

Care Matters: **Time to Deliver** **for Looked After** **Children**



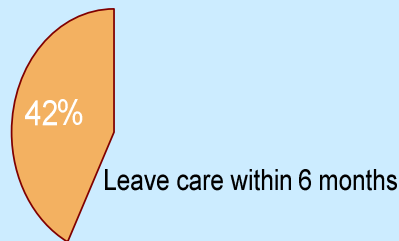
department for
children, schools and families

Who are Children in Care?

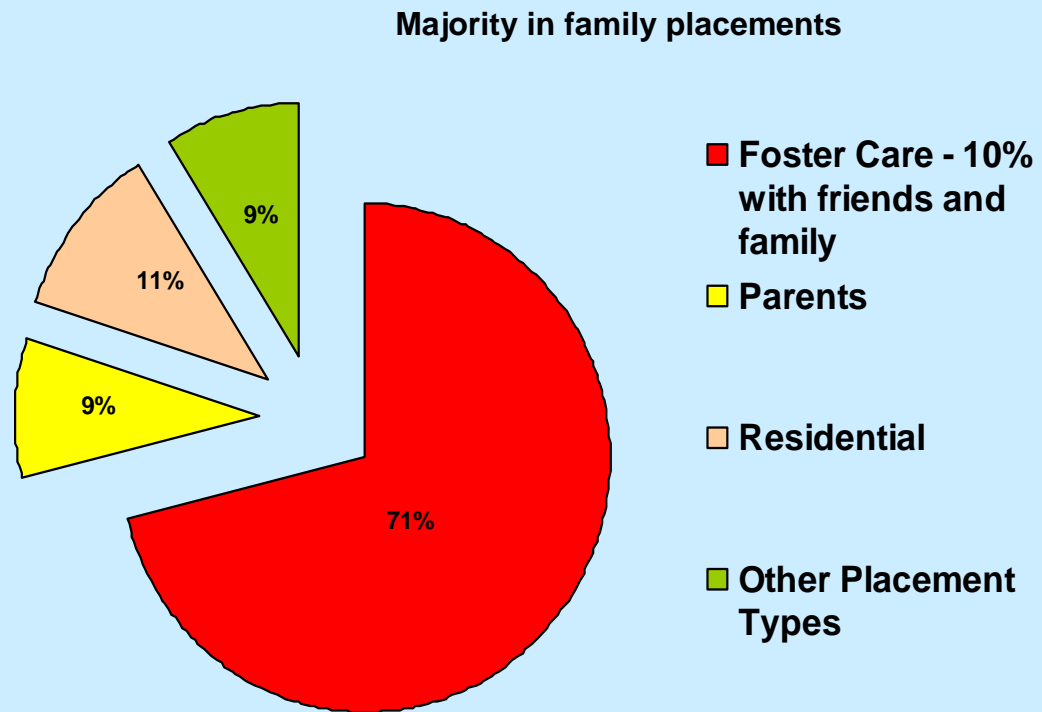
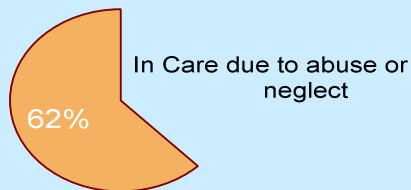
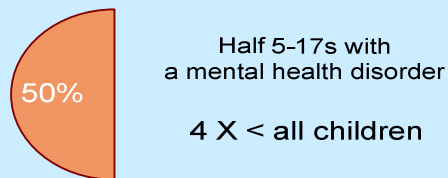
A changing and diverse population

A changing population:

60,000 in care at any point in time; 83,000 in course of a year (level of churn is reducing)




With a high level of needs:



Components of current strategy


Underpinned by very strong partnership with the sector - need to build on that to generate sector-led improvement across the board.

Pilots
Enable some change on the ground while legislation is going through – maintain momentum



Provide models to disseminate & test policies borrowed from other countries

Legislation, standards and guidance




Revising statutory framework to reflect Care Matters

Workforce reform & commissioning



Key interdependencies in the medium to long term – change is dependent on these working

