

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Q3 2023-24 Corporate Performance Update – Children's Services
Meeting date	19 March 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report provides a performance update for the period October - December 2023 (Quarter 3 2023-24) for the key performance indicators relating to Children's Services as detailed in the Corporate Performance Scorecard.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: The performance update is noted by members of the Board.
Reason for recommendations	Children's Services are on an improvement journey where changes to practices, processes and culture are currently occurring. The impact of these changes in all areas of practice will take some time to be seen through the performance data.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Director of Children's Services
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Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. This report provides a performance update for the period October - December 2023 (Quarter 3 2022-23) for the key performance indicators (KPI) relating to Children's Services as detailed in the Corporate Performance Scorecard.
2. The key performance indicators are reported under the following 3 directorates in Children's Services:
 - 2.1 Corporate Parenting and Permanence

2.2 Safeguarding and Early Help

2.3 Education

3. Corporate Parenting and Permanence:

- 3.1 **Number of approved fostering households** – Q3 2023/24 figure stood at 274, a slight increase from 270 in Q2 2023/24. During Q3 approximately 43 assessments/enquiries were processed which has seen the number of approved fostering households increase by 4 in Q3.
- 3.2 **Percentage of children in care with an achieved plan for permanence** – 44% at the end of Q3, a 1% increase from 43% in Q2 and is now slightly below the target level – 45%. Achieving permanency remains a key issue. BCP's permanency policy was refreshed and re-launched over a series of workshops during July 2023. The aim of the re-launch and the workshops were to enable better care planning, increase understanding of what permanency means for children and young people and how permanency can be achieved.
- 3.3 **Percentage of children in care attending a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school** – Education data is calculated based on the academic year and therefore it is available on a half term (HT) basis. 85% in Q3 2023/24, this data falls into HT1 and HT2 of the 2024/25 academic year. Improvement from 79.3% in Q2 which was for HT5 and HT6 2023/24 academic year.
- 3.4 **Percentage of children in care who are NEET** – Although not shown in this quarterly dataset, this figure has reduced from 24% at the start of this academic year (HT1) to 21% in (HT2 - Q3). Previously, lack of provision from our BCP, Southampton and Portsmouth colleges after the start of academic year impacted late re-engagement for NEETs, drop outs after day 43 and UASC arrivals throughout academic year. However, BCP have commissioned bespoke provision for UASC cohort in Southampton, hence why the reduction has been seen across Autumn term.

4. Safeguarding and Early Help:

- 4.1 **Percentage of good and outstanding Targeted Support assessments for children and families** – 62% of assessments moderated in Q3 2023/24 were rated as good or outstanding – reduction from 74% in Q2 23/24. The decline in quality of assessments is based on the selection process of the PLR's and equates to approximately 3 assessments having been reviewed, it also reflects workforce challenges with staffing. The service is aware of outliers in 2 localities across the Poole conurbation, so if a larger proportion of PLR's are selected from these localities, an impact will be seen on the overall grade. Actions the service is taking forward to improve the quality of assessments include:
- QA Link Worker working with individuals and teams to develop quality performance.
 - Workshops being held to support staff with developing their practice fundamentals to improve quality of intervention.

- Team Managers and practitioners, with particular strengths are modelling good practice within the outlier' localities.

4.2 **Percentage of children and young people stepped down from Early Help (targeted support) with no re-referral within 12 months** - 89% in Q3 which is an improvement compared to 83% in Q2 2023/24. Fluctuations in re-referral data are expected as there will always be some children re-referred due to the needs of the child or family, however the service are continuing to closely monitor this performance KPI. The data can also be impacted by large sibling groups.

4.3 **Percentage of CIN started which were re-referred within 12 months**- 25% in Q3, which shows no change from Q2 2023/24. BCP are above comparator averages – national 21.5% and statistical neighbours 22.5% but remains below the BCP intervention level of 30%. The service continues to closely monitor this performance indicator. Because the data looks at re-referrals over the past 12 months, it also reflects some legacy practice. However, it is expected to incrementally show improvement, in line with improved practice and systems.

5. Education:

5.1 **Children missing out on Education** – the number of children missing out on education (CMOE) has increased by 33% from 302 in Q2 2023/24 to 403 in Q3 23/24. See exception report for further information (Appendix 2).

5.2 Exclusions:

5.2.1 **Primary School aged children** – 0.02% in Q3 2023/24 (0% in Q2) – equates to 5 exclusions in HT2 23/24, higher in comparison to same point last year HT 2 22/23 where it was 2 exclusions.

5.2.2 **Secondary School aged children** – 0.16% in Q3 2023/24 an increase compared to 0.04% in Q2.

Both KPIs are currently below target and intervention levels, nonetheless it is anticipated that the figures will increase throughout the academic year. Service and Schools are working closely together to reduce exclusions however, for both secondary and primary exclusions Schools and professionals have suggested several reasons for the increase including:

- Increased complexity in cases that schools are having to manage.
- Refusal of EHCP requests and delays in issuing of them resulting in schools having to “hold” complex cases for longer periods than they have the capacity and resources to manage.
- Insufficient resources undermining school's ability to provide school-based support or commission external support services, for pupils at risk of exclusion.

Work is now underway with schools to jointly develop improved practice and early intervention options to better support our Vulnerable Learners.

5.3 **Good / Outstanding Schools:**

5.3.1 **Primary and Secondary Schools:** The percentage of children in both primary and secondary schools that are rated as Good/Outstanding continues to remain excellent at 96.7% and 92.9% respectively.

5.3.2 **Special Schools:** All Special Schools in BCP are rated as either Good/Outstanding – no change from Q4 22/23.

5.4 **Percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and percentage of not knowns** – 3.4% in Q3 2023/24, an expected significant improvement when comparing against Q2 2023/24 – 22.8%. This decrease in NEETs and Not Knowns is expected at this point of the academic cycle due to; BCP receiving confirmation of education, employment and training places for the Year 12 and 13 cohort and Youth Services tracking individuals supporting them to re-engage back into some form of education, employment or training.

6. Summary & Recommendations

Actions taken or planned to be noted for the key performance indicators that are emerging areas of concern:

6.1 **Re-Referrals-** Re-referrals remain higher than National /Outstanding and good LAs/Statistical neighbours which is expected at this point in the improvement journey, but also reflects the work undertaken with Early Help to create a more holistic, cohesive system. Work is now underway to restructure Early Help delivery which should create a more robust community system, which in turn, should be reflected within the data within 12 months. The Early Help strategy and offer will be launched in March 2024.

6.2 **Children missing out on Education** – see exception report (appendix 2)

6.3 **Secondary School Permanent Exclusions** - Actions being planned include:

6.3.1 Promote the co-produced behaviour pathway within all settings to improve early identification and assessment of needs, providing good support and strategies to children and young people and parents and carers in the pre-assessment stage. including training and resources.

6.3.2 Development of a multi-disciplinary pilot programme in collaboration with schools to proactively support pupils at risk of exclusions/experiencing poor attendance. This pilot will include robust evaluations in helping BCP to inform future sustainable offer.

Summary of financial implications

7. Local authorities have a statutory duty arrange education for children that are permanently excluded. If children cannot be placed in a mainstream school they will be in alternative provision. An alternative provision place will cost between £20,000 and £50,000 per year. Places are funded from the Schools High Needs Block funding, which is currently in deficit.

Summary of legal implications

8. The 45 day assessment timeframe is a legal requirement. A safe and effective front door service is essential for Children's Services to fulfil our statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area who are in need, as set

out in the Children Act 1989. Local authorities have a statutory duty arrange education for children that are permanently excluded.

Summary of human resources implications

9. The prevention of permanent exclusion and the placement, monitoring and safeguarding of permanently excluded children requires significant staffing resources.

Summary of sustainability impact

10. Evidence indicates that children and adults that were permanently excluded will require greater support from services during their lifetime.

Summary of public health implications

11. It has been evidenced that children that have been permanently excluded achieve less well