



Highlight Report on Performance for the Board

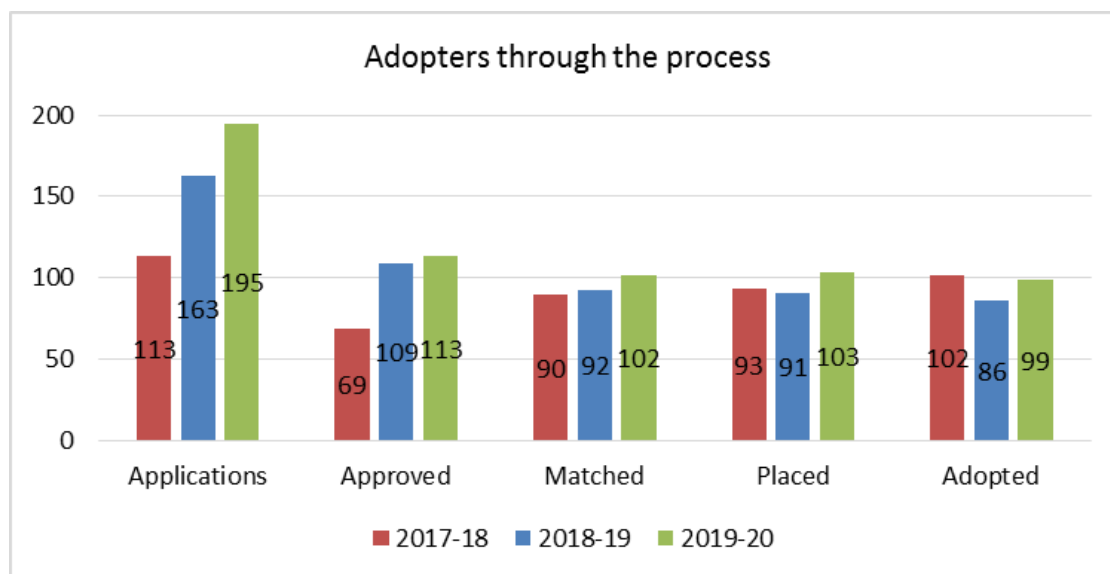
2019-20 Full Year

Kirklees

Sufficiency: Are enough of the right kind of adopters being recruited and approved to meet the needs of the children waiting:

Adopter recruitment

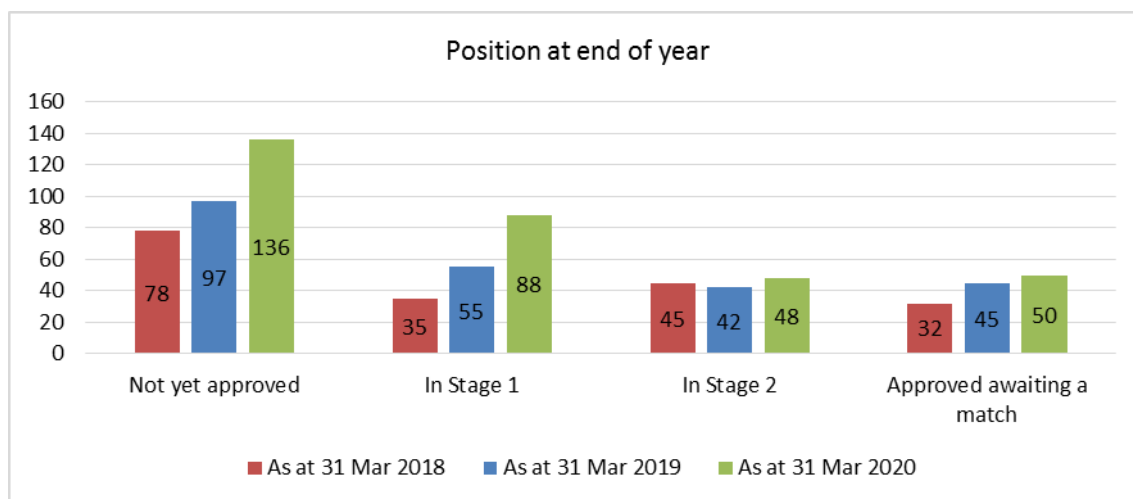
As at 31/3/20, 113 adoptive families have been approved, 102 families have been matched with children, 100 of these being with children from the West Yorkshire region.



Within the 113 households, 219 individuals were approved. Of these, 21 (10%) are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. We need to improve our percentage of BME carers and keep a focus on ensuring that we approve a full range of adoptive families to meet the range of children requiring placement, while at the same time not relying on matching children with regard to ethnic identity as an overriding factor. 3 (2.6%) of the households identified as LGBTQ+.

16 households were approved for sibling groups and 34 households were open to Early Permanence Placements. 16 households who were approved were open to children aged 4 years and over. 2 households were able to consider a child with a disability.

There is still more to do around recruiting adopters for sibling groups, which is reflected in the development of additional training to offer additional support to those considering this. This training was due to commence in April 2020, and is now being reviewed and further developed into an online program in response to Covid19.



Of the 163 adoptive families who ended Stage One in 2019/20, the average time in stage one was 3 months; 45% were completed within the 2 month timescale.

Of the 113 adoptive families who ended Stage Two (Approved) in 2019/20, the average time in stage two was 4 months; 76% were completed within the 4 month timescale.

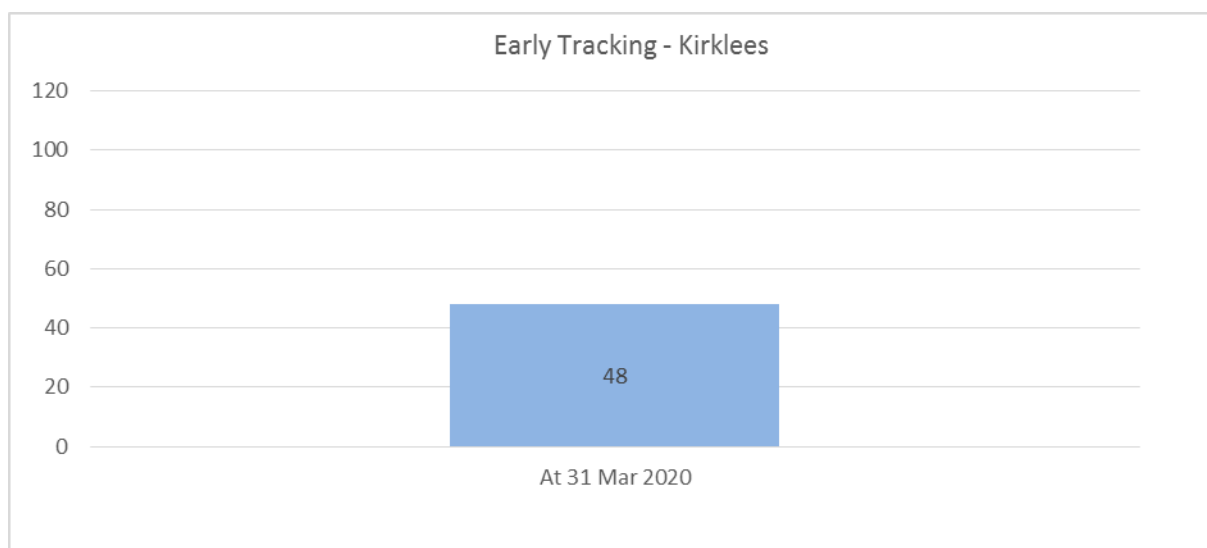
Analysis of delays during Stage 1 has shown the outstanding GP medical reports and DBS checks are an overriding factor. Obtaining additional information from health consultants and other professionals in response to information contained in health and local authority checks also contributes. Exploration is currently underway to ascertain where changes to process could reduce this delay.

At the end of quarter 4 there are 136 families who are not yet approved, 88 of these families are in stage 1 of the assessment process and 48 are in stage 2. OAWY has seen an increase in the number of prospective adoptive families entering the adoption process over quarter 4. This will impact on the number of applicants in stage 2 of the process in the next quarter and should result in an increase in the approved adopters by the end of quarter 1. However, at present some applicants are unable to proceed to stage 2 of the process as a result of Covid19, which may mean that the increase in approved adopters is not seen until quarter 2.

Early Tracking

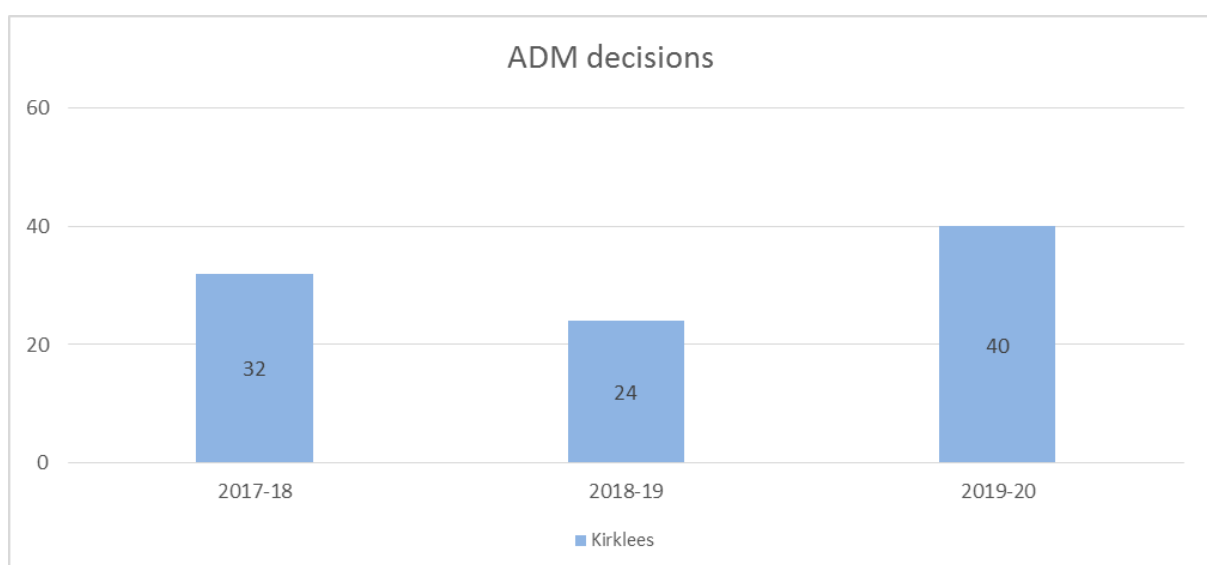
At the end of March 2020 there were 48 children in Kirklees within the early tracking and awaiting a decision on whether a plan of adoption would be identified.

Of the 48 children, 20 were hard to place, consisting of 3 BME children, 7 over the age of 5 and 12 were part of a sibling group. Some of the 20 children will have more than one characteristic.



The children with a plan for adoption during 2019- 20

Between 1/4/19 and 31/3/20, 40 children had a plan for adoption ratified by Kirklees Agency Decision Makers. Of these 40 children, there were 22 female and 18 male children.



Ethnicity

Of the 40 children with a plan for adoption ratified so far this year, 70% were from White British backgrounds (including information not obtained) and 12 children (30%) were from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.

Placement with Siblings

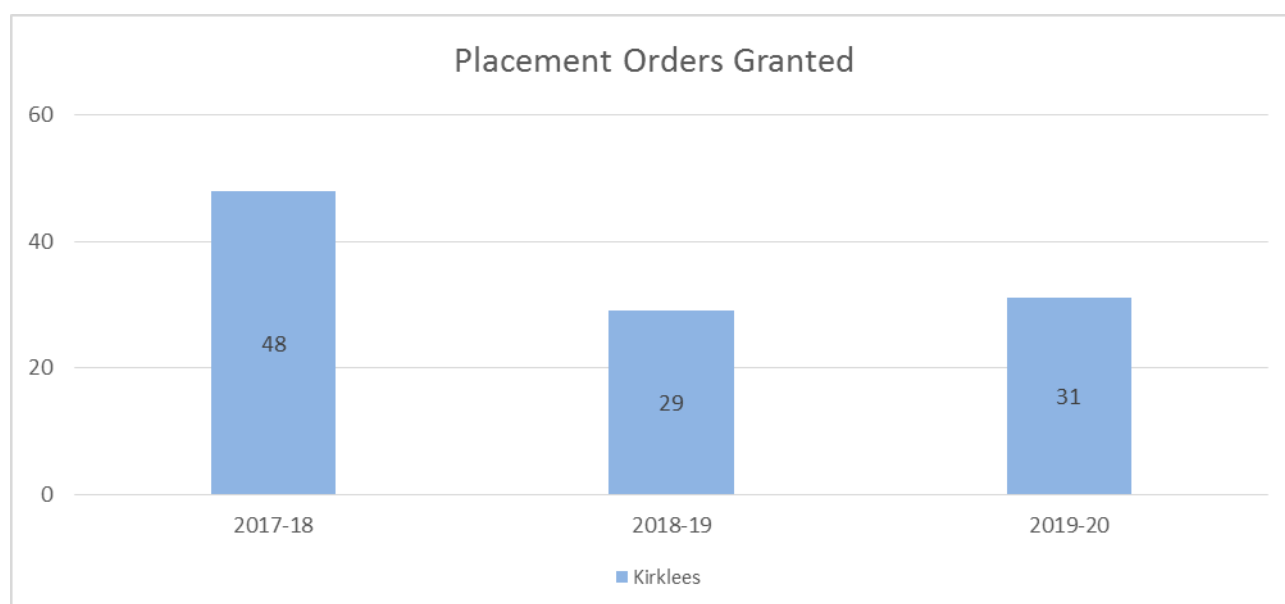
As a general principle, siblings will be placed together; however, due to the individual needs of children, this is not always appropriate and cannot always be achieved. It is essential that robust sibling assessments are carried out to ensure good quality decision making and support plans are evidence based if children are placed together or apart. The numbers of children requiring adoption in sibling groups at the end of the year is 23 children (this includes those with a match and/or placed). 6 of the 23 children were placed during 2019-20.

Children with an adoption plan

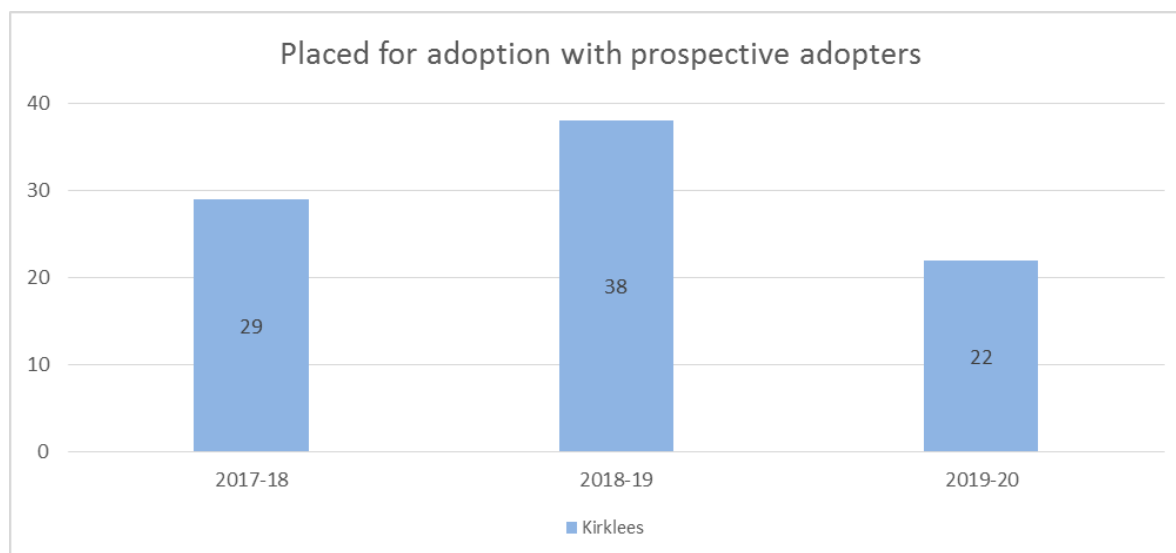
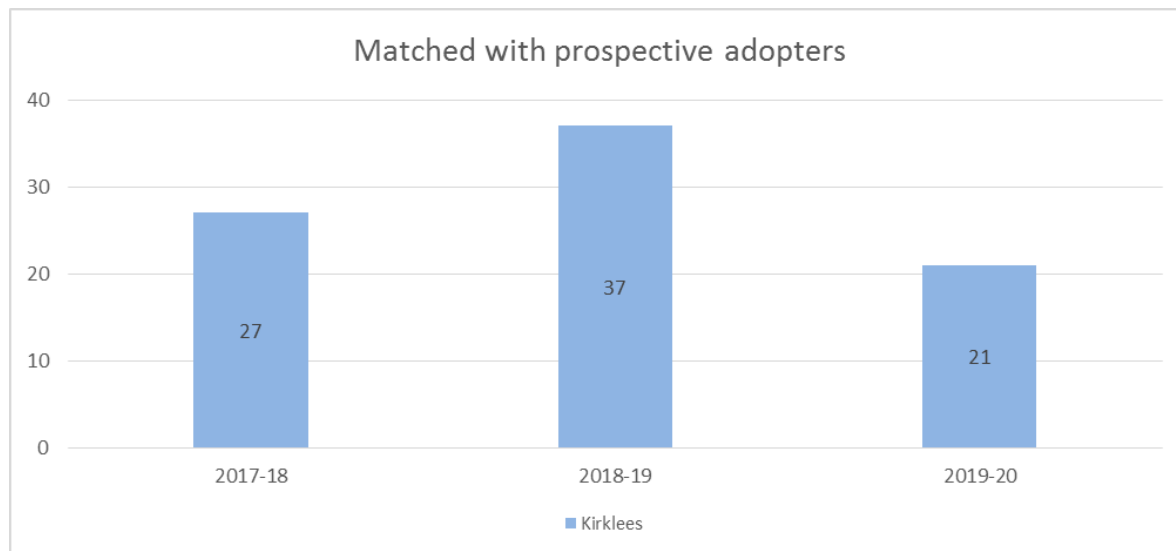
As of the end of March 2020 there are 36 children with a plan for adoption from Kirklees not currently placed and requiring adopters. 5 children out of the 23 are under 2 years, 11 are between 2 and 4 years and 2 children are 5 years of age or older. 2 of these 36 children have a potential match identified.

From the children waiting for a placement there are 21 girls and 15 boys, and 42% are children from BME backgrounds. There are 16 children part of a sibling group.

The plans for these children are actively reviewed with clear monitoring and tracking systems to understand the range of family finding activity going on for these children and whether adoption remains the right plan for each child. The delays for these children are related primarily to the needs of the children; the need to place siblings together, the age of the children or their particular special needs or complexity.



Timeliness: Are children being matched and placed without delay including those children who wait longer?

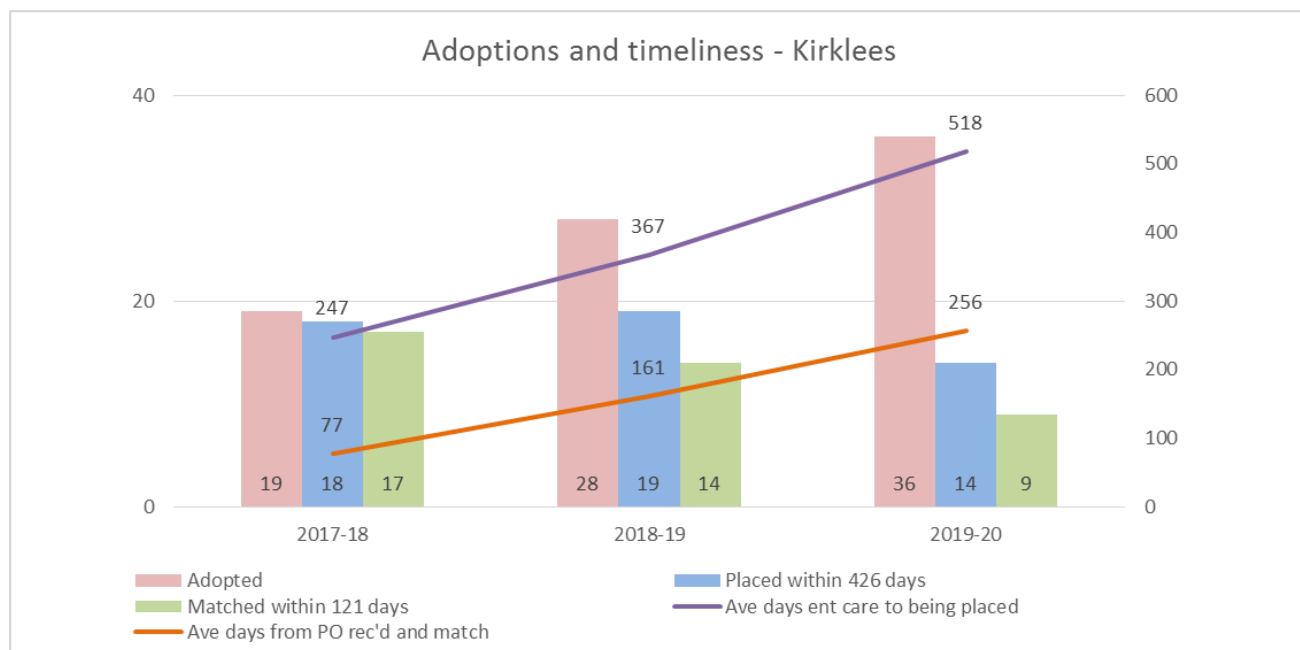


The number of children matched and placed with prospective adopters has been broadly consistent with the previous year with a slight increase on 2019/20 of both children matched and those placed for adoption,

In Quarter 4 the number of children matched has increased by 1 compared to the previous quarter, whereas children placed has increased by 5.

4 of the 6 children placed were those who wait longer due to their needs (e.g. over the age of 5 years; sibling groups, BME & children with disabilities), 3 of the 4 children matched were children who wait longer.

A1 indicator (children adopted)

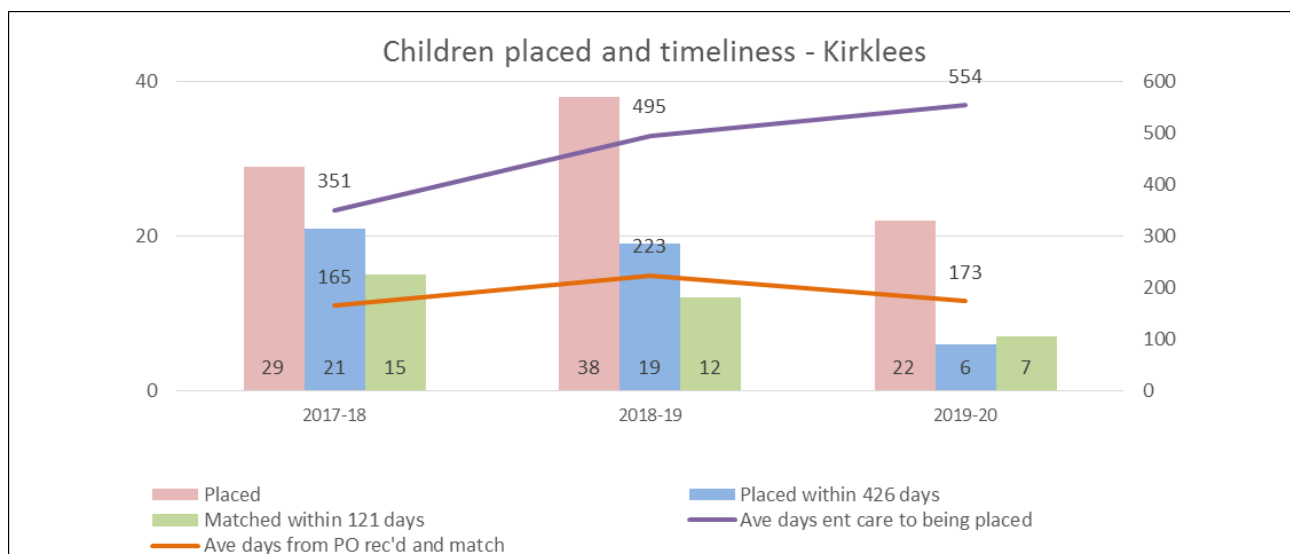


The graph immediately above is with regard to children adopted in the period, where there were 36 children adopted.

The annual average for A1 is 518 days. There were 17 children where their A1 average was over 500 days, 13 of those children were classed as harder to place, and 6 children had 2 or more of the harder to place characteristics. Without the 17 children then A1 average is 379 days. The average for quarter 4 increased to 641, there were 5 children who were older children at the time of their placement, 3 were over 5.

The annual A2 scorecard indicator 256 which exceeds the 121 day National Indicator, the average in quarter 4 increased and of the 5 children adopted in Quarter 4, 3 of these were classed as children who wait longer to match; 1 child waited nearly 3 years for a match, which affects the overall average timeliness. All children adopted in the quarter had an average over 121, one child has a very high A2 average.

A1 indicator (children placed)



This shows a large increase in timeliness, well above the national indicator of 426.

Of the 6 children placed in Q4, 5 children had more than 500 days between entering care and being placed making the average 806 days, without these 5 children it brings the average down to 247, well below the national indicator, 1 child came into care in 2015 and was placed in Q4.

4 of the 5 children who took more than 500 days from entering care to being placed were classed as hard to place, 2 were part of a sibling group and 2 children were aged over 5 years and part of a sibling group.

Case examples of all the children placed in Q4:-

4 were children who wait longer (e.g. classed by the DfE as harder to place children):

- 2 were aged 5+ years;
- 4 were part of a sibling group;
- 0 were Black and minority ethnic (BME).
- 2 children had 2 or more of the above characteristics

A2 indicator of the children placed:

The 6 children placed in Q4 took more than 121 days from Placement Order to match.

At the end of March 2020 there are 5 children who have been waiting for at least 18 months since entering care and are not yet placed for adoption;

4 are classed as “hard to place” children (5+years old, sibling group, disability, BME), of which 3 have more than one of these characteristics. 1 of the 5 children is,

however, not classed as hard to place so further exploration of this 1 child, to understand the issues, is underway.

It is evident that there has been some delay with foster carer adoptions. A protocol has now been agreed with the 5 LA's to progress swift decision making regarding financial support so that these can be resolved before full assessment commences.

Plans are in place for One Adoption West Yorkshire and Kirklees to work together in undertaking an analysis of timeliness relating to adoption to identify themes and areas of practice which could be strengthened. In addition, joint auditing of cases will be undertaken to ensure children's care plans for adoption

Support: Is the right kind of support being provided?

At the end of March 2020 there were 113 cases allocated to the Adoption Support Service from Kirklees who have an Adoption Support Plan and are in receipt of or are awaiting therapeutic support via the Adoption Support Fund.

Between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020, 76 successful applications have been made to the Adoption Support Fund in respect of adopted children in Kirklees accessing £335,545.30 for therapeutic support.

There has been an increase in referrals for Adoption Support services; there was 12 families from Kirklees awaiting allocation at the end of March 2020. In the interim all the families continue to have access to the Core Support Services and some are accessing these. We hold monthly tracking and allocation meetings to ensure those families who are waiting are discussed routinely and progress to allocation is monitored. Keep in touch phone calls are made to some families who are waiting for an allocated worker.

There are currently 262 letterbox contact plans facilitated for Kirklees children and young people by One Adoption West Yorkshire.

Between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020, 269 referrals were made to PAC-UK for families inclusive of adult adoptees, birth parents/relatives across West Yorkshire. 48 (18%) were families living in Kirklees.