



Sandwell
Children's Trust



Scrutiny Committee

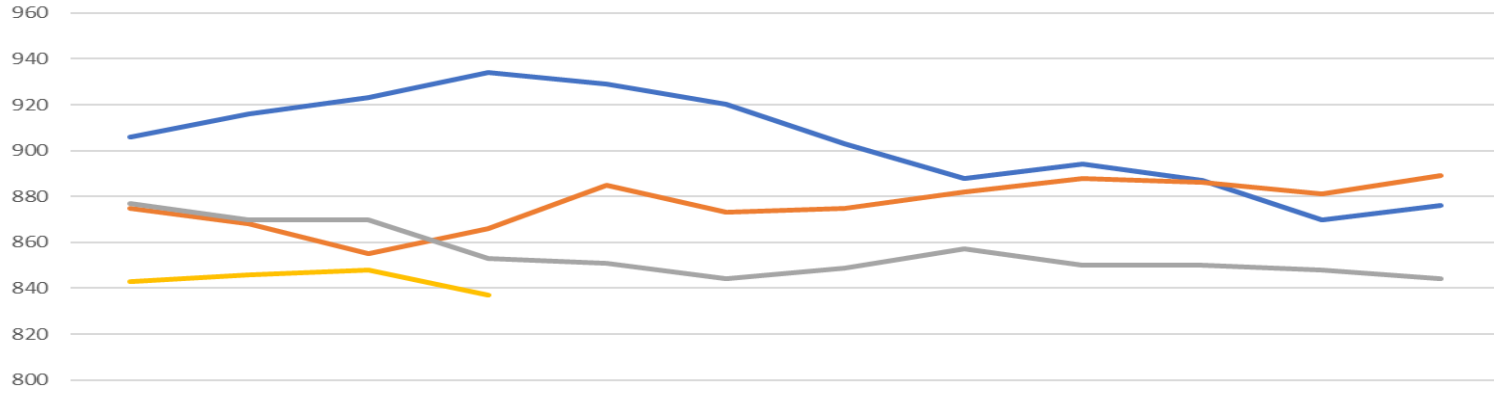
Spotlight on children in our care

10 October 2022

Our Children in Care- numbers



Children in Care Population Trend

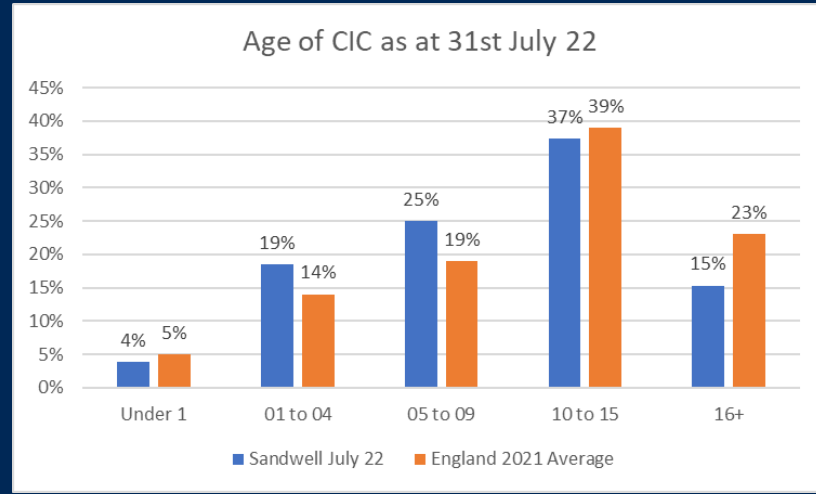
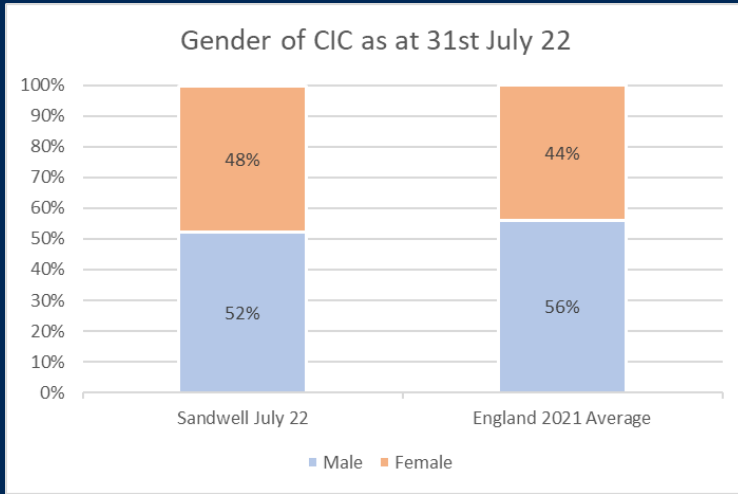


