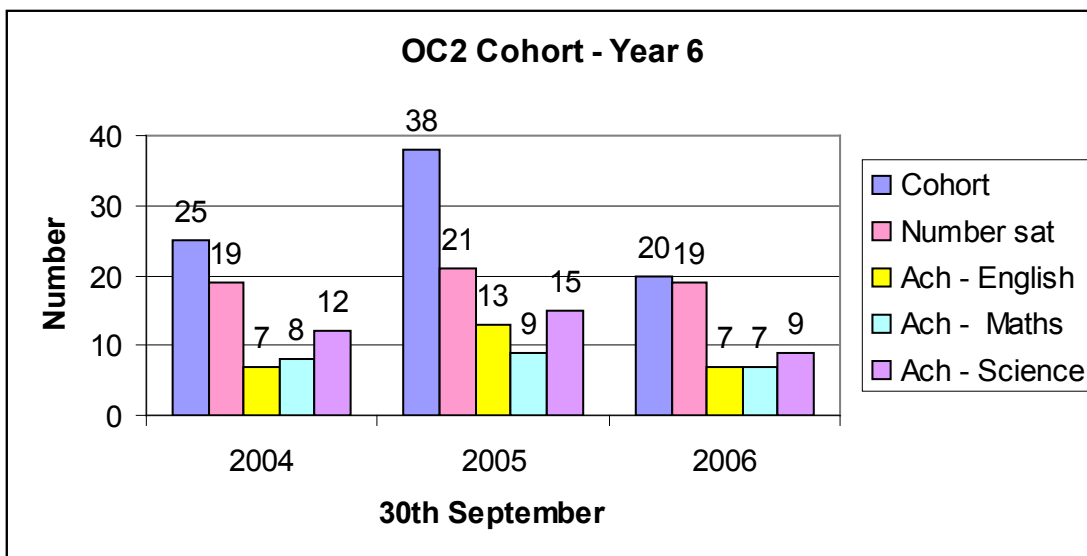
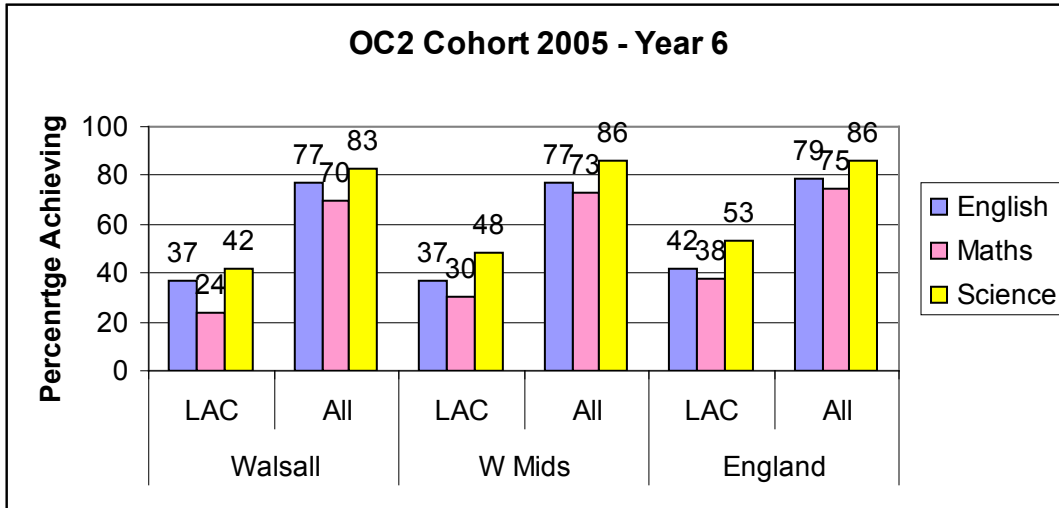


Table 7 - Key stage 2



Tables 8 & 9 set out the position at Key stage 3 within the same framework as the previous tables.

Walsall's performance at Key stage 3 is below the England average but competitive with that of the West Midlands

Table 8 - Key stage 3

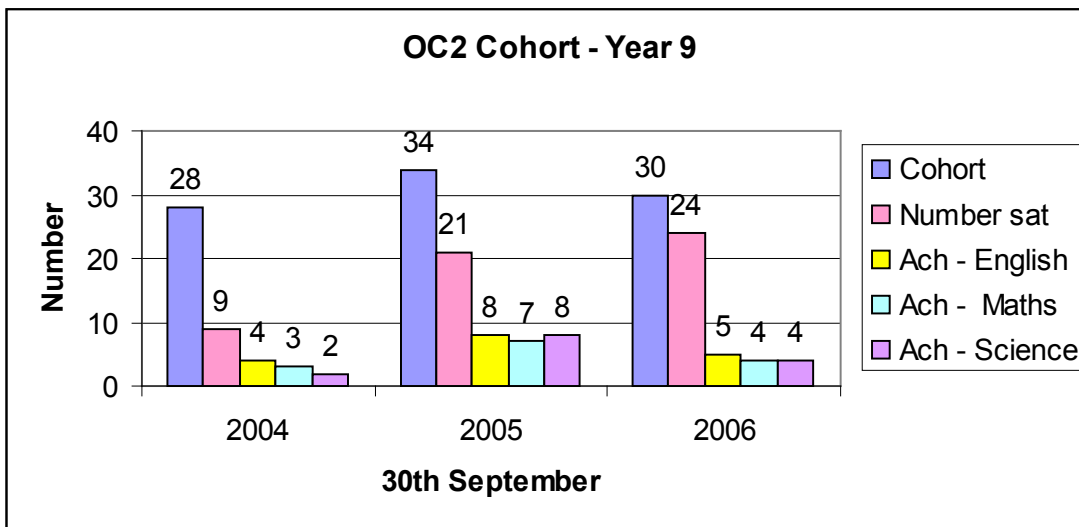


Table 9 - Key stage 3

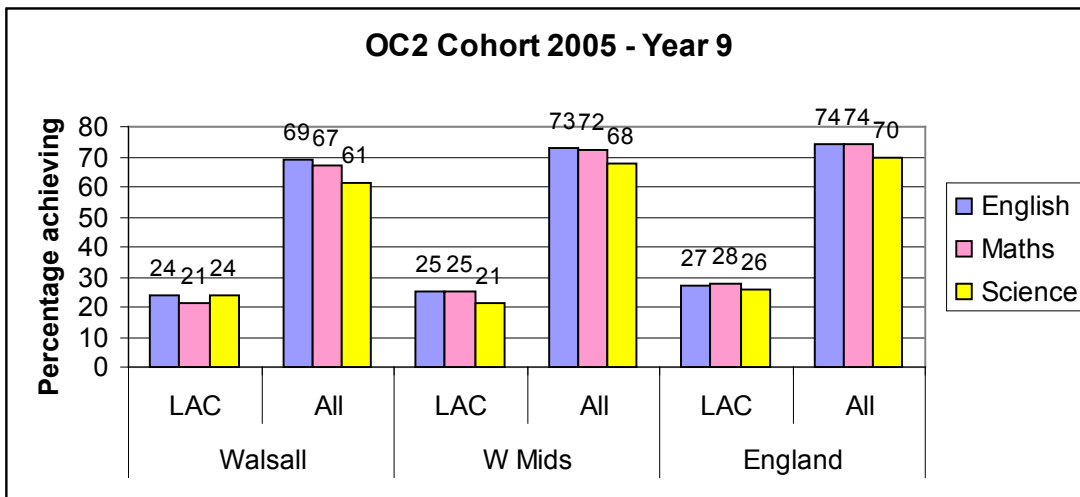


Table 10 sets out the attainment at GCSE/GNVO level (Year 11 children). It can be seen that where children actually sit the exams they are likely to obtain at least 5 GCSE's A-G. However, because of their poor levels of attainment at previous Key stages few children are able to obtain 5 passes at grade A* - C

Table 10

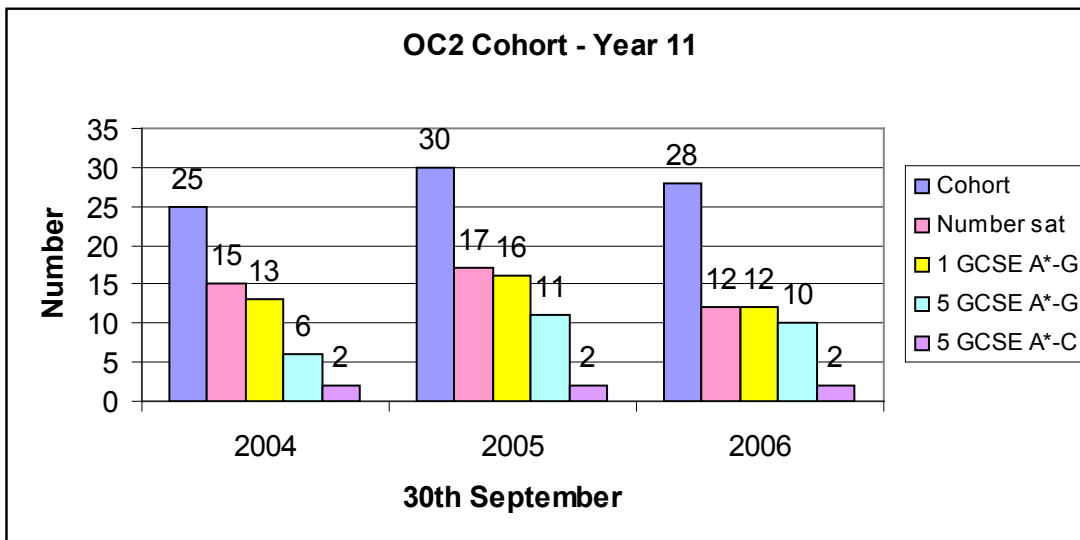


Table 11 demonstrates that Walsall's performance is below that of the West Midlands and England averages in Year 11

Table 11

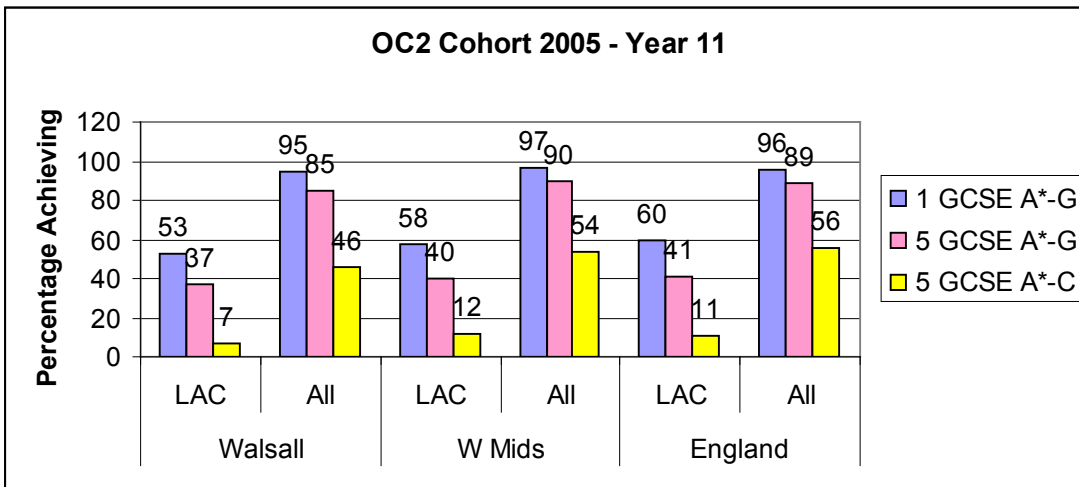


Table 12 shows the destinations of Care Leavers. It can be seen that there has been a decrease in the number of unemployed.

Table 12

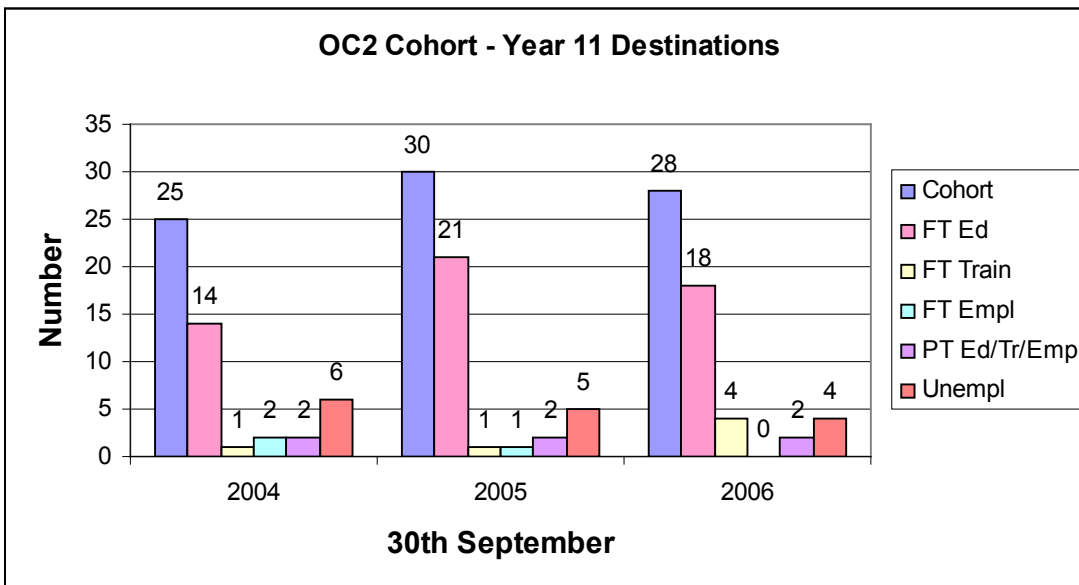
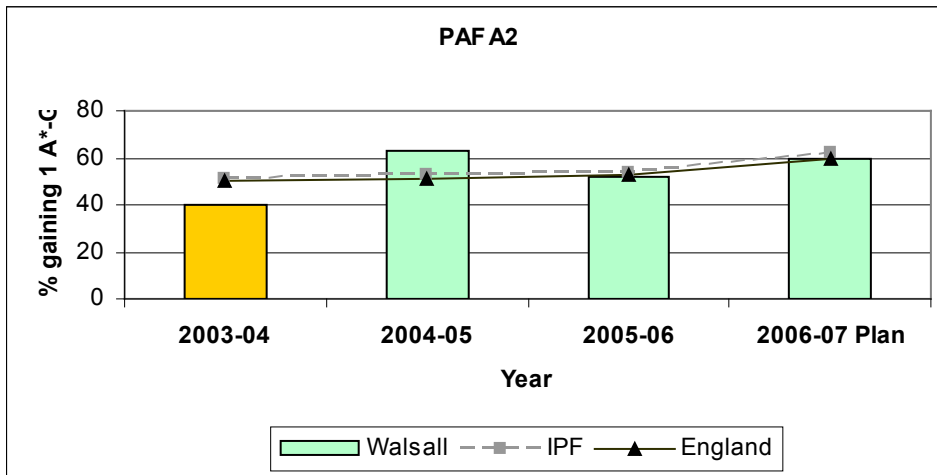


Table 13 demonstrates the number of children who leave care post 16 years who have obtained 1 A*-G at GCSE or equivalent.

Whilst our performance in 2006 was competitive to our comparator authorities we intend to make further improvements to our level of performance. However this indicator is dependent on the composition of the cohort, particularly the number of children with severe learning disability and those remanded to the care of the local authority. The IPF line denotes Walsall comparator authorities.

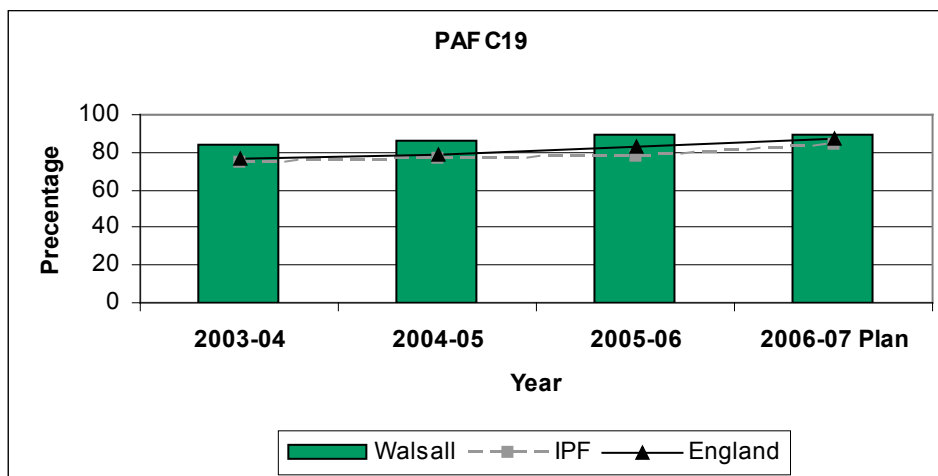
Table 13



PAF C19 – Health of Looked after children

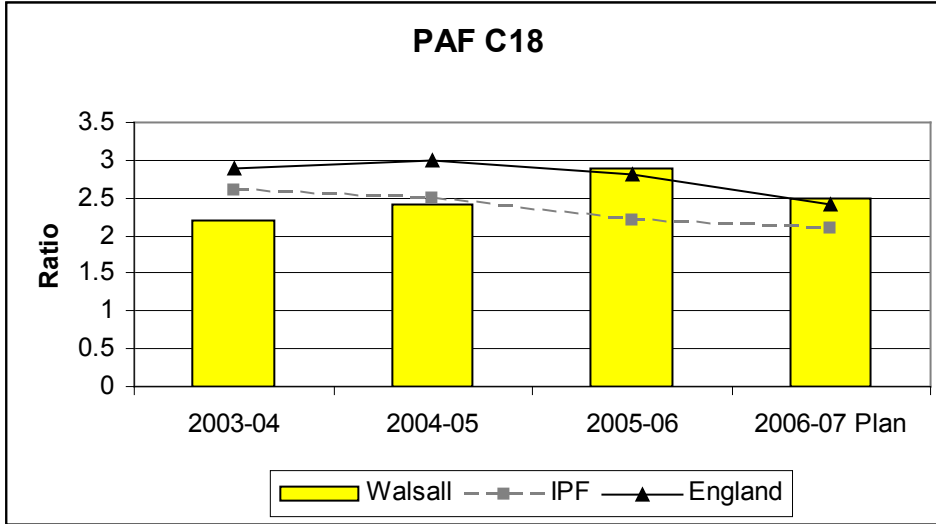
This table demonstrates that there has been consistently good performance in the number of looked after children receiving health assessments over the last three years. The IPF line denotes Walsall comparator authorities.

Table 14



PAF C18- Table 15 denotes final warnings/ reprimands and convictions for looked after children. It can be seen that Walsall underperformed this year when compared to the success of the previous year.

Table 15



Chapter 11

Action Plan

	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
Being Healthy	Physically healthy	To improve access to health services and assessments for looked after children, ensuring 90% have up-to-date health assessments (LAA local)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain specialist resources. Social Care staff to inform Health Service of placement details within 5 working days of admission Ensure eligible children have their initial health assessment within 4 weeks of admission to the looked after system Improve provision of needs led training programmes for carers, health and social care personnel (NSF 1) Develop initiatives to support looked after young people in taking responsibility for their own health and lifestyle by rolling out Personal Health Fax for all Looked After Children in cohort, including those placed out of borough. 	Walsall Health Care Strategy Children & Young People's Plan	M. Griffiths	Written strategy developed between Health & Children's Services
		Reduction in numbers of care leavers becoming pregnant before 19 th birthday. Target 6 in 2007/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue sexual health awareness programmes with care leavers to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies 	Walsall Healthy Care strategy	Health Adviser for care leavers	8 in last 12 months

Being Healthy		Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
	Physically healthy	Increased awareness of the effects of substance misuse by care leavers. Target to reduce to 7 and 3 respectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue awareness programme with care leavers to reduce the rate of substance misuse 	National Service Framework for children	D. Silvester M. Griffiths	10 LAC used substances in last 12 months 6 offered intervention but refused	
	Promote Mental Health needs of looked after children	To meet mental health needs of looked after children, by reducing waiting times to eight weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide accessible assessment treatment and therapeutic intervention to Looked after Children who have moderate to severe mental health needs and emotional/behavioural difficulties. To provide advice and support to school health advisers who are working with children with mental health needs via our PCMHT Training for foster carers on mental health, self harm and communicating with LAC 	MBC CAMHS Service Plan 2006-09 Walsall CAMHS Strategy 2006 LAC Action Plan	K. Williams F. Burgess D. Bovell	Substantial lottery bid via tPCT underway to provide additional resources to PCMHT. Increased capacity within Carmen (LAC) via CAMHS grant Over 60 carers involved in training	

	Being Healthy	Physically healthy
Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions
	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions
	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions
	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions
	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions
Progress To date	Lead Officer	Plans ref
Written strategy developed between Health & Children's Services	M. Griffiths	Walsall Health Care Strategy
8 in last 12 months	Health Adviser for care leavers	Children & Young People's Plan
10 LAC used substances in last 12 months 6 offered intervention but refused	D. Silvester M. Griffiths	National Service Framework for children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain specialist resources. Social Care staff to inform Health Service of placement details within 5 working days of admission Ensure eligible children have their initial health assessment within 4 weeks of admission to the looked after system Improve provision of needs led training programmes for carers, health and social care personnel (NSF 1) Develop initiatives to support looked after young people in taking responsibility for their own health and lifestyle by rolling out Personal Health Fax for all Looked After Children in cohort, including those placed out of borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve access to health services and assessments for looked after children, ensuring 90% have up- to-date health assessments (LAA local) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue sexual health awareness programmes with care leavers to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies Continue awareness programme with care leavers to reduce the rate of substance misuse
Reduction in numbers of care leavers becoming pregnant before 19 th birthday. Target 6 in 2007/08	Increased awareness of the effects of substance misuse by care leavers. Target to reduce to 7 and 3 respectively	

	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
Staying Safe	Have Security. Stability and are cared for	To reduce the number of looked after children to 420	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide good family support alternatives to becoming looked after. Pursue adoption for children who cannot return home, building on current good performance Increase support for permanency orders with relatives, friends and permanent foster carers, including residence, special guardianship and adoption orders. Continue to pursue revocations of care orders for children placed with parents, where they are no longer needed to safeguard the child's welfare. 	LAC Action Plan	R. Heighway	Currently adrift of target.
				Children's Service Plan	D. Bovell	Permanency strategy to be launched.

	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
<p>Staying Safe</p>	<p>Have Security. Stability and are cared for</p>	<p>Most care cases to be completed in the court within 40 weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of consultation between social work staff, legal representatives, CAF/CASS and the courts 		<p>C. Boughton R. Heighway D. Bovell M. Winter</p>	<p>Currently at 60%. Difficult to influence most delays are court based</p>
		<p>Percentage looked after 2½ years or more, who have been in the same placement for 2 years or more, or are placed for adoption. Target 68%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure good quality multi-agency support to foster carers. Develop a joint understanding of permanency and improve education support initiatives. Improve CAMHS input and practical support to carers 		<p>D. Bovell R. Heighway</p>	<p>Some corrective action required</p>
		<p>Incidence of abuse and neglect is minimised. Nine complaints against foster carers between 1.1.06 and 31.12.06. None recorded against staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints against staff and foster carers are investigated in accordance with Walsall local safeguarding board procedures Implementation of audit tool to monitor quality of out-of-borough placements 	<p>Safeguarding Plan</p>	<p>K. Child D. Bovell</p>	<p>Ongoing Survey currently being planned</p>

	Staying Safe	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
	Have Security. Stability and are cared for	Ensure LAC are able to communicate in confidence by a variety of means. Percentage of children, including those with disabilities, who communicated their views to a statutory review to be 100% in 2007/08 Every Child Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of advocacy and independent visitor schemes. Use of Viewpoint and consultation documents during the review process LAC meet together (Respect group) and are encouraged to discuss common concerns 	LAC Action Plan	R. Heighway	Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services interviewed for Respect magazine about support for Looked After Children On target for 95% in 2006/07	Ongoing. Initial consultation undertaken with the 'outreach' team to identify specific young people
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop sexual health and relations programme for looked after young people 	Walsall Youth Service Action Plan	D. Neale		

Enjoying and Achieving	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
Achieve Stretching National Educational Standards	Reduce the amount of our LAC who miss 25+ days education. PAF C24 LAA Reward element Target 7.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all of our looked after children are receiving full time education Establish system for looked after children to access places at Prus and LSUs. ASW to be appointed to track/ monitor attendance of OOB looked after children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the possibility of running after school clubs at the Shepwell Centre Complete a trawl on the number of children attending extra curricular school activities Ensure that personal education plan records whether LAC attends after school clubs. Highlight after-school activities on all designated teacher and foster carer training sessions 	Education Action Plan LAC E/W NG5	K. Dainty R. Heighway C. Knowles	Corrective action required
	Ensure that all of our looked after children are provided with the opportunity to attend after school activities/ clubs	Education Action Plan	K. Dainty R. Heighway D. Bovell			

	Enjoying and Achieving	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
Achieve Stretching National Educational Standards		Provide training, advice and guidance to education and care providers to enable them to appropriately support the education of our looked after children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly training sessions provided for all designated teachers • Termly visits made to all schools to discuss LAC Governor training planned for spring term to raise the awareness of LAC and the School Governor's role • Meeting to be set up between FPS, EST and CISS to discuss the piloting of Paired Reading Scheme • Pilot of Paired Reading Scheme to take place with foster carers/ residential staff 	Education Action Plan	K. Dainty S. Murray	Specific and multi-agency training events to be finalised	
	Every Child Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Looked After Young people have information to enable them to access positive social education activities provided by Walsall Youth Service 	Walsall Youth Service Plan	D. Neale	Ongoing		
	Every Child Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of accredited social education programmes for looked after young people in local authority homes, e.g. Spindle Tree Rise 	Walsall Youth Service Action Plan	D. Neale	Ongoing		

Enjoying and Achieving	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
Achieve Stretching National Educational Standards	CF/A2 Educational qualifications of children looked after (BVP1 50 – key threshold) Target 60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that schools and alternative education provides in and out of the borough are working effectively to increase the level of attainment of our looked after children Appointment of project worker to work with looked after children placed OOB or at risk of being placed OOB Establish distance learning programmes, and GCSE Maths and English on VLE Re-launch Walsall's benchmarking document – effective practice to raise the attainment of looked after children 	Education Action Plan LAC	K. Dainty	Level of attainment is below required level. Subject of corrective action included in Education Action Plan for LAC	
	CF/A2 Educational qualifications of children looked after (BVP1 50) (Key threshold) Target 60%	Develop a 'virtual school' for our looked after children	EW NG5	K. Dainty	On target	
			EW NG 5	D. Taylor K. Dainty	On target	
			Education Action Plan	K. Dainty C. Davies	Under construction	

Enjoying and Achieving	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
Achieve Stretching National Educational Standards	CFA2 Educational qualifications of children looked after (BVP1 50) (key threshold) Target 60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued use of the 'Excellent initiatives' to reward our looked after children's personal academic achievements and good attendance 	Education Action Plan	S. Murray	Sustained high attendance of LAC and carers at 3 annual awards events. Increase take-up rate of Excellent file	
	Guidance on the education of looked after children Target 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all of our looked after children have a Personal Education Plan 	Education Action Plan	B. Heighway	On target	
	To highlight LAC returning to Walsall to ensure that education provision is available on their return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective planning via multi-agency complex needs operational group 	Education Action Plan	K. Dainty B. Heighway C. Mergen	On target	

	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
Enjoying and Achieving Achieve Personal & Social Development & Enjoy Recreation	Take up of sporting opportunities by 5 -16 year olds		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children and young people can access a range of recreational activities, including play and voluntary learning provision For example through: Sports Development, Sneyd Watersports Centre, Aldridge Airport "High Ropes" etc	Sport & Leisure Development	B. Percival	Opens April/May 2007
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All looked after children are provided with free swimming at the Leisure Centres. 	Sport & Leisure Management	P. Jeffery	Current provision.	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atlantis swimming lessons provided F.O.C. from 1st January 2007 	Sport & Leisure Management	P. Jeffery		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fitzone Kidz gyms – inductions provided F.O.C. Session use at £1.00 per session thereafter - immediate effect 	Sport & Leisure Management	P. Jeffery		

	Enjoying and Achieving	Aims	Achieve Personal & Social Development & Enjoy Recreation	Indicators & Targets		Strategic Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of three annual passes to Fitzone or Mint Condition as prizes for "Excellent Night Out" awards event. Healthy Eating reward scheme via a credit card featuring new Catering Logo 'Alfie' the Apple. 10 stamps + a free swim or free entry to kids gyms in WMBC sites. Possibility of extending the scheme so that stamps can be earned by walking to school etc being explored. 	Plans ref	Sport & Leisure Management Catering Services	Lead Officer	P. Jeffery K. Waite	Progress to date	Further work required between Catering and Sport & Leisure Management

	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
Making a Positive Contribution	Engage in Decision Making	Involve LAC in consultation and decision making processes LAC are supported in developing socially and emotionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve LAC in review and planning of services Involve LAC in appointment of staff Care leavers employed as peer mentors to support LAC about to leave care. Participate through team A (steering group of LAC) to plan and participate in arts projects which enable them to communicate and express their wants, needs and views 	LAC action plan	R. Heighway	LAC involved in review and planning of Health & Education services. LAC involved in selection of staff.
	Action taken to prevent offending and to reduce re-offending	Final warnings/reprimands and convictions of LAC Target 2.1 for 2007/08	A practitioner has been appointed to work with young people, carers and professionals to reduce numbers of LAC becoming involved in the criminal justice system	LAC action plan	P. Jennings R.Heighway	Predicted outturn for 2006/07 2.5%

Making a Positive Contribution	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress To date
	Develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges	To reduce the number of young people placed away from Walsall, in independent, residential care, and agency foster care to 22 and 75 respectively by 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a multi-agency review process to agree all future placements on an individual basis • Develop the "out-of-borough" initiative where children who are likely to return to the borough at any given time are tracked and monitored efficiently and effectively • Develop a range of linked school and community sport opportunity programmes 	LAC Action Plan	D. Bovell R. Heighway K. Dainty	On target
		Every Child Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that looked after young people are represented on Youth Opportunity/Capital Fund Panel 	Walsall Youth Service Action Plan	J. Nokes D. Neale	Ongoing

	Achieving Economic Well-being	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
		Increase the numbers of Looked After Children and Care Leavers in FFT	10 young people to be offered work experience placements with WMBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Managers to pledge support and commitment from champions to identify placements 	LAC Action Plan	D. Silvester	
			5 paid work experience placements to be offered to looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources to identify corporate funding for allowances (@ £500 – based on numbers at £75 per head) 	Connexions Plan. GW Plan	D. Silvester	
			5 summer work placements to be offered to LAC and care leavers in FE and HE students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources to co-ordinate with contact in LAC. Employment co-ordinator with TLC to liaise with HR 	LAC Action Plan	D. Silvester	
			Develop mentoring programme for 8 looked after children and care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources to identify mentors through champions and in partnership with the Education Business Partner. Training to be provided 	LAC Action Plan	D. Silvester	

	Aims	Indicators & Targets	Strategic Actions	Plans ref	Lead Officer	Progress to date
Achieving Economic Well-being	Increase the numbers of Looked After Children and Care Leavers in EFT	Provide programme of assistance with job search skills (for all looked after children)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources to facilitate - TLC Employment Co-ordinator to liaise with HR. 	LAC Action Plan	D. Silvester	
	Increased capacity to meet the needs of LAC within the borough. Increased ability to keep sibling groups together	Foster carers will be accepted as a Council nomination if their reason for moving increases the number of children they are able to care for over a five year period.	Strategic Housing Action Plan	S. Byard D. Parkes	Ongoing	

