



Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 18 December 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 October 31st 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?	Mel Meggs 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

This graph shows the number of children in care 641 (excluding any looked after children receiving only S20 short term breaks) alongside the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

The current number of LAC equates to a rate per 10,000 population aged 0-17 of 64.0.

This compares to a statistical neighbour average of 86.1 and a national average of 64.0 based on published data for March 2018.

Kirklees (Oct 19) = 64.0

Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1

England (2018) = 64.0

Placement Stability and Support

The Legal Gateway Permanence Panel continues to support consistency in regards 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. We are reviewing 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 78 on 1st August 2019

The total number of children in care was 641 on 31st October, the same as September, but up from 635 in August. In terms of comparators Kirklees (Oct 19) 64.0 data shows 10.000 CIC per child population for Kirklees. Statistical Neighbours (2018) = 86.1 England (2018) = 64.0 per 10.000 child population

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.

Whilst the data shows improvement in certain areas we are focussing particularly on the areas where data does not show improvement, for example LAC with three and four placement changes in the previous 12-month period. We are currently reviewing the work of the team which will ensure that we are able to improve our outcomes for children and young people.

Health of Children in Care

Initial health assessments:

Kirklees Local Authority (LA) rolling 12-month data shows 87.4% were completed in timescales. Locala monthly data reports that 100% were completed in timescales. The difference in comparison with Locala data is that in August, 4 siblings' assessments placed with a parent, were asked to be re-arranged on the final date of statutory timescales. This will affect the LA data until August 2020.

Review health assessments:

Kirklees rolling 12-month data for developmental assessments completed in timescales, i.e. children under 5 years old, were 94% and for annual assessments, i.e. children over 5 years old, were 96.4% on time. Locala monthly data records that 92% of the developmental and 100% of the annual assessments were completed in timescales. There were 2 late RHA's. (Reasons – 1x carer cancelled and then not in for re-arranged appointment, 1 x Other LA capacity issues). All Kirklees children who decline an assessment, are informed that a 'Virtual' assessment will be completed if they agree. The 'Virtual' assessment gathers available health information from current records and discussions with carers and the social worker. The assessment information helps to inform the LAC reviews and those caring for the children of any outstanding health needs. These are not counted in the data.

Dental Checks within last 12 months:

Kirklees rolling 12-month data shows that 79.3% of LAC have been recorded as having received a dental check. This figure will be higher, as it relies on being notified after each dental attendance, in between health assessments. Additional actions are undertaken to find this information other than at their health assessment i.e. when an SDQ is sent out, monthly lists of missing information etc. The missing information is less likely for children up to age 5 as this is asked at their '6-monthly' RHA. For children over age 5, this information is reported annually.

Registered at dentist:

Locala monthly data shows 100% of children up to age 5 (omitting babies under 18 months) and 98% of children over age 5 were registered with the dentist at the time of their RHA. The Designated Nurse is informed following the child's health assessment by electronic task from Locala, of any children not registered to allow action to be taken. The Designated Nurse met with a Public Health colleague in July 19 to look at including Looked after Children and Care Leavers, as a cohort to automatically access dental registration, in the 'Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan 2019-24', which is in draft format currently.

Substance misuse:

1.05% (n5) of looked after young people were identified at their last review health assessment, as having a dependant problem with substances. The number has reduced by 1 in the 12 month rolling data collection. 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. (National figure 4%). Those young people who refuse any support are discussed with the local support service, to try to have a targeted response. Any young person misusing substances at any level is offered support.

What difference did we make?

To the end of October 19, 15.9% (31 children) had been adopted as a percentage of children leaving care in a 12-month rolling period. At the level of performance to October 19, Kirklees is now above the England rate of 13.0% (2018) and the Statistical Neighbours rate of 15.5% (2018).

The average timescale has been increasing and reached 461.8 days in September 19, reducing slightly to 460.8 in Oct 19. Overall this remains better than the Statistical Neighbours and National averages, 512.4 and 486.0 days respectively, from the most recent Adoption Scorecard (3-year average outcome to March 2018). Kirklees performance on the Scorecard was 487 days, so performance has improved since this time.

The average timescale improved slightly to 218.9 days in October 19. Overall this is close to the Statistical Neighbours average of 215.3, from the most recent Adoption Scorecard (3-year average outcome to March 2018). Kirklees performance on the Scorecard was 198 days, so there has been an increase in the average timescale since this time.

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 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?

Develop an even closer working relationship between One Adoption West Yorkshire and Kirklees social workers and managers, to ensure we maximise the potential benefits of the regional adoption agency in Kirklees. The family finding team at One Adoption with responsibility for Kirklees have now moved into Civic centre 1 which will improve areas of communication and partnership working to assist timely adoption for our children.

Head of Service Narrative: Janet Tolley- Virtual School Head Teacher:

What difference did we make?

94.3% initial PEP's have been completed within 10 school days of notification to the Virtual School since 01/09/2019. We continue to work with social work teams to improve both PEP and initial PEP completion and the quality assurance of PEP's. This includes weekly updates to Social Work managers and regular chase up emails and phone calls to Social Workers where there is missing information. We are currently moving to termly PEP's to meet statutory requirements and this will need to be clearly communicated and implemented across the service as a priority. Percentage of LAC attendance is similar to this time last year, and the percentage of persistent absentee pupils has improved.

81% of school moves have been carefully planned across service to ensure a smooth transition with no break in provision.

What do we want to improve?

We will have a focus on termly PEP completion as all pupils should now have a termly PEP from 1st Sept 2019. Attendance/PA is an ongoing concern as we remain slightly below regional data. All pupils with attendance less than 90% have a PA plan in place agreed by all professionals working with the young person.

We continue to maintain a strong focus on pupils not in full-time education 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 slightly decreased.

Reduce the number of young people who have 20 plus days between a school move.

Looked after Children Reviews and Missing

Service Narrative

What difference did we make?

22 requests for Initial Review forms (SR1's) were received by the Child Protection and Review unit in October 2019 – relating to 32 children in total. This was an increase of 13 children from previous Month (September). 100% were allocated an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) within 24 hours.

In October there were 176 Review Meetings held for children. Child Looked after Reviews held within timescales remained at over 90%. Independent Reviewing Officer's closely monitor Review timescales to ensure that a high percentage of reviews continue to be held on time. Mid-ways reviews are embedded in practice and this continues to improve evidence of Independent Reviewing Officer's oversight on children's files.

There has been an increase with regards to the number of Children in Care who have received a statutory visit in line with practice standards we continue to monitor the visits as part of our service performance meetings. The recent introduction of Advanced Practitioners within the service will further enhance the improvement with regards to our performance. Twenty children were supported at their Looked after Review by an Advocate from the Children's Right's Team.

What do we want to improve?

The Service Manager is increasing focus on statutory visit compliance to improve the performance. Regular performance meetings are held within the service to ensure that we are able to improve our performance.

We will ensure that the issues of risk and vulnerability are clearly considered at each Child Looked After review, where relevant.

Children New into Care referrals to the Child Protection Review Unit to be made in a consistent and timely manner.

Child participation in the Looked after Reviews – Delays in recording on Liquid Logic affect reporting of the monthly performance.

Children in Care involved in the criminal justice system

Service Narrative

For the year 2018/2019 65.8% of CIC young people have successfully completed their interventions which in comparison with the previous year is a decrease of 10% but is however a much-improved picture from 3 years ago when less than 30% of CIC young people successfully completed their interventions. For the 2nd quarter of this year (July to Sept 2019) the percentage of CIC offending is 1.15% which is an improvement from 2.13% for the same period last year. The figure for the period April to September 2019 is 2.01% of CIC offended which again is an improvement on the same period last year where the figure was 4.26%. Although there has been a slight increase in the number of CIC offending these continue to be relatively small numbers of young people in comparison to the larger CIC cohort.

This figure continues to be encouraging when in 2010 almost 13% of Kirklees CIC were convicted of an offence, this compared with a national average of about 5% and a local average of 7%.

The number of CIC involved with the YOT has reduced by four from the previous month. Recent West Yorkshire data indicates that rates of reoffending overall by young people is lower in Kirklees than neighbouring Councils.

What do we want to improve?

There has been a significant reduction in offending by CIC between 2017/18, 7.26% and 2018/19 5.48%. The latest quarterly figure for offending 1.15% is also better than the second quarter of last year 2.13%. Through interventions by the YOT CIC team, restorative processes, liaison with Children's Homes and creative out of court disposals it is hoped the offending rate will continue to fall.

LEAVING CARE

What difference did we make?

Contact with care leavers

There has been a slight increase however we continue to maintain a high percentage of care leavers we are in touch with, currently in touch with 83.6% 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 decrease in the number of young people in suitable accommodation. This is linked to young people who are taken into custody, rather than a lack of suitable accommodation in the borough. 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 "No 12" and where possible link young people with tenancy support when housed in KNH tenancies.

Kirklees Commitment to Care Leavers

We now have an established service at our new drop in no 12 in the North of the district which has improved our reach with our young people.

Personal Advisors

The service report shows that 100% 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 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.

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 increased which is in part due to the better recording of plans on Liquid Logic. Work is currently ongoing within the service and it is expected that the measure will improve further. 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. We are currently undertaking work to analyse the decline in young people placed in suitable accommodation.

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)