	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
2019	906	916	923	934	929	920	903	888	894	887	870	876
2020	875	868	855	866	885	873	875	882	888	886	881	889
2021	877	870	870	853	851	844	849	857	850	850	848	844
2022	843	846	848	837								

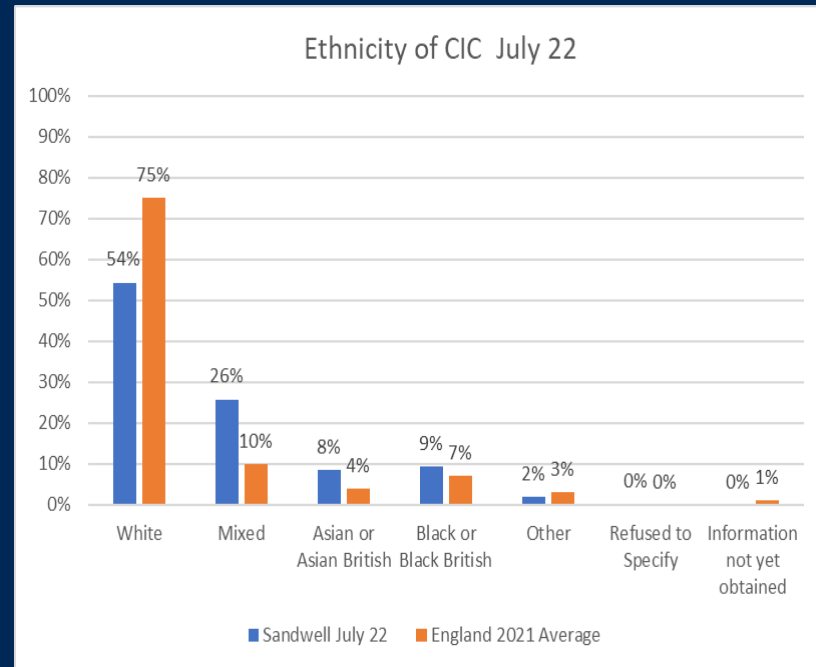
— 2019 — 2020 — 2021 — 2022

- July 2019- peak number
- July 2022- 837
- Steady decline over 4 years

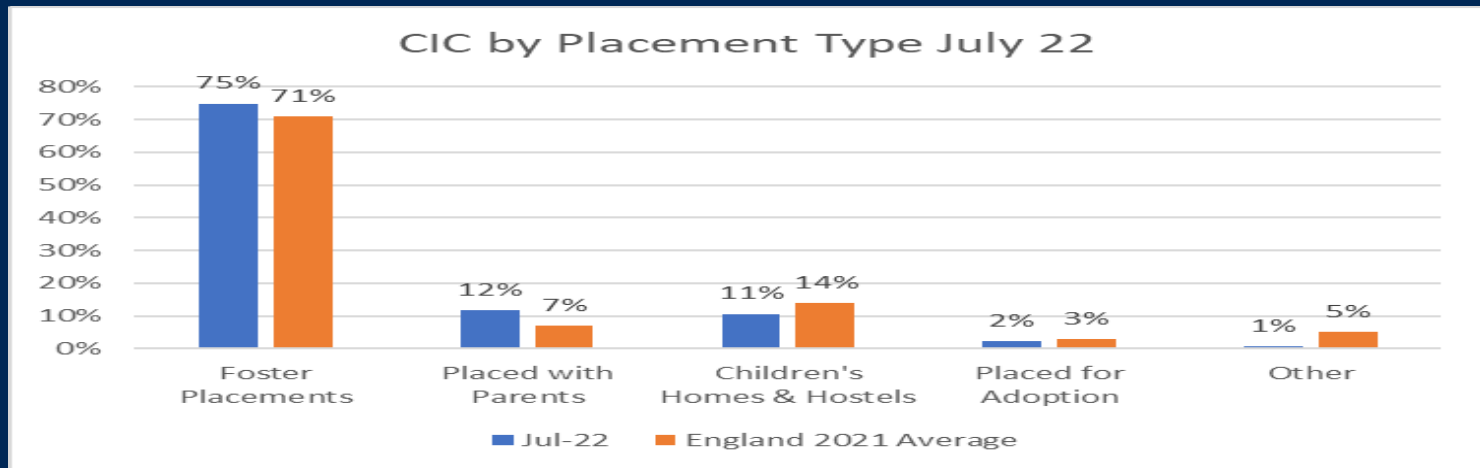
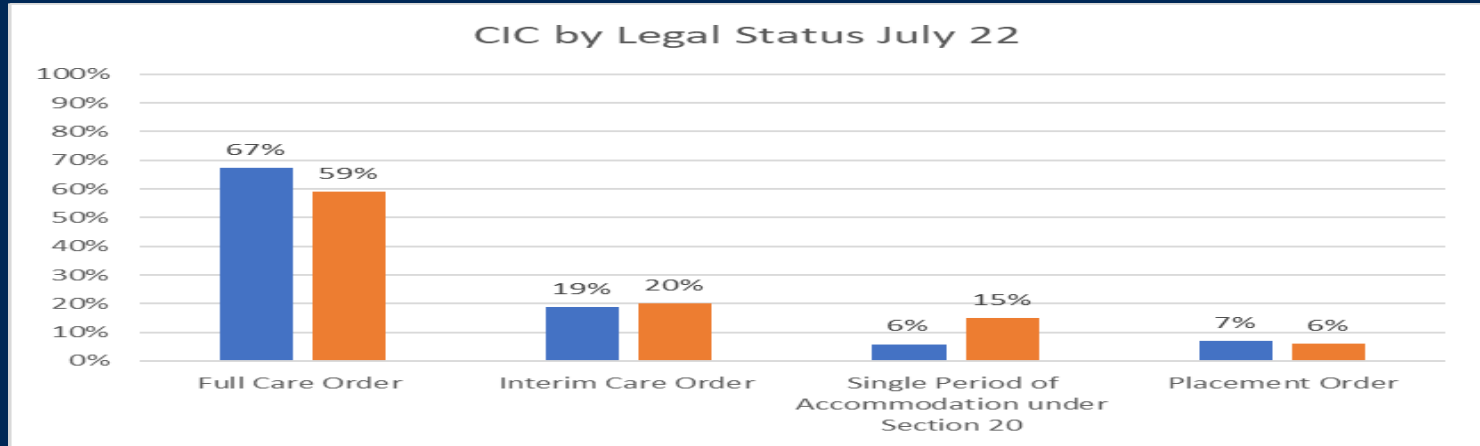
Our Children in Care- demographics



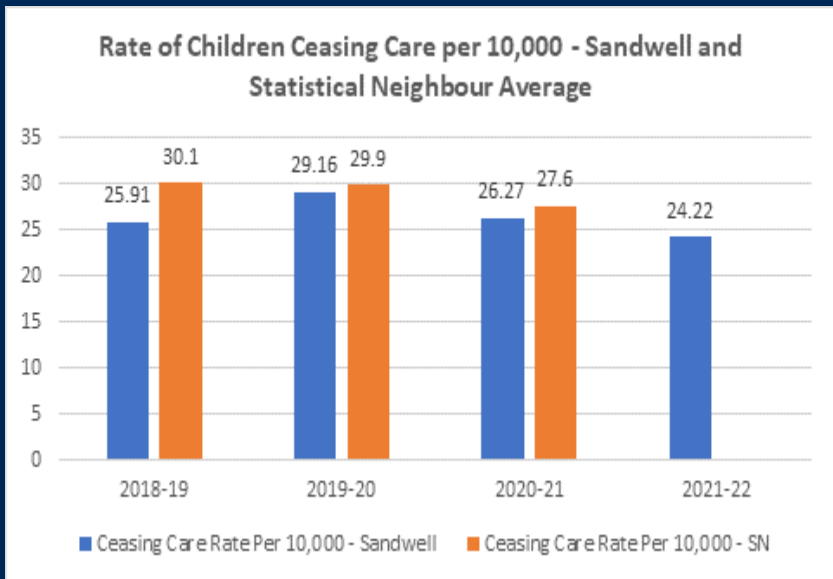
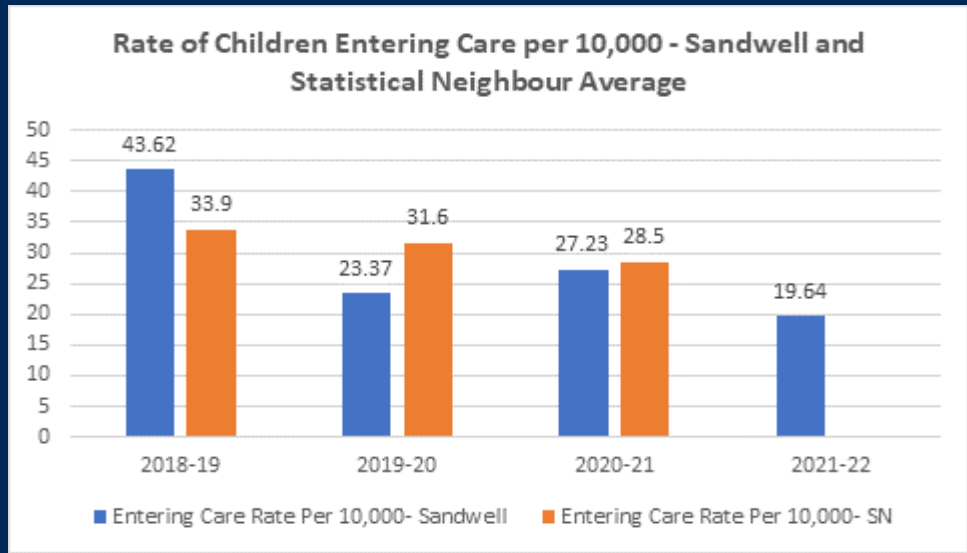
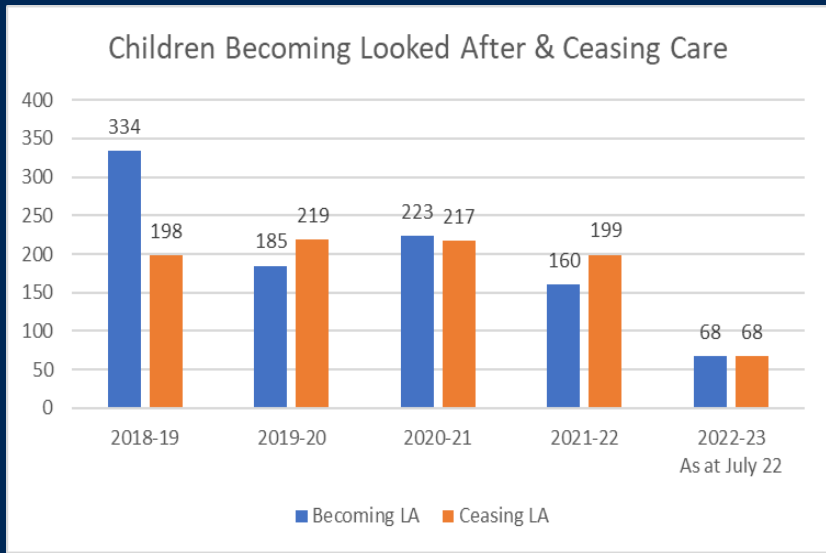
Grouped Ethnic Origin	Ethnic Origin	Sandwell July 22	Sandwell July 22	England 2021 Average
White	White - British	415	54%	75%
	White - Irish	1		
	White - Other	39		
Mixed	Mixed - White/Asian	59	26%	10%
	Mixed - White/Black African	11		
	Mixed - White/Black Caribbean	97		
	Mixed - Other	49		
Asian or Asian British	Asian - Bangladeshi	13	8%	4%
	Asian - Indian	20		
	Asian - Pakistani	13		
	Asian - Other	25		
Black or Black British	Black - African	32	9%	7%
	Black - Caribbean	32		
	Black - Other	14		
Other	Arab		2%	3%
	Gypsy / Roma Count	5		
	Any Other Ethnic Group	11		
Refused to Specify	Refused to Specify	1	0%	0%
Information not yet obtained			0%	1%
Total		837	100%	100%



Our Children in Care- demographics



Entering and Ceasing Care



The number of children becoming looked after has reduced significantly since 2018-19. With the exception of 2018-19 the number of children entering care is below Statistical neighbours.

The number of children ceasing care has remained fairly consistent over the last 3 years and on par with our statistical neighbours.



