

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 15 April 2019
Title of report: Children in Care Services Performance Highlights

Purpose of report

This report outlines key performance highlights for children in care and care leavers up to February 28th 2019, for the board to consider and comment upon.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable – for information
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Elaine McShane for Mel Meggs (4.4.19) Not applicable Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children)

Electoral wards affected: None

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Have you considered GDPR?

Yes GDPR considered no service users identified

1. Summary

The key performance highlights for children in care and care leavers up to February 2019 are as follows:-

Number of children in care

We have seen a decrease in the rate from a 12 month high of 68.0 per 10,000 children (675 children) in Apr 18 to 62.7 (626 children) in Feb 19. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 65.3 and we have remained below our 31 March 2018 published rate of 68.0 and below our Statistical Neighbours 2018 rate of 86.1 and the England 2018 rate of 64.0.

The number of children in care has decreased by 48 between March 2018 and February 2019. The number of children in Kirklees aged 0-17 has been revised for the calculation from 99,192 to 99,815 as per the data published by DfE in October 2018)

Kirklees (Feb 19) = 62.7 per 10.000 child population

Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1 per 10.000 child population

England (2018) = 64.0 per 10.000 child population

Placement Stability and support

The Legal Gateway Permanence Panel continues to support consistency in regard to decision making and planning around placement moves for children and young people. A weekly External Placement Review Panel is now in place, to provide better oversight of children who are not placed in council provision. An External Placement Review is ongoing of all children who are placed out of Local Authority to consider their care planning and explore options of returning to the local area if this is in line with meeting the children and young person's needs. We have already made progress reducing this number placed more than twenty miles away from Kirklees from 127 in 2017 to 106 in February 2019.

We have reviewed all children who are placed at home on interim or full care orders as a legal status (Placed with Parents). This includes children residing at home under a court direction.

For Placement Stability the placement support team are very active, and we have implemented innovative solutions to support several placements. An example of plans to limit unplanned moves is as follows: where a foster carer or placement is given 28-day notice, the Team Manager will coordinate a meeting within 5 working days to look at what can be provided to avoid placement breakdown and to maintain the current placement.

Health of Children in Care

Initial health assessments

Kirklees rolling 12-month data for Feb shows 87% were completed in timescales. Locala monthly data at source, reports that 92% were completed in timescales with 1 breach. The breach was for a child who was accommodated outside England, appropriate practitioner to carry out the assessment on leave. The difference between the figures has been analysed, showing that some situations that can negatively affect the LA data, as it stays visible for 12 months. e.g. unaccompanied asylum seeker & refugees given LAC status who become whereabouts unknown, an IHA completed by another local authority before being transferred to Kirklees, Liquid logic not being timely updated with status change.

Review health assessments

Kirklees rolling 12-month data for Feb 19 for developmental assessments, i.e. children under 5 years old, stands at 82.5% and annual assessments, i.e. children over 5 years old, was 86% on time. Locala monthly data at source records that 100% of the developmental and 77% of the annual assessments were completed in timescales. January & February were challenging months, although February was an improvement. There were 7 breaches in-house in February (3x workload issues, 1x admin oversight, 1 unable to do due to after school commitments, 1x placement move, 1x abroad at time assessment due). There was a capacity issue in the health nursing teams, who complete a large number of RHAs. There were 4 breaches by other local authorities (OLA) completing on our behalf (1x OLA declined, 1x staff sickness, re-direction to GP as residential nurse left post, 1x placement move).

Dental Checks within last 12 months

Kirklees rolling 12 month data for Feb 19 shows that 90.5% of LAC have been recorded as having received a dental check. The increase in figure is a result of the Designated Nurse contacting individual carers from a list of missing data produced by PIU. This is a time consuming task, but proves as predicted last month, that the actual picture is better than the raw data shows.

The missing information is less obvious for children up to age 5 as this is asked at their '6 monthly' RHA. For children over age 5, this information is reported at the 'annual' RHA. Locala Monthly data now being collected to compare. 100% of all ages who are registered with a dentist, are up to date with their checks at the time of the LAC health assessment. Locala's 'Registered with Dentist' data shows 100% of looked after children up to age 5 (omitting babies under 18 months) & 93% of children age 5 -18ys were registered at the dentist. The Designated Nurse is informed immediately by electronic task from Locala, of any children not registered to allow action to be taken. The Designated Nurse liaises with Chairman of Clinical Executive Dental Committee, if issues arise.

Substance misuse

2.56% of Looked after young people were identified at their last review health assessment, as having a dependant problem with substances. Reduction in number of LAC cohort, resulted in 0.03% percentage rise. Consideration must be given to the difficulty in obtaining an accurate figure, as it is dependent on the young person admitting the extent of the issue, given that it is illegal and they may not wish to share the information. Those young people who refuse any support are discussed with the local support service, to try to have a targeted response. Any young person mis-using substances at any level are offered support.

Early permanence placements

We continue to consider early permanence placements for children with a plan for adoption and have made some improvements in this area in terms of timescales for children.

Child permanence reports

We have established weekly clinics to support children's social workers who are undertaking child permanence reports, sibling assessments and considering whether a plan for adoption is appropriate. This is a joint initiative between the Assessment & Intervention Service and One Adoption and will be supported by regular training and workshops.

One Adoption West Yorkshire Children with a plan for adoption

Managers from One Adoption West Yorkshire have attended the Corporate Parenting Board in January 2019, and will be invited to a future meeting to update again.

Senior Managers from One Adoption meet with relevant senior managers within the council on a regular basis. We have implemented a new arrangement for Agency Decision Maker, bringing us in line with our colleagues in Leeds and the remaining three local authorities in West Yorkshire, to ensure continuity and consistency for care proceedings dealt with in the Leeds Court Centre.

We continue to consider early permanence placements for children with a plan for adoption and have made improvements in this area in terms of timescales for children. There is now a fully agreed and operational flow chart which outlines the process involved for all workers from the two agencies and clarifies roles and responsibilities. Senior managers from One Adoption are meeting with relevant senior managers with the council on a regular basis. The average timescale increased in Feb 19, with an average of 342.2 days as compared to 349.3 days in Jan 2019. Overall this remains very good performance compared to the Statistical Neighbours and National averages, 532.5 and 520.0 days respectively, from the most recent Adoption Scorecard (3-year average outcome to March 2017). Kirklees performance on the Scorecard was 549 days, so there has been a considerable improvement since this time.

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One Adoption continue to attend legal gateway on a weekly basis in order to track children with a plan for adoption and to ensure a family finder is allocated.

If an adoption placement ceases then One Adoption have a 'disruption review' and their new procedure is on our procedures website. There will be work with Kirklees staff as to the implementation of this process.

We have a structured Agency Decision Making process in relation to adoption planning. This includes legal and medical advice as well as advice from One Adoption West Yorkshire. Adoption Support Fund there has been an increase in successful applications for Kirklees children that resulted in an increase of support, training and therapeutic input.

What do we want to improve?

To the end of Feb 19, 11.9% (21 children) had been adopted as a percentage of children leaving care in a 12-month rolling period. This is below the 12-month high of 12.9% seen in Mar 18. The 12-month average is 11.8% (23).

Kirklees remain below England rate of 13% (2018) and statistical neighbour rate of 16% (2017). The family finding team at One Adoption with responsibility for Kirklees will be moving to Civic Centre in the near future, which will improve areas of communication and partnership working to assist timely adoptions.

Early Permanence Planning

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Adoption Support Fund

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EDUCATION

What difference did we make?

The initial PEP Completion rate had increased to September 2018. All initial PEP's have been completed within 10 working days of notification to the Virtual School since 01/09/2018. The issue appears to be related to the time taken to update Liquid Logic with new into care details.

Attendance is steady as is the number of persistent absentee pupils. We continue to maintain a strong focus on pupils not in full-time educational provision. Wherever possible we look to ensure a return to full time education as soon as possible but these situations are often very complex. The number of young people not in full-time education has decreased, we have 2 young people not on a school roll for exceptional reasons and they have a personalised package of education in place. Whilst we keep this as a priority, performance is now better than Statistical Neighbours and the national picture

What do we want to improve?

Ensure that no child in our care is without full time education provision or placed on a restrictive timetable PEP Completion. We continue to work with social work teams to improve both PEP and initial PEP completion. This includes weekly updates to Social Work managers and regular chase up emails and phone calls to Social Workers where there is missing information. This is a concern for us and the implementation of Liquid Logic had contributed to a decline in performance within timescale. We appear to also have an ongoing issue around the notification of when a young person comes into care, impacting on initial PEP completion data.

We are working together across services to try to resolve these issues, for example to enable a PEP alert for all Social Workers on the Liquid Logic system.

Looked after Children involved in the criminal justice system

Over the past 2 years there has been a welcome increase in the percentage of LAC young people having a successful outcome to their YOT intervention. In fact during 2017/18, 75% of LAC young people on Orders to the YOT successfully completed their intervention, compared with 68% of the general YOT population, a remarkable turn-around. For the 1st Quarter of this year (Apr to June) the percentage of LAC offending is 2.13%, a very slight reduction on the same period last year of 2.32%.

The 2nd Quarter (July – Sept 18) again gives a figure of 2.13% of LAC offending, this indicates that we are on target for 2018/19 to have the same LAC offending rate as in 2017/18. The 3rd quarter (Oct to Dec 18) the percentage of LAC offending is 0.61%, which gives us a total of 4.88% April to Dec 18. All being well, the continuing of this trend for the next quarter will result in a reduction in the LAC offending for the full year

What do we want to improve?

Compared to last year there has been a small increase in the percentage of LAC offending. In the year 2016/17, 6.14% of LAC had offended, compared to 2017/18 when the figure was 7.26%. While the overall performance this last year is disappointing, given the steady reduction over the previous few years, the figure of 7.26% is significantly lower than 2012/13 when almost 10% of LAC offended. The YOT will continue to closely monitor the figures to ensure that we are ready to respond should the situation deteriorate. The latest published figures for a full year (2015/16) show a national average of 5% of LAC offending, while regionally the range was between 5% and 9%. It should be noted that these returns are provided by each local authority individually and we are not aware of any validation exercise. Also numerous local authorities, locally and nationally have not submitted any figures.

LEAVING CARE

What difference did we make?

Contact with care leavers – We are maintaining a high percentage of care leavers we are in touch with, currently in touch with 98% of care leavers, this has to be viewed in the context of this group all being aged 18 plus. In some situations, young people are not wanting to keep contact with their Personal Advisor, the team work innovatively to keep in touch, we have a best practice protocol in place.

Number of young people in suitable accommodation

There has been a small decrease in the number of young people in suitable accommodation since December 2018 down from 90.6% to 89.8% in January 2019, and has decreased again slightly to 89.1% in February 2019. We continue to maintain strong links with KNH and Housing and the Housing Panel is enabling us to ensure that suitable accommodation is available in a timelier manner when young people are moving to their own accommodation.

We have recently made some strong links with private housing providers and are considering how collectively we can improve our skills for independence training. We now have life skills and pre-tenancy training in place held weekly at “No.11” and where possible link young people with tenancy support when housed in KNH tenancies. We also intend to have a trainer flat arrangement in operation in the near future for some of our young people who we believe may struggle with transition.

Personal Advisors

The service report that all of our Young People aged 17 and 4 months have an allocated PA, as well as an allocated Social Worker. We have been able to strengthen our pathway planning in relation to developing timely transitions with young people.

Education Employment Training

Our performance in relation to Employment, Education and Training (EET) indicator is a focus for improvement we are now 6% above statistical neighbours with 57.1% of

care leavers in education employment or training we have a C&K Careers Advisor in the Leaving Care Service. We have a pro-active multi agency group to improve opportunities in partnership working and there is a real desire to ensure our young people are afforded the best of opportunities in relation to EET. We are also working on opening a similar service to number 11 in the North of the district to improve reach with our young people.

Pathway Plans

We continue to work with the Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings.

What do we want to improve?

Number of young people with a pathway plan – The number of young people with a pathway plan has a reduction which is due to the recording of plans on Liquid Logic. Work is currently ongoing within the service and it is expected that the measure will improve in the March and April data.. We have recruited new Personal Advisors this has led to improved Pathway Planning. We continue to work with the Personal Advisors to ensure pathway plans are completed in a timely manner to meet targets with a focus going forward on the improvement of the quality of plans, the involvement of young people and ensuring we capture their wishes and feelings.

Childrens Homes

The Councils five Ofsted Registered Childrens Homes have all been inspected unannounced by Ofsted within this financial year, for their main annual inspection four are graded as Good and one Outstanding. The homes will be re inspected unannounced in this financial year

2. Information required to take a decision

Not applicable

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Not applicable

3.2 Working with Partners

Not applicable

3.3 Place Based Working

Not applicable

3.4 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

Oversight and monitoring of children in care performance to continue at future Corporate Parenting Board to monitor progress, as requested by the Chair.

3.5 **Reducing demand of services**

Not applicable

3.6 **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

Not applicable

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable

5. **Next steps**

Managers to lead the focus on areas of performance with staff, in areas where outcome data is not what we expect it to be.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

That the report and key highlights on performance within Children in Care Services be noted.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

Not applicable

8. **Contact officer**

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9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Monthly performance information is used to inform the narrative for this report

10. **Service Director responsible**

Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director (Learning and Early Support)

Elaine McShane, Service Director (Family Support and Child Protection)