

Norfolk Boarding School Partnerships



Norfolk
County Council

2008-2018

Background

From 2008: based in the Virtual School for Children in Care under senior educational psychologist.

From 2013: transferred to clinical commissioning team following the need for higher social care involvement.

52 children and young
people placed within 11
state and independent
boarding schools

Steps to Success

- ✓ Virtual School governance by senior managers in both social care and education
- ✓ **Presence of large, state boarding school with national profile**
- ✓ Development of strong working relationships with schools
- ✓ **Comprehensive assessment of child and family need**
- ✓ Careful matching of child's needs with school placement
- ✓ **Establishment of team with education and social care expertise**

Results

- **Improved social care outcomes**
Three-quarters showed a reduced level of risk
- **Impact on educational outcomes**
Two-thirds obtained an educational qualification by 16-years
- **Financially favourable**
- **Rated well** by children, families and schools

*Stable, long-term
boarding placements
increase the
likelihood of
improved outcomes*

Outcomes

Successful outcomes were positively correlated with **average placement length**.

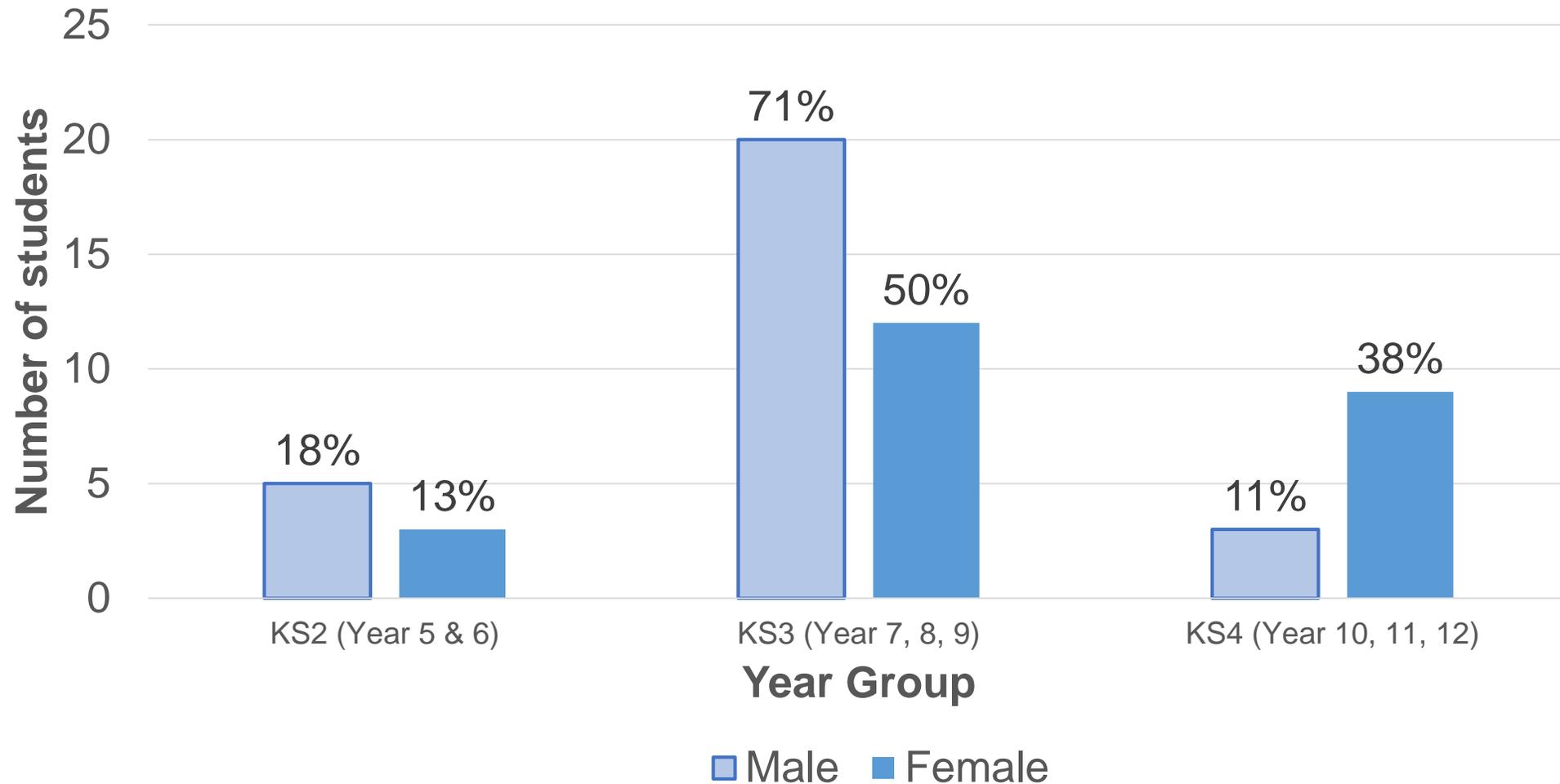
Those who attended for an average of **3 years or more** showed improved outcomes across social care and education in comparison with those with a placement of **2 years or less**.

Central to the success

- ✓ **Careful and suitable matching** of children to boarding schools.
- ✓ **Effective collaboration** between and within young people's services.
- ✓ **A long-term and sustained commitment** from all stakeholders, including schools and family.

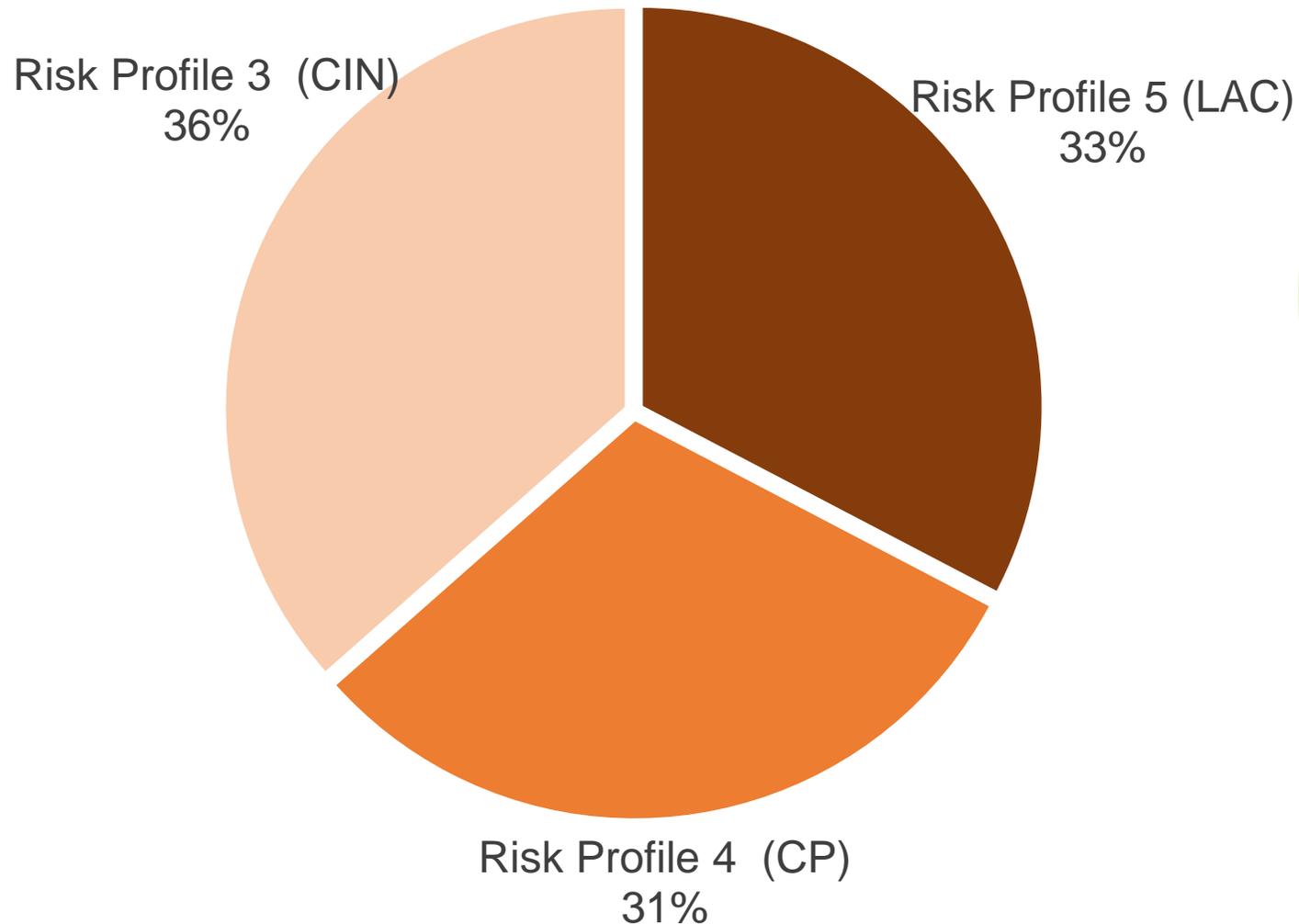
Children and Young People

Age and Gender



Children and Young People

Initial Risk Profiles



Risk Categories

- Risk Profile 5:** Looked after Child (LAC)
- Risk Profile 4:** Child Protection (CP)
- Risk Profile 3:** Child in Need (CIN)
- Risk Profile 2:** Early Help (EH)
- Risk Profile 1:** Universal Services (US)

Challenges

- Working across departments in large organisations
- Establishment of services in both education and social care to support boarding placements
- Strategic location of the boarding partnership

What Next?

- 1 Continued commitment to boarding partnership from both social care and educational services.
- 2 Dedicated staff to co-ordinate the project and further develop charitable linkage.
- 3 Refinement of assessment process pre- and post-placement.
- 4 Exploration of greater number of placements at a younger age.
- 5 Gathering views of children, young people and other partners.

Pupil views

What has worried you about your boarding school placement?

I was worried about going into boarding school, I thought everyone would be very posh and drinking tea. The place was so big, it was such a big change and I did not think I was going to stay there for long to be honest. I thought when I moved house, then I'd leave school again.

This is my 16th school. It has taught me a lot about changing lifestyles.

*Child AB, aged 17 and currently studying for A levels. Placed during primary school.

What worked, what did not and what could be improved?

An evaluation of Norfolk
Boarding School Partnerships



Norfolk
County Council



Educational Psychology
& Specialist Support

Background

Initial analyses of Norfolk's findings indicated that children and young people with a boarding placement could benefit from improved social care outcomes.

What were the views and experiences of those involved?

Young people

Boarding school staff

Social workers

Strengths

Challenges

Improvements

Aim and Purpose

- **Explore** the perspectives of young people, boarding school staff and social workers involved with Norfolk Boarding School Partnerships
- **Inform and enhance** the current model for boarding partnerships developed by Norfolk County Council.

Participants

Outcomes	Questionnaire Type			Totals
	Boarding School Staff	Social Worker	Young people	
Starting Sample	11	18	6	35
Unobtainable: multiple attempts made to follow up completion	4	17	4	25
Completed questionnaire	7	1	2	10
Response rate	64%	6%	33%	29%
Average involvement length	8.9 years	4.0 years	6.6 years	6.5 years

Method

Questionnaires:

- School staff and social worker
- Young person

Responses analysed using thematic analysis.

*Strengths
and benefits
of scheme*

*Challenges
surrounding
the scheme*

*Potential
improvements
to the scheme*

Results

Preparation

Including children and young people in decision-making processes

Involving parents and carers in the placement process

Facilitating school staff awareness of students' needs

Communication

Collaboration between schools and other partners

Building and rebuilding trusting relationships

Increasing awareness of assisted boarding

Boarding Experience

Evaluating social, emotional and educational outcomes

Providing stability and support

Promoting diversity and inclusion

Results

*“The more time spent **planning and sharing** before placement the better. When well planned, it has been highly successful” (School Staff).*

*“Services need to be more **aware of the benefits** this programme can bring to young people and support their families” (School Staff).*

*“Young people **achieved far greater educationally**, and made **progress within their familial relationships**, than what – despite numerous efforts – could be achieved without the provision” (Social Worker).*

Pupil views

What has worried you about your boarding school placement?

"I've never seen a difference between state and boarding educationally but for someone that was passed around so much from family to family it was great to have stability with a boarding school."

"I am super grateful to [the boarding school] and the amount of school support that they gave me was incredible - they did not have to do that for someone in my position. I am sure I would still be angry and disruptive if I'd just continued to be passed around lots of families and not gone to [the boarding school]."

What would you say to another child who was thinking about a boarding school placement?

"Yes, do it."

*Child ES, aged 21 successfully completed GCSE and A-Level education, securing a place at a university in London. Placed during primary school.

Conclusion

When sufficient **planning** and preparation for placements were combined with effective **communication** and support, boarding could meaningfully **impact** social, emotional and educational outcomes.

*“Definitely 100% go for it. Take it up and take all the opportunities you can because your life can then really become something”
(Child AB).*