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Our Children in Care – placement types

Type of Accommodation	Sandwell July 22	Sandwell July 22	% of Budget
Foster Placement - Internal Foster Carer and External Foster Carer	462	55.2%	74.9%
Foster Placement - Connected Carer (family and friends)	165	19.7%	
Residential Homes(including secure accommodation)	57	6.8%	36.0%
NHS/Health Trust or other Establishment Providing Medical or Nursing Care	1	0.1%	
Placed with Parents	97	11.6%	
Independent Living	33	3.9%	
Placed For Adoption	19	2.3%	
Other Placements	3	0.4%	
Total	837	100%	

Focused Activity: Prevention

Edge of Care Services November 2021 to April 2022

- **Family Group Conferencing - 100** FGC referrals- **177** children. 92 requests for FGCs- 45 completed. At the point of closure- 10 children stepped down from Child Protection to Children in Need, no increase in Children in Care, 5 children ended plans.
- **Family Solutions Team-** 91 children closed to Family Solutions Team (FST), 90 actively supported, 1 withdrawal. At point of closure, no children entered care (48). 100% success rate for this period.
- 11 children's placements ended during this period and a further 23 whose placements were maintained- 68% success rate in placement stability
- **Multi-Systemic Therapy Team-** 39 children supported. All children were on the edge of care or custody when referred- 89 % remained with their families at the completion of involvement.

Focused Activity- Permanency

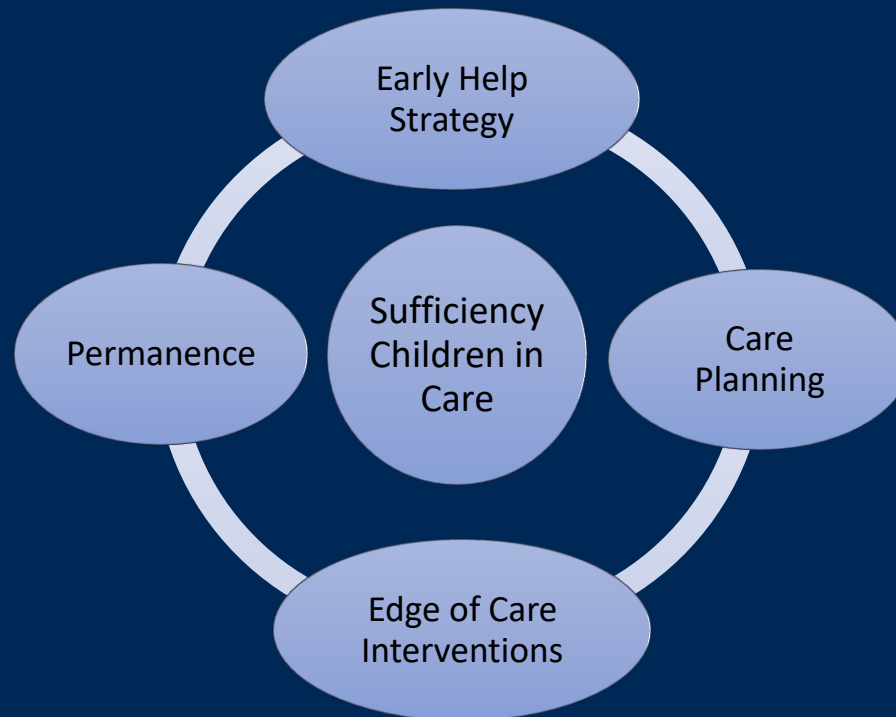
- New Permanency Strategy- multi-agency approach- ‘permanency from the outset’
- Review of Court processes- improved practice and oversight
- December 2021 to July 2022- **117** children left care:
 - Adoption- 12.8%
 - Special Guardianship Order – 12.8% (SN average 11%)
 - 34 returned home so far (6 same period last year)
 - 2 Care Orders discharged
 - 42 children turned 18
 - 5 children in Staying Put Arrangements with current Foster Carers
 - 4 children under other (eg Child Arrangements Order)

Focused Activity- Sufficiency



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National Challenges

- National shortage of foster care placements
- National shortage of SWs
- Complexity of children's needs
- Implications of Social Care Review

- Systemic approach
- Prevention- every level
- Sufficiency Strategy and action Plan- Strategic Lead
- Practice focus- Care Planning- keeping children and families together wherever possible
- Collaboration with providers in Sandwell and wider partners- shared decision making
- Closer alignment between Placement Team and Fostering Service
- Scrutiny and challenge of planning and decision making

Participation Service



Our approach to participation

Participation is the means by which young people realise their rights, where they join with adults to make decisions.

Our principles of participation

- is an ongoing process
- must enable young people to influence their outcomes
- values and supports collaboration

Invest
Everyone in the Trust family will understand the importance and value of participation

Inform
Children and young people will know their rights and have access to the information they need

Influence
Children and young people will make a difference, now and in the future

Involve
Children and young people will co-design and review the services they receive

Children coming into care

Participation Team will make contact with all new children who come into care with an intro pack which will include a booklet informing of their rights, how to complain, advocacy services and more. They will also be invited to an introduction day to build positive relationships with the Trust.

Voices of Sandwell

The Children in care council meet on a regular basis and discuss issues faced currently by children in care. Over the past 6 months the group have met with Ofsted inspectors, been consulted on Fostering Guidelines and matching processes, they have also hosted and organised the Queens Jubilee family event.

Forum for Independent Young Adults

Young people who are care experienced come together regularly to discuss issues around the Local Offer. Recently it was highlighted care leavers who attend University struggle financially. A report has been produced with recommendations on how this can be improved. Young People have also been involved in filming what its like to be a care leaver for Neighbourhood Services, which will be used for training purposes.

Summer Programme

The recent summer programme for children in care and care leavers has been linked to the Commonwealth games, HAF programme and other recreational activities for young people to develop their skills such as First Aid and Arts.

Recruitment of staff & Induction

Young people have sat on Young People's Panels to recruit a range of roles such as Social Workers, Heads of Services and Team Managers, Corporate Parenting Coordinator and Independent Reviewing Officer. They have also been involved in the Induction of new staff within the Trust.

Summer Programme
25TH JULY - 26TH AUGUST 2022

TO RESERVE A SPACE CALL: 07582310210 OR BIRK PARTICIPATION TEAMS@SANDWELLCHILDRENSTRUST

WEEK 1 25TH JULY - 30TH JULY 2022	WEEK 2 31ST AUGUST - 5TH AUGUST
<p>MONDAY 25TH JULY BATON RELAY PARADE SANDWELL VALLEY 9:30-11:30PM (ALL YOUNG PEOPLE)</p> <p>WEDNESDAY 27TH JULY FIRST AID TRAINING (FULLY BOOKED)</p> <p>THURSDAY 28TH JULY MALTHOUSE STABLES 10-12PM LIMITED SPACES (ALL YOUNG PEOPLE)</p>	<p>MONDAY 1ST AUG MAGICAL DAY @INGESTRE HALL 9-11 PICK UP OLDDBURY</p> <p>TUESDAY 2ND AUG SHROPSHIRE WALK LONG WYD 9:30-11:30 PICK UP OLDDBURY</p> <p>TUESDAY 2ND AUGUST COMMONWEALTH GAMES WOMENS CRICKET @BOSWASTON 6:30PM</p> <p>WEDNESDAY 3RD AUG GO PLAY FESTIVAL 12-2PM @ SANDWELL VILL</p> <p>FRIDAY 5TH AUG COMMONWEALTH GAMES BOWLING @ BOWLEX 10-12PM (ABOVE ACTIVITIES ABOVE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE)</p>
WEEK 3	WEEK 4
<p>MONDAY 8TH AUG COMMONWEALTH CLOSING CEREMONY @SANDWELL VALLEY (ALL YOUNG PEOPLE)</p> <p>TUESDAY 9TH AUG DUDLEY ZOO 12-4PM (CARE LEAVERS ONLY)</p> <p>THURSDAY 11TH AUG BOWLING @BOWLPLEX DUDLEY 1-3PM (CHILDREN IN CARE ONLY)</p>	<p>MONDAY 15TH AUG BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH 9-6PM (CARE LEAVERS ONLY)</p>
WEEK 5	
<p>TUESDAY 23RD AUG BUSHCRAFT SESS1 @ SANDWELL VALLEY 1-3PM (ALL YOUNG PEOPLE)</p> <p>THURSDAY 25TH AUG THORPE PARK 9-6PM (CHILDREN IN CARE ONLY)</p>	

PLEASE NOTE THE PROGRAMME CAN CHANGE AT ANYTIME