

SESLIP – Lead Members’ Network

Tuesday 17 August 2021

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9.00	9.10	Welcome and Introductions – Cllr Gareth Barnard
9.10	9.15	Outline and purpose of the Workshop - Alison Michalska
9.15	10.15	Presentations: Matt Dunkley, DCS Kent; Cllr Sue Chandler, Kent; Sarah Daly, Acting DCS Portsmouth; Cllr Suzy Horton, Portsmouth; Katie Thrussell, Lead Social Worker, South East Strategic Partnership for Migration.
10.15	10.25	Break
10.25	10.55	Q&A
10.55	11.20	Action Planning and next steps

Workshop Aims

1.	to understand more about who UASC's are, their needs, and the duties on all councils to care for them
2.	to learn from the experience of Kent, Portsmouth and the Strategic Migration Partnership
3.	to understand the finances associated with caring for UASC
4.	to understand the National Transfer Scheme: the theory of how it should work, and the reality
5.	to appreciate why the children caught up in this humanitarian crisis matter more than the politics
6.	to agree next steps in the SE: how can we make this work for UASC and what actions Lead Members may want to take individually/collectively to lobby central government

Presentation to SE Lead Member Workshop: UASC in Kent

Sue Chandler, Lead Member for Integrated
Children's Services

Matt Dunkley CBE, Corporate Director for
Children, Young People & Education

17th August 2021

Definition of 'UASC'

Children who arrive with parents are not UASC and are dealt with through the Adult system.

An unaccompanied asylum seeking child is defined by paragraph 352ZD of the Immigration Rules as one who is:

- *under 18 years of age when the claim is submitted*
- *claiming in their own right*
- *separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who in law or by custom has responsibility to do so*

Being unaccompanied is not necessarily a permanent status and may change, particularly if the child has family members in the UK

Section 20, Children Act 1989

Entry Local Authorities become responsible for caring for UASC under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, not any Immigration Law.

Section 20 was designed to meet the needs of local children not UASC, but at this time there is no other mechanism to care for this vulnerable cohort.

This is in effect a form of mandation on entry/gateway LAs.

The LA's role is to maintain a child care focus and not to have a view about the merits or not of the case for immigration status.

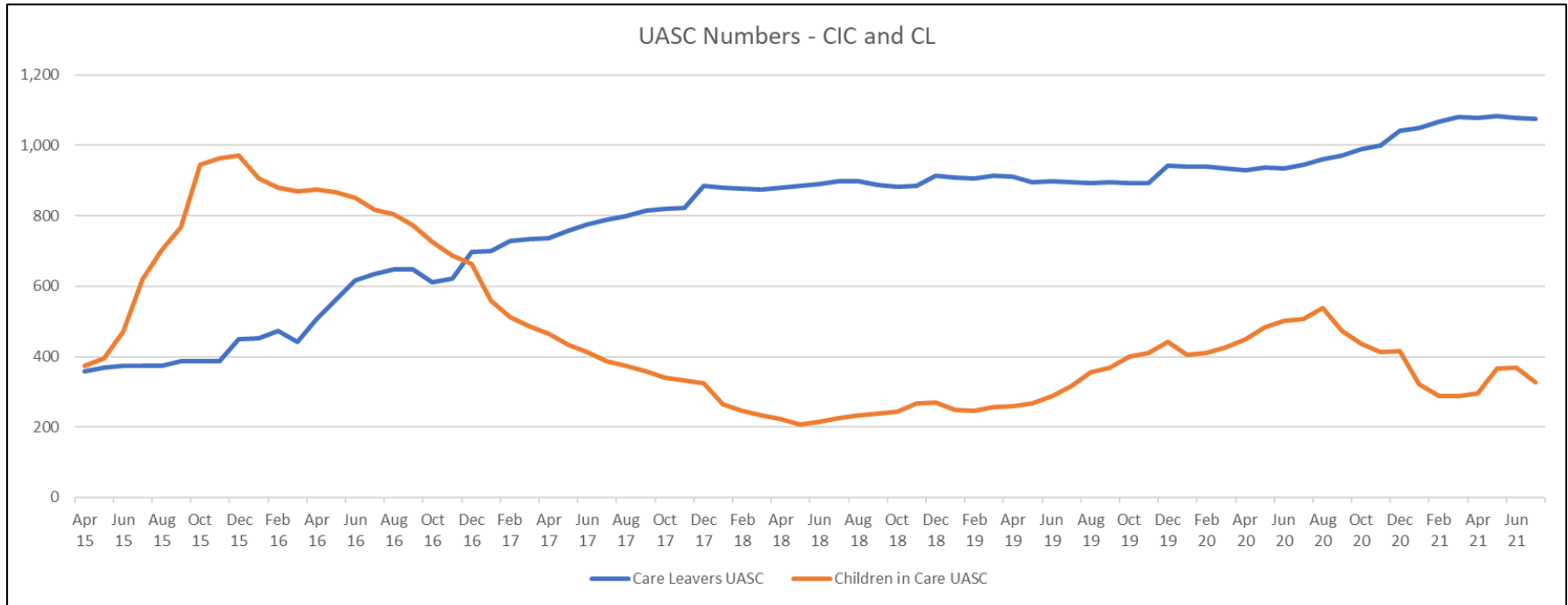
Having a better understanding of this has assisted some previously reluctant LAs to accept UASC into their care via the NTS.

Preventing a crisis through the NTS

The conception of the 2016 NTS was designed to prevent any one entry/gateway local authority from becoming overwhelmed with newly arrived UASC they could not safely or reasonably care for.

For Kent this did not work, resulting in action being taken in August 2020 and June 2021 to shut the doors to new arrivals.

UASC Numbers since 2015



Total Number of UASC in Kent's care from 2015-21	3122
Total Number of UASC Care Leavers in Kent from 2015-21	1967

New Arrivals 2020/2021

2020 – New Arrivals by Month & Total UASC LAC Population

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	1-17 th Aug	Total
New arrivals	13	39	35	38	64	85	68	97	439
Total UASC LAC	395	400	413	450	486	522	507	605	

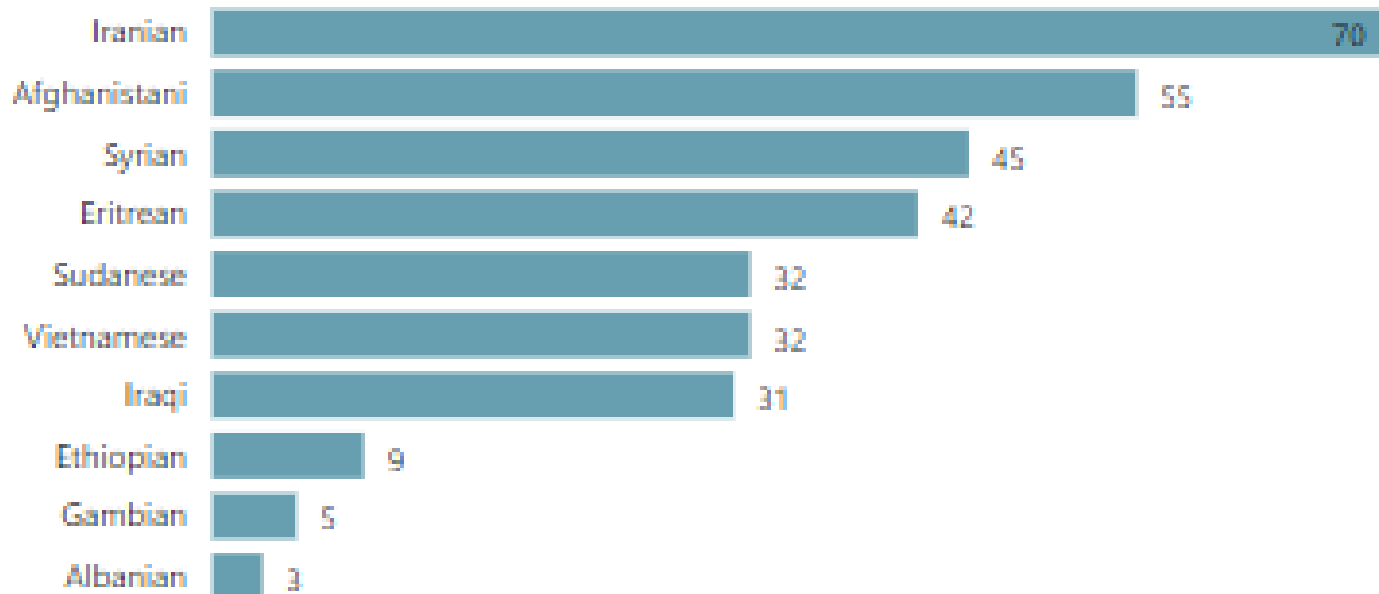
2021 – New Arrivals by Month & Total UASC LAC Population

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	1-14 th June	Total
New arrivals	14	15	58	38	116	62	303
Total UASC LAC	344	286	290	301	341	424	

Kent's Position – August 2021

Total No. of UASC	Male	Female
323 (0.07% = 240)	308	15
Total No. of UASC in Leaving Care Service	Male	Female
1070	1001	69

Referrals by Nationality



Means of Arrival

Until 2020 nearly all new arrivals came to the UK by lorry or train

Increased security around Calais in 2016 made it harder for UASC to access lorries and trains there

Use of small boats by organised criminal gangs to transport migrants including UASC to the UK started in 2019

A noticeable rise in Vietnamese arrivals in 2021 following the lorry deaths in Essex last year and a move from lorries to small boats.

The risk of them being trafficked into modern slavery is much higher with this cohort

UASC Journey within Kent below the 0.07% quota

Kent's NTS 0.07% is 240 UASC at any one time

UASC Service (SUASC), or Out of Hours staff if appropriate, pick up young person from port having been notified of their arrival by UKVI

Young person will stay for 4-6 weeks, either in reception centre or foster care, before transferring to community placements and a long term care team

They have the same rights and the LA has the same responsibilities as with citizen children

Young people thrive and prosper as children in care in Kent and eventually progress to our care leaver service who support them into independent lives

UASC Journey in Kent above the 0.07% quota – the reality

Young people are collected from port and are informed that they will transfer to the care of another LA in due course

Preparation work will take place including urgent needs assessments, and previously age assessments

Information about UASC is shared with the Home Office and a request for transfer made

The sooner YP are transferred, the better they settle in their new LA, and we see a significant reduction in challenging behaviours and poor mental health outcomes

When transfer is significantly delayed the impact on YP and the service is very damaging.

Social work and IRO case loads become unmanageable, YP behaviours and mental health deteriorate

Triple Care Planning for KCC Permanent UASC

Every new arrival is referred to an immigration solicitor to support them in their asylum application

To reflect the importance of asylum claims on a child's care planning, Kent uses Triple Care Planning:

Child achieves Leave to Remain in the UK and stays in the care of the LA until they become adults

A family member in the UK is identified and assessed as suitable to care for the child and they leave the care of the LA

Child's asylum claim is refused by the Home Office and they are returned to the country of origin when they become an adult

Recent Changes in UASC Funding

Changes in funding from 2020-21:

- Under 18 (UASC) rate: rate increased for those supporting higher number of UASC
 - > *less than 0.07% of LA children's population £798 per wk (£114 ppn)*
 - < *more than 0.07% of LA children's population £1,001 per wk (£143 ppn)*
- However, any UASC accepted through the NTS attracts the higher rate
- Over 18 (Care Leaver) rate: increased from £150/£200 to £240 per eligible young person per wk. Covers up to 21 and those in education up to 25.
- All LAs now receive funding for first 25 care leavers who entered country before June 2016
- Extension of duties to 25 for those not in education is expected to be covered by New Burdens funding from DFE

Further changes in funding from 2021-22:

- Over 18 (Care Leaver) rate: Increased further to *£270 per eligible young person per wk*

Reception Centres

Reception Centres are NOT Detention Centres. Young people are free to come and go

Millbank and Appledore reception centres can house up to 90 16/17 year old males in total

Operate on a 6:1 ratio of young people to staff, with a shift leader and centre manager in each

Health, education and social needs are assessed, as is age where required

Reception centre model was designed for a young person to be there for 4-6 weeks before moving on into the Kent community

Increased arrivals and delays in NTS transfers have resulted in them being there for an average of 3-4 months: one young person has been in the centre for over 1 year

Accommodation

Shared Accommodation for single male UASC over the age of 16. Block contract based on a four bed property model including rental cost, utilities, defects and furnishing. KCC pay £125 per unit per week in Kent or £200 in London

Fostering for single female and under 16 UASC – both in-house and IFA providers. Average cost for UASC and citizen children alike is £1003 per week

Kent Supported Homes – in-house service providing accommodation and support for males and females aged 16-21 in a family setting. Costs are £220 per week pp

Young People Supported Accommodation & Floating Support – contract based on a housing related support model which includes accommodation and bespoke support, at an average weekly placement cost of £490

Unique Needs and Rewards of UASC

Arrive with little or no belongings so need a package of provision to make sure their basic care needs are immediately met

Have a complexity of needs including lack of English language, cultural and religious needs, mental and physical health needs

Previous negative experiences of authority may make them reluctant to speak to professionals

Great majority have not been trafficked into modern slavery: often unrealistic expectations about the support they will receive in the UK

Majority are highly motivated to engage with services in their desire for a new, better life and it is possible to see positive changes in a relatively short period of time

A positive family environment in their early years has provided them with the resilience to endure trauma in their home country and/or on their journey

Support for Care Leavers

Each care leaver over 18 is allocated a Personal Adviser

Majority are placed in shared accommodation

Until they are granted status and can claim benefits, they receive £57.70 per week Essential Living Allowance

KCC fund transportation to all legal/asylum meetings and support access to immigration solicitors

Act as Accompanying Adult at Home Office asylum interviews and support them in accessing legal aid

Pay transport costs to all Education, Training & Employment programmes

Access to Care Leaver published local offer

Challenges transitioning into Leaving Care

Care leaver services are now better funded through the HO grant but this transition can bring challenges such as:

A delay in obtaining immigration status so many unable to claim benefits, open bank account or access housing services

Isolation and loneliness – some experience racism and discrimination and struggle to integrate

Lack of formal education can make adapting to UK's education system very challenging

Access to college courses – some have to travel into London to access ESOL English courses

Many therapeutic interventions cease at 18

The contribution UASC bring

Amir has completed a degree in Architecture and is now enrolled onto a Masters programme

Sohail is a professional boxer and has just opened a restaurant, Eggoland, in central London

Thomas graduated in Performing Arts and has written a book on his experiences during his journey to the UK from Eritrea

Khaled completed his degree in Accounting and Finance and is now working at the university as a Finance Assistant

Safeer is an amateur boxer and works in a leisure centre

Hadas supports her younger siblings and mother whilst dealing with the recent loss of her youngest brother to conflict

Luwam is an apprentice in Kent's Participation Service

Yeasin secured a full scholarship from university to study electrical engineering

Aymn received the 'Principal's Award' from his college this summer

Presentation to SE Lead Member Workshop: UASC in Portsmouth

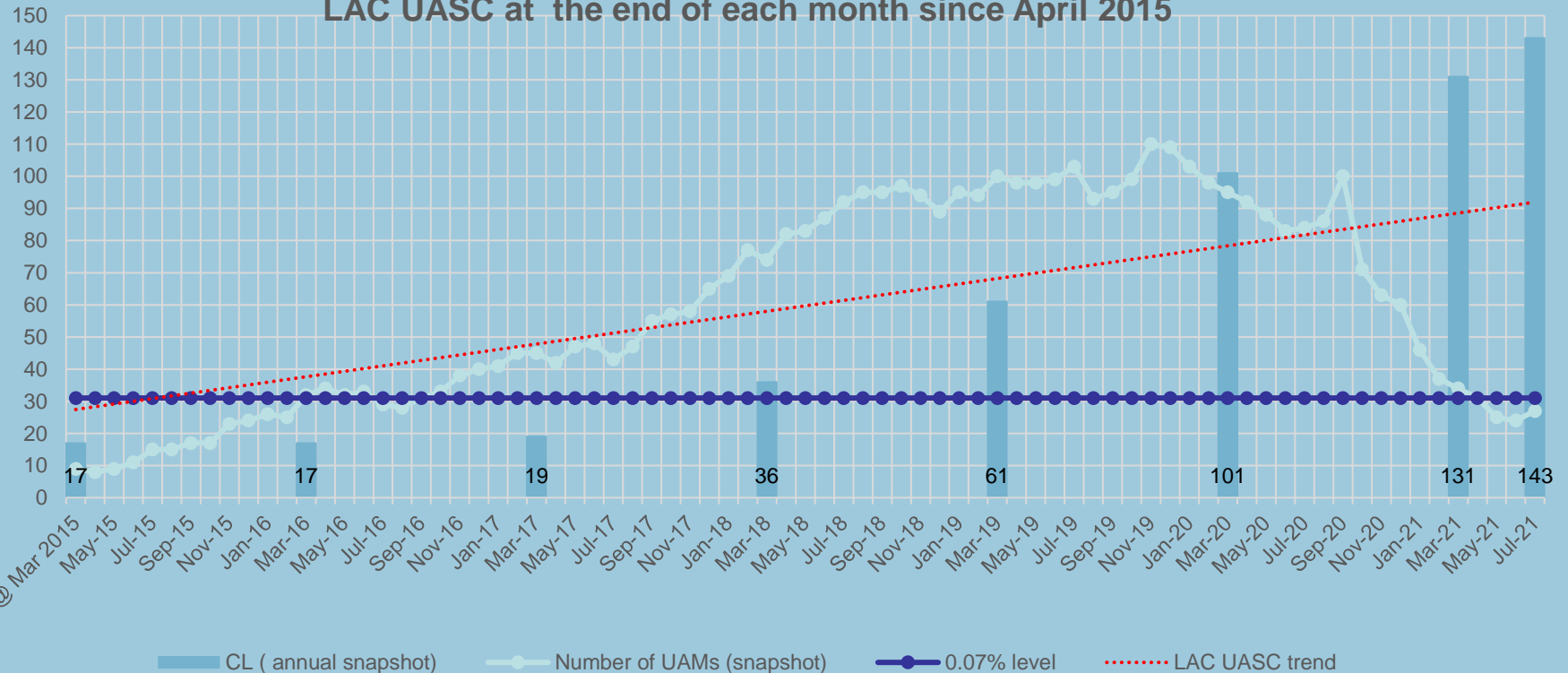
Suzy Horton, Lead Member for Children, Families and Education

Sarah Daly, Deputy Director for Children and Families

17th August 2021

UASC Numbers since 2015

LAC UASC at the end of each month since April 2015



Total Number of LAC UASC in PCC's care from 2015-21

391

Maximum expected number of UASC (0.07% of child population)

31

New Arrivals 2020/2021

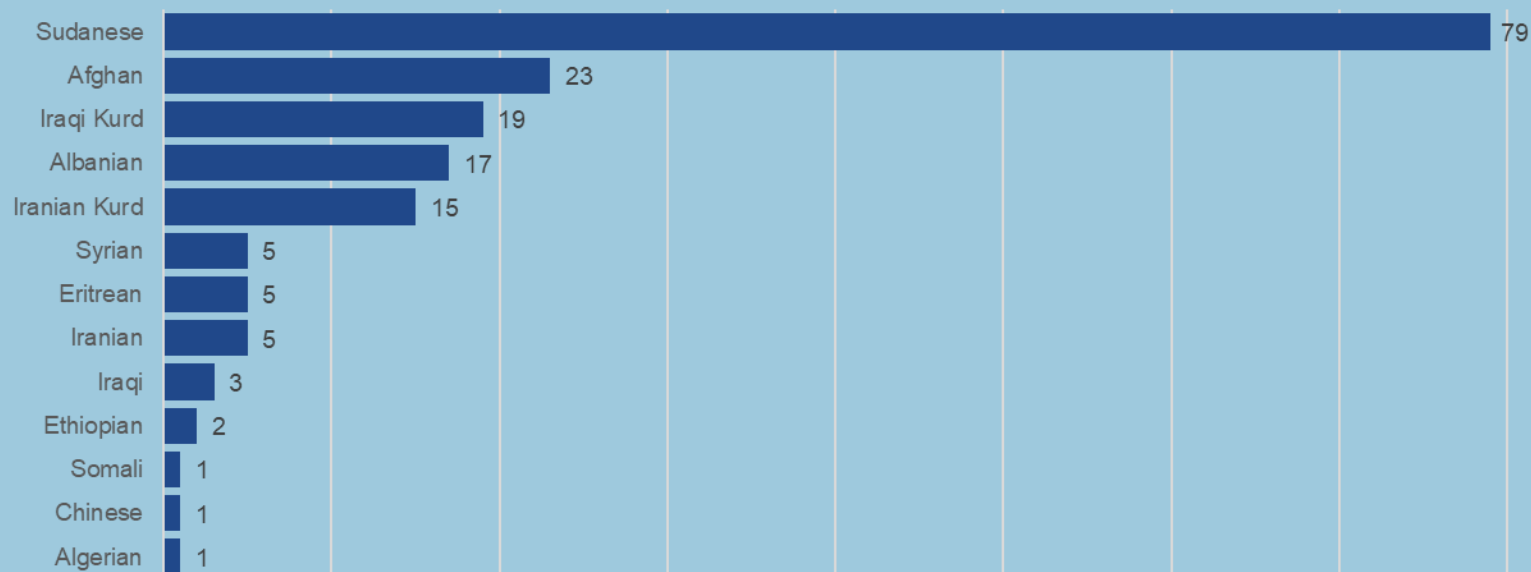
2020	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
New UASC arrivals	3	4	12	0	3	2	7	6	14	1	0	6
Total UASC LAC	103	98	95	92	88	83	84	86	100	71	63	60
0.07% ratio	3.32	3.16	3.06	2.97	2.84	2.68	2.71	2.77	3.23	2.29	2.03	1.94

2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	@ 16th Aug
New UASC arrivals	0	0	0	2	2	2	5	1
Total UASC LAC	46	37	34	31	25	24	27	27
0.07% ratio	1.48	1.19	1.10	1.00	0.81	0.77	0.87	0.87

Portsmouth's position – August 2021

Total No. of UASC	Whole LAC population	Male	Female
28 (0.07% = 31)	370	27	1
Total No. of UASC in Leaving Care Service	Whole CL population	Male	Female
148	382	148	0

UASC and former UASC Nationalities



UASC Journey within Portsmouth

The majority of children present at the port, but small numbers of children are also identified landside.

Through Care Team (TCT), or Out of Hours staff if appropriate, pick up young person from port having been notified of their arrival by UKVI

Where necessary children are taken to Queen Alexandra Hospital for emergency health care treatment

Young person will be placed in local authority care (since resuming statutory responsibility in April 2021 all children presenting have been placed with local authority foster carers).

At 18 these young people transition and become care leavers, they continue to receive a service up to the age of 25 years

Impact of intervention: October 2020 – March 2021

October 2020 – Portsmouth cease responsibility for unaccompanied children presenting in the city

Weekly meetings in place to review all children meeting criteria for transfer under the NTS.

The number of UASC looked after by Portsmouth decreased by 66

34 children transferred to other local authorities under the NTS

In addition a further 32 unaccompanied children turned 18 and transitioned to care leaver status (thus falling outside of the transfer scheme) but still remaining the responsibility of Portsmouth City Council

Safeguarding for UASC located 'landside': Operation Innerste

Operation Innerste – for any child located 'landside' a multi-agency safeguarding response will be implemented.

An initial welfare / safeguarding form will be completed, and fingerprints and photographs taken (using both immigration and Common Law powers) this information is passed on to Immigration Enforcement's NCCU for uploading on to immigration systems.

Capturing fingerprints and photographs is essential to allow the police and immigration departments to identify children later if they go missing, are trafficked or are found in distressing circumstances.

On 6 August Taulant (aged 17) was found in a cannabis factory in Portsmouth. Checks on biometrics undertaken as part of the strategy discussion to develop an immediate safety plan identified that Taulant had entered the UK in May 2021. A referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and this process will establish whether there are reasonable and conclusive grounds that Taulant has been a victim of human trafficking.



**South East
Strategic Partnership
for Migration**

NTS SCHEME

PRINCIPAL IDEA

Voluntary participation

Fair allocation process across all 12 regions

Each regions Local Authorities to achieve 0.07% of their child population as UASC.

Local Authorities 0.07% figure based on a weighting system of five elements:

Child Population (25%)

Looked After Child Population (22%)

UASC population (10%)

Former UASC Care Leaver Population (10%)

Supported asylum population (33%)



**South East
Strategic Partnership
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NTS CYCLES

Expected that 650 children will be transferred over the four cycles

Each cycle will transfer 123 children across all 12 regions

New Cycle process started 26th July with a large backlog of Children waiting for placements.

Cycle one transfers allocated to regions over a four week period.

South East is region 7 on the list

South East region is expected to transfer 30 children



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Strategic Partnership
for Migration**

How we calculated Cycle One allocations

Discussions held by Lucy Butler and Mac Heath with DCSs

Feedback from Lucy and Mac on Cycle One Agreement

Cycle One capped number was based on percentage of 0.07% supported already

Cycle Two has an increased number so capped figures will need re-evaluating



**South East
Strategic Partnership
for Migration**

SE position
at end of
Cycle One

25 Children successfully transferred

Goodwill participation across the South East has been very positive

Expectation that Cycle Two will transfer 35 Children

0.07% data is still outdated



**South East
Strategic Partnership
for Migration**

SE Pressures impacting on ability to take:

Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP)

Hotels commissioned to take Immigration Removals overspill

Hotels commissioned to take Dispersal overspill

Hotels commissioned to take asylum dispersal overspill adults and families in the following areas

Southampton

Reading

Slough

Reigate & Banstead

Eastbourne



**South East
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