

Name of meeting: Children's Scrutiny Panel
Date: 08 November 2019
Title of report: Repeat Child Protection Plans

Purpose of report: The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of repeat Child Protection plans, where a child or young person previously subject to a Child Protection Plan, is made subject to a second plan within two years of the previous plan ending.

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?	Yes/ no or Not Applicable No If yes give the reason why
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – Yes/No Not applicable Private Report/Private Appendix – Yes/No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes/No or Not Applicable Not applicable If no give the reason why not
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?	Tom Brailsford, Service Director for Resources, Improvement and Partnerships. N/A N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Viv Kendrick, Children's Portfolio

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes; the data in this report relates to a relative small number of children, consequently only headline data has been included.

1. Summary

The number of the repeat Child Protection Plans observed within a Local Authority area is often used as an indicator of safeguarding effectiveness. However, for a number of children who experience complex and fluctuating family circumstances and /or new contextual risks, a repeat Child Protection Plan is an appropriate safeguarding response.

The reasons to why children are made subject a repeat Child Protection Plan are varied. Increased risk and vulnerability factors for a child can include a change in family life circumstances, parent relationship breakdowns, new or resumed adult relationships, parental substance misuse, new or increased concern relating to adult mental health problems / domestic abuse, and /or contextual factors from outside the home, such as a child being assessed to be at risk of significant harm from exploitation.

Data identifies that currently there are 70 children in Kirklees who have been made subject to a repeat Child Protection plan within two years of their previous Child Protection plan ending. The ethnicity for the majority of these children is White British, with gender and age range, between 0 to 15 years old evenly represented in the cohort. A large percentage of repeat Child Protection Plans made in the last twelve months were in relation to the risk of significant harm category of Neglect, with the categories of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, less represented.

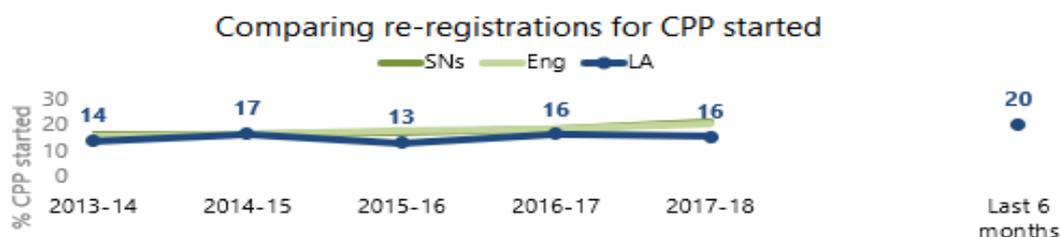
Of these 70 repeat Child Protection plans, a number ended after a relatively short period of time, either due to children becoming looked after, or professional decision making assessing that the identified concerns had reduced sufficiently enough to enable children and families to receive support and intervention via a Child In Need plan.

Of the 70 children identified as having a repeat Child protection plan, 45 remain subject to one. The gender split for these children is slightly more for boys and young men (24). The ethnicity of the majority of the children is White British, with the Pakistani being the second largest cohort. The age range of the current cohort subject to a repeat Child Protection plan is between 1 to 17 years old, with children aged between 1 to 4 years old, and 10 and 15 years old, accounting for the largest cohorts.

For the half of the children made subject to a repeat plan, the second plan commenced over a year after the previous plan ended.

Neglect was the overriding initial significant risk of harm category for the repeat plans; in the last twelve months no children had a repeat initial significant risk of harm category of physical abuse, and less children were made subject to a plan under the category of emotional abuse.

When comparing re-registrations for Child Protection plan's for children who have previously been subject to a previous plan during their life time, the number of repeat Child Protection plans in Kirklees has historically been below our statistical neighbours and the national figure. However, it is recognised that our figures have been increasingly in-line with these comparators over the past six months.



	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Last 6 months
Kirklees	13.7	16.7	13.1	16.4	15.6	20.3
Statistical Neighbours	16.5	16.7	17.3	18.8	21.2	-
England	15.8	16.6	17.9	18.7	20.2	-

2. Information required to take a decision

No decision is required: this report has been submitted at the request of the Children's Scrutiny Board to gain an increased understanding of the context relating to repeat Child Protection plans

3. Implications for the Council

- **Working with People:** Not applicable
- **Working with Partners:** Not applicable
- **Place Based Working:** Not applicable
- **Improving outcomes for children**

Once a Child Protection plan has ended there can be, in some circumstances, a tendency for families to 'disengage' with professional support. The Children's Social Care Improvement plan, and the cross directorate work being undertaken to embed Early Support within local communities, will strengthen the current offer available to children and families who require access to support and intervention to sustain change, and help to avoid circumstances escalating to a point where a repeat Child Protection plan is required.

A repeat Child Protection plan should prompt all professionals /agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of previous and any current intervention with a child and their family, in order to help identify any opportunities for agency /professional development, and improve outcomes for children and their families. However, this activity should also give full consideration to the fact that a repeat Child Protection plan may be the result of significant and /or unpredictable changes of a child's family circumstances /situation, and therefore is an appropriate safeguarding response.

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

4. Consultees and their opinions

5. Next steps and timelines

Through Quality Assurance activity, Children's Social Care and the Child Protection Review Unit will continue to monitor the professional response for children and families subject to Child Protection plans. The Child Protection and Review Unit (CPRU) has recently introduced a new process to review all requests for Initial Child Protection Case Conferences (ICPCC's) and to strengthen discussions between the CPRU and Children's Social Care, to help ensure that all requests for ICPCC's are appropriate.

The Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework is currently under review. The review will include revisiting the current structure and implementation of thematic and interactive audits for Children's Social Care. Forward planning for audit activity will include a detailed focus on repeat Child Protection Plans, to help identify any areas for multi-agency professional development that could reduce the likelihood of children being made subject to repeat Child Protection Plans.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations N/A

8. Contact officer

Sara Miles, Interim Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding, Resources, Improvement and Partnerships.

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

10. Service Director responsible

Tom Brailsford, Service Director for Resources, Improvements and Partnerships.