

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
13th July 2006

**CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER
STATISTICAL UPDATE**

JAN BRUNTON - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
PAUL THOMPSON – EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS

**TERRY REDMAYNE - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide the Corporate Parenting Board with statistical information regarding Children Looked After by Middlesbrough Council.

BACKGROUND

2. The provision of services to children looked after is a core statutory function and corporate responsibility. Since the introduction of the Quality Protects initiative, the Government has maintained a clear focus on improving services for this group of young people. This is reflected in the range of local government targets and performance indicators relating to children looked after.
3. Government guidance for elected Members on corporate parenting identifies the need for Members to receive regular statistical updates on the numbers of children being looked after by the authority.

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

4. At 31 March 2005, there were 239 children looked after by Middlesbrough Council. This compares with 240 children looked after at 31 March 2006, representing a 0.4% increase. The following tables identify placements of children at March 2005 and placements at March 2006.

As at March 2005

with foster carers	174 (73%)
placed for adoption	11 (5%)
in Middlesbrough Children's Homes	17 (7%)
placed home on trial, or with extended family members	24(10%)
in specialist residential placements outside of the area	11 (5%)
independent living / lodgings/other	2(1%)

As at March 2006

with foster carers	188(78%)
placed for adoption	10(4%)
in Middlesbrough Children's Homes	10(6%)
placed home on trial, or with extended family members	16(7%)
in specialist residential placements outside of the area	15(6%)
independent living / lodgings/other	1(0.4%)

5. The number of children looked after as a proportion of the population is still above the national average of 61/10,000 0-17 year olds, Middlesbrough is 73/10,000

OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSMENT

6. The prevalence of parental drug misuse, mental health difficulties and domestic violence continues to present a challenge to all services providing services to children and their families. Numbers of children looked after are unlikely to fall significantly in the short term.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no immediate financial or legal implications arising from this report. The report will be of interest to all Members.

RECOMMENDATION

8. The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to advise the Executive:
a). To note the contents of this report.

REASON

9. To ensure that elected Members are aware of current statistical information regarding children looked after by the local authority.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Middlesbrough Council, 2006, *Annual Performance Assessment (APA)*, Middlesbrough Council.

Middlesbrough Council, 2006, *CLA 903 DfES Return*, Middlesbrough Council.

AUTHOR: Gary Watson, ICS/ISA Project Manager

TEL NO: 728704

Address: P O Box 234, Middlesbrough, TS1 2XH

Website: <http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk>