

# Key Performance Obsessions

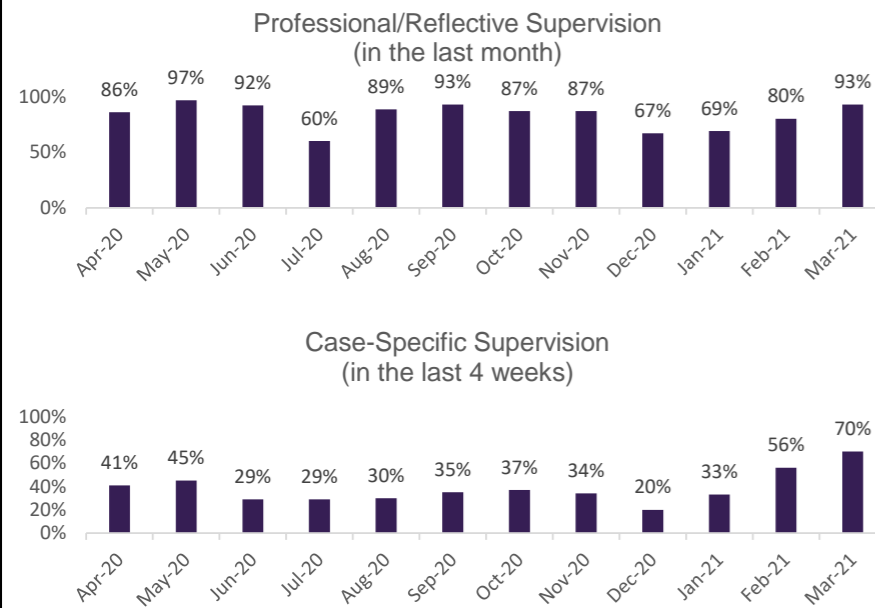
## Children's Social Care Services

### March 2021



Please note, this Key Performance Obsessions report is an emerging tool to be used by the Children's Services Improvement Board. It contains illustrative examples to aid the swift enactment of performance scrutiny by the Board. Figures are updated at the end of each quarter, to capture any delayed recording.

#### Management oversight



Most staff continue to experience regular professional supervision, with many teams performing at 100%. An increase in new work has had some impact on capacity for supervision in the C&FF service.

Case supervision performance has improved considerably in March, following changes to Mosaic and a focused session at SMT.

#### An open & inclusive culture

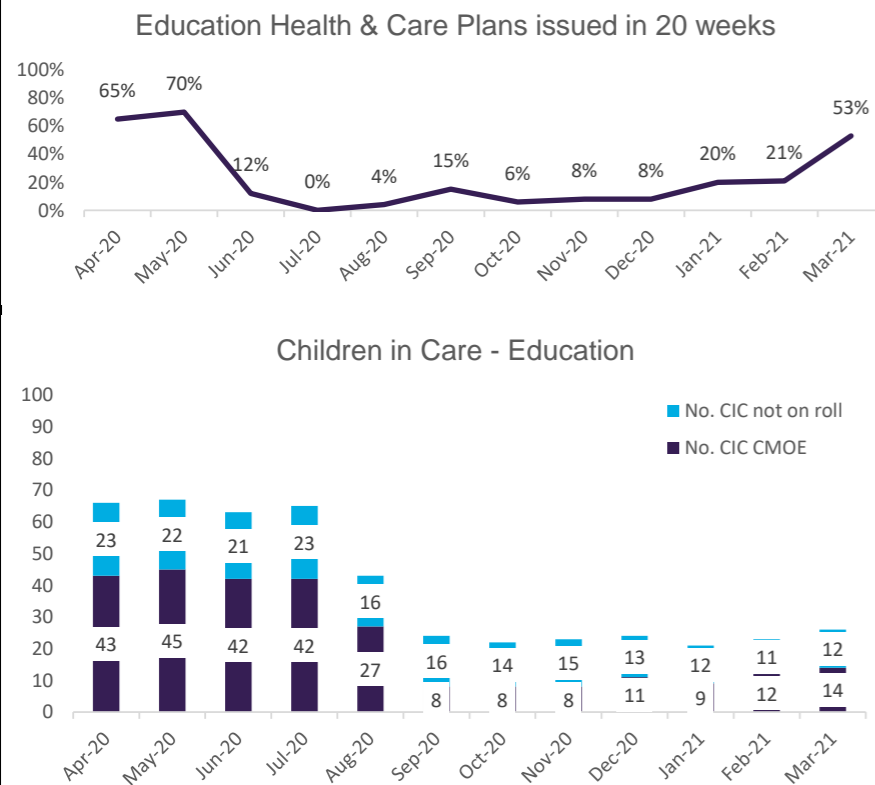
##### Progress Forum

The Pulse Survey has been shared with staff promoting the opportunity to participate, collaborate and make changes within BCP Children's Services Directorate in order to enhance the way we work and improve the way we feel about the work we do. The Progress Forum identifies areas within Children's Services that need improvement – those areas are identified by colleagues through completion of the survey and the Progress Forum shapes the way these improvements are to be made within the service. The Progress Forum members are a range of staff, managers and senior managers across the organisation who have volunteered to be forum members. The first questionnaire sent out in April 2021 was responded to by 30% of Children's Services staff. The three main priorities that have been raised are 1) Workforce Stability 2) Clarity and Communication across the service 3) Staff Numbers and Capacity. 70 staff across the service have volunteered to be part of the working group to address the issues raised under these priority areas and group leaders are taking this forward with the first meetings being held w/c 10 May 2021. The second questionnaire is currently out for completion.

##### Extended Leadership Team

Extended Leadership Team is now an established weekly management meeting for all team managers, service managers and senior leaders to meet regularly and collaborate and influence current and future activity within Children's services.

#### Transform key services & relationships

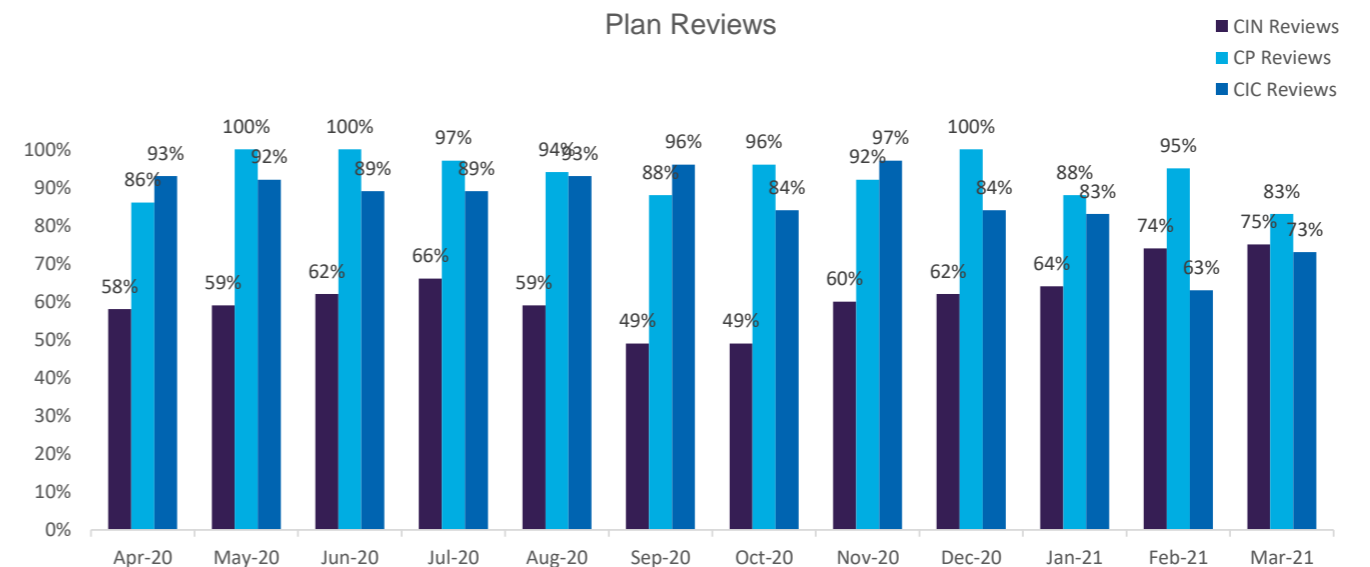


53% of plans were issued on time in March, a significant increase on the previous month. Weekly meetings in place with health to identify any overdue health advice. Capacity in the new assessment team remains a concern, and there are capacity challenges in the Educational Psychology service which also put performance at risk.

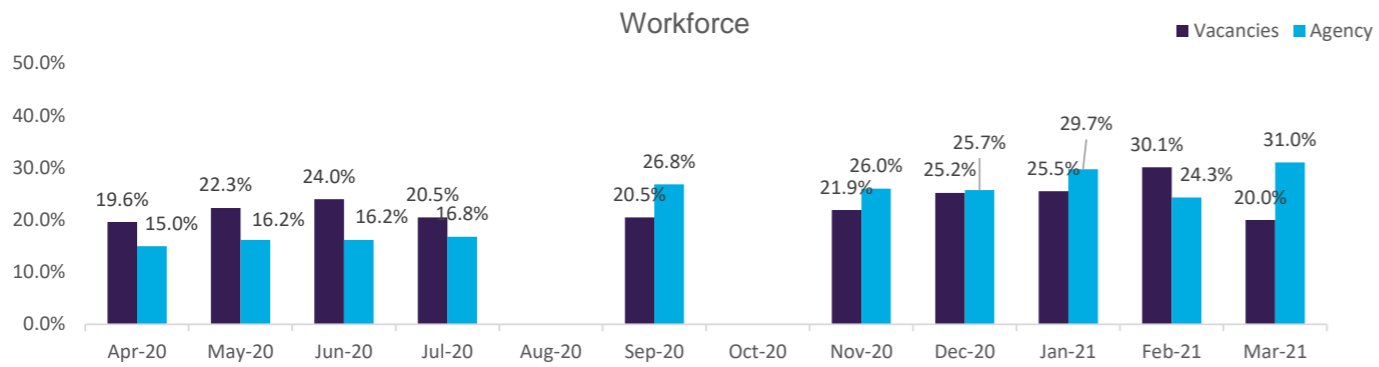
A rise in children in care missing out on education is due to 2 young people now on roll at a school but on part-time timetables of less than 18 hours per week. An increase in children in care not on roll is due to 3 unaccompanied asylum seeking children entering care in March. Applications for school have been submitted, places agreed, and the young people are expected to take up these places in April. There has been a small increase in fixed term exclusions this month, but schools are now contacting the Virtual School earlier giving opportunities to put support in place before this escalates to permanent exclusion.

#### Child-centredness

The timely completion of CIN review continued to improve in March, up to 75%. We continue to see lower numbers of children in care reviews completed on time (although this did increase to 73% in March), and this month have also seen a decline in the timely completion of child protection reviews. This reflects in part the impact of sickness in the IRO & CP Chair service, which is currently undergoing rapid improvement. There continues to be an increase in the number of children seen prior to their review by their IRO, and some positive feedback has been received from these visits. Sessional support is now also in place to address shortfalls in staffing levels.



## Practice leadership



Fluctuations in caseloads reflect the service rebalancing around the correct thresholds, particularly leading to higher caseloads in C&FF Teams (range of 23 to 30). The Assessment Service, although having high caseloads (range 25 to 30), is now stabilising into more routine patterns of working and a higher degree of throughput in the next 3 months is anticipated. A Step Up to Social Work cohort has completed with just a 2 weeks extension, despite Covid. A number of colleagues are now recruited into permanent or fixed term positions, emphasising the focus on workforce stability following a period of practice challenge. The challenge remains for experienced social workers but the gap is reducing. Creative solutions on accommodation and agile working have started to attract staff from outside of the area.

**Case load range:**  
11-30

## Making systems stronger

### Monthly Manager's Practice Learning Reviews

- 15 new PLRs, 8 Good, 5 Requires Improvement (RI) and 5 Inadequate.
- 23 PLRs reviewed, 8 Good, 9 RI, 4 Inadequate.

### SEND

- 6 EHCPs reviewed, 2 RI, 4 Good.
- 6 EHCPs reviewed to see parent views, all participated.

### Children subject to care order, placed with parents

24 cases reviewed, 1 Good, 8 RI, 15 Inadequate.

### Cases allocated to Innovate Team

- 26 cases reviewed, 11 Good, 14 RI, 1 Inadequate.

### Management Oversight in Assessment

- 14 cases reviewed, 3 Outstanding, 3 Good, 6 RI, 2 Inadequate.

### Complex Safeguarding Team

- 3 cases reviewed, 1 Good, 2 RI.

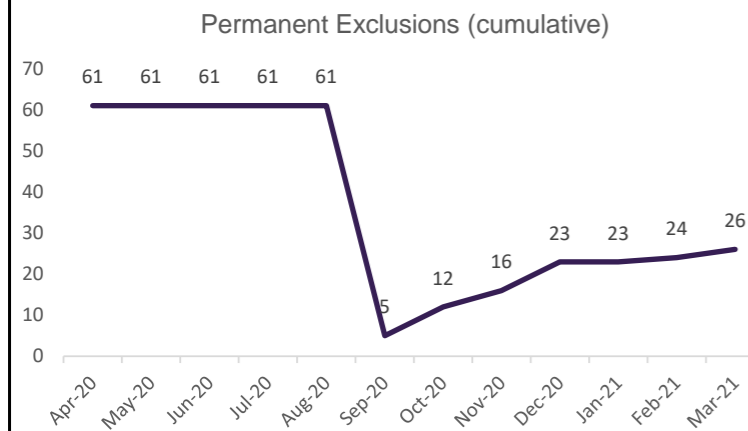
### Care Together

393 cases currently in Care Director.  
14% of all open cases (down from 15% last month).

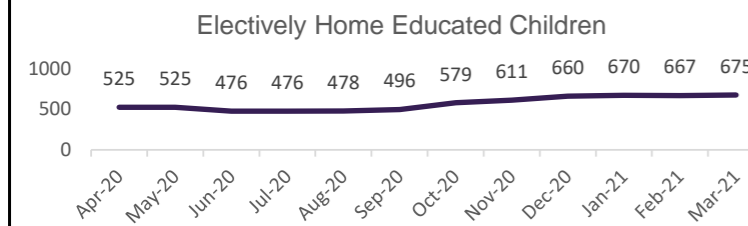
### Data Quality

729 key errors in latest Annex A Dry Run. Includes 197 missing primary need codes, 183 missing ethnicities, 250 closures with no reason recorded, 39 missing placement providers, 23 endings of a child in care placement with no reason recorded, 9 missing children in care placements, 11 invalid eligibility for care experienced young people, 16 missing placement locations, and 1 missing suitability of accommodation. Monthly data quality Annex A meetings commence in May between DCS and Team Managers to improve data quality.

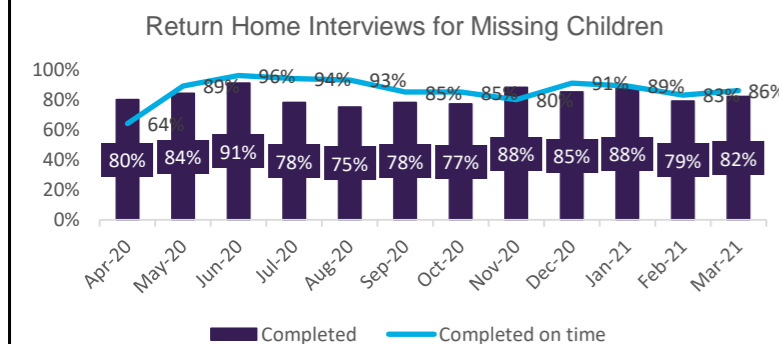
## Everyday practice



2 further permanent exclusions from school were recorded in March. High numbers of children returned to school after lockdown, although a small but significant number have been reluctant to return for a range of reasons including most prominently child or parent anxiety, or children refusing to attend. The delivery of programmes to support parents/carers to address anxiety issues and promote school attendance is continuing post lockdown. Learning will be fed into the Appreciative Inquiry into education in April and May.



The number of children being electively home educated has stabilised over the last 3 months, but at the end of March stands 29% higher than at the start of the financial year. A review of all children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and EHE is currently being undertaken (4 children). EHE will be a priority for the new Director of Education.

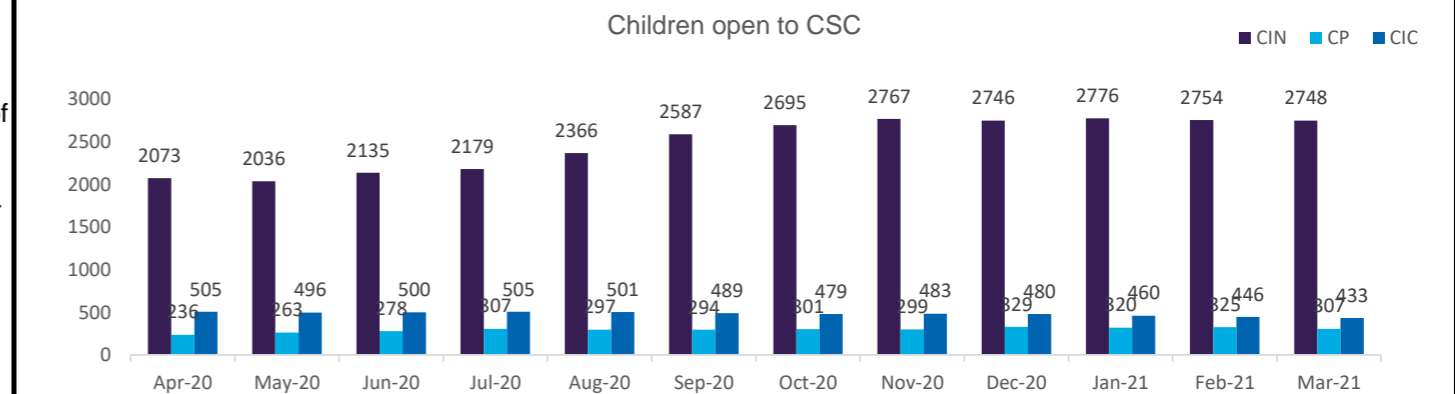


The number of missing episodes rose in March, attributed to public perception around the relaxing of Covid restrictions and good weather. The number remains lower than the same period last year (down by 20 to 155). The timely completion of return home interviews improved slightly, as the number of refusals fell.

### Understanding the lived experience of young people

Young people are telling us what good practice looks like from their perspective; listening and talking with them - whatever age, being interested...not just task orientated, know the details that are important to them, help with practical things.

They are telling us how it feels for them to work with us. For example, that they feel more listened to now they are older, that some social workers want to control their lives and only visit when they want something, attention to detail is important (eg. name spelt wrong on records), how a social worker arranged for a carer to support with life skills and independence enabling a young person to go to a youth club, how their worker talks with them and makes them feel safe. One young person feels they have the "best social worker in the world", explaining they speak to the young person, not just their carer; they don't lie and they always listen even if it's glad. Several of the young people have expressed that they want to be part of the project to help make a change. We are evaluating the learning continuously and sharing this with teams to apply changes to practice.



Overall, the number of children with a social worker has remained stable for several months, although remains 33% higher than at the beginning of the year (675 children). The number of children in care fell further to 433, 72 lower than at the start of the year. This has been attributed to lower numbers of children entering care due to delays in court proceedings and to some extent the impact of the Edge of Care panel in supporting children to remain with their families. The number of children with a child protection plan fell by 18 compared to the previous month, but is 71 higher than at the start of the year. Earlier identification of CP cases has resulted in an increase to Legal Gateway Meeting.