Inspection



Additional focus on LAC alongside CAA. Working with Ofsted to shape this

Time for Change – Children and Young Persons Bill 2008

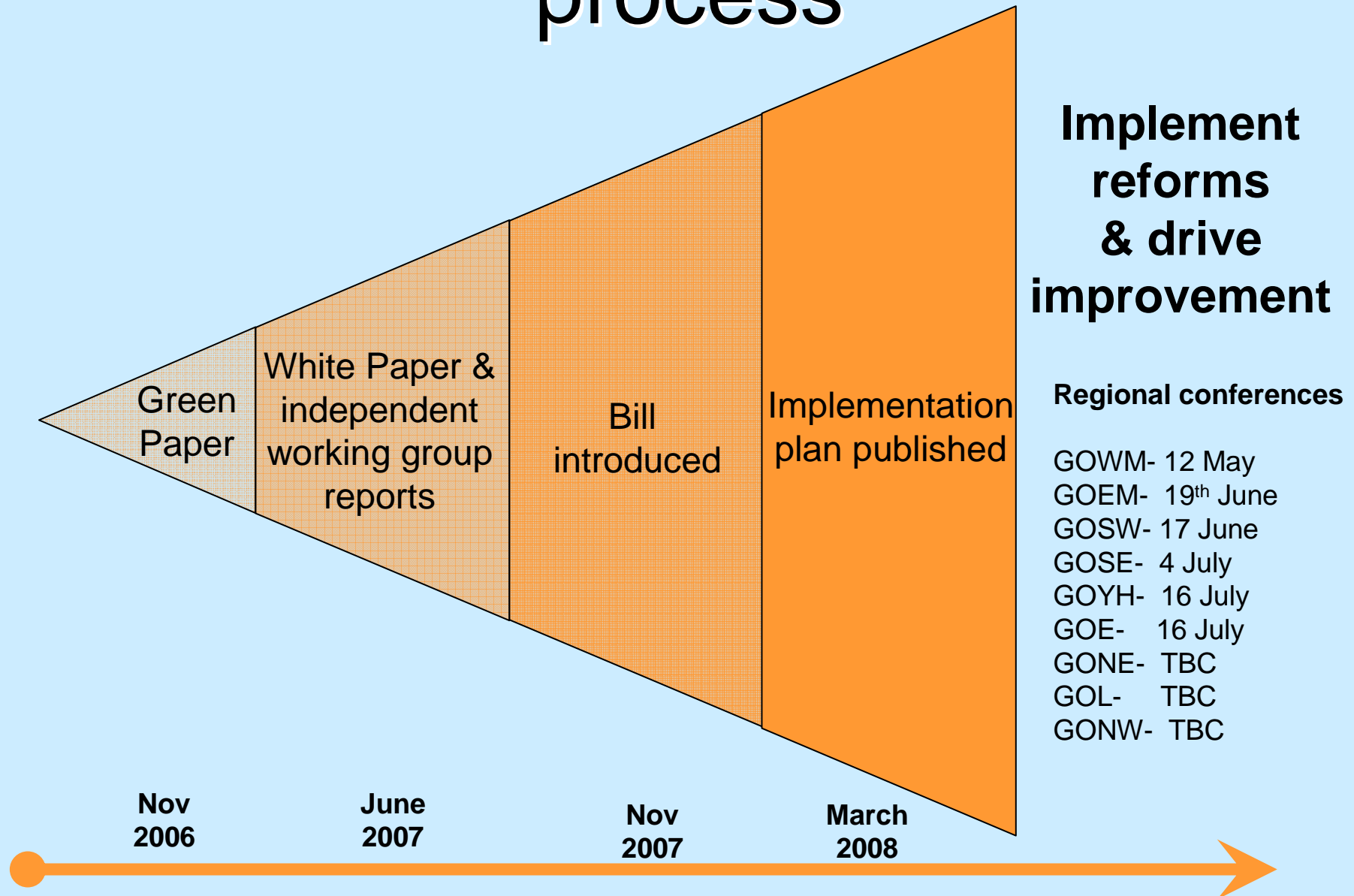
- **Improving placement stability.**
- **More consistency for looked after children.**
- **Improve school experiences for looked after children.**
- **Give pilot LAs the power to test a different model of social work (SWPs)**
- **Increase the focus on transparency and quality of care planning.**
- **Make sure young people are not forced out of care.**

Emphasise listening to the children's voice in everything we do, being ambitious for them and good parenting by everyone responsible for their care

Measuring Success

Indicator number	Indicator
58	Emotional and behavioural health of children in care
61	The timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption (following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption)
62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves
63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement
66	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales
99 (PSA)	Looked After Children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2 (60% for LACs by 2011)
100 (PSA)	Looked After Children reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2 (55% for LACs by 2011)
101 (PSA)	Looked After Children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 including English and Maths) (20% for LACs by 2011)
147 Links to PSA 16	Care leavers in suitable accommodation
148 Links to PSA 16	Care Leavers in employment, education or training

Where we are in the policy process



Enhancing Stability

- Work to improve quality of support and training for foster carers
- Development of more authoritative IRO role
- Children and Young Person's bill provisions to improve placement decisions and quality of placements
- Care planning reforms, and work to support better commissioning

The shape of future services

- Care Plans based on sound good quality of assessment covering all dimensions of children's needs
- Children contribute to planning, understanding and preparing for changes. Consideration and weight given to the voice of the child.
- Planning for short, medium and long-term.
- There can be no presumption that young people will be ready for new services at set ages (still less as young as 16)
- Leaving care will only take place for most y/p at 18 and there will be no practical distinction between the care planning process for any child in care and what is presently understood as "pathway planning" for "care leavers"
- Improved flexible "transition support" services allowing young people to return for support to remain in or resume education and training (broadly defined) until 25.

Making care matter locally

(What should be happening now)

- Reviewing approach to corporate parenting
- Children in Care Council (or equivalent)
- Identifying local priorities for change
 - Approach to care planning and strengthening IRO service
 - Commissioning
 - Support for foster carers
 - Educational support – virtual head
 - Links with health partners
 - Considering placement stability
 - Leisure opportunities
 - Care leaver work experience and employment opportunity.
 - Care leaving services modelled on need not age
- Development of pledges

Some milestones

- Bill – likely to be autumn; then phased commencement and regulations
- Children Act and other Guidance (2009)
- Review National Minimum Standards (2009)
- Ofsted new inspection regime (2009)
- Statutory health guidance (2008?)
- Deliver and evaluate 9 sets of pilots: many complex - e.g. R2BC4 and “18+ Staying Put: Family Care” (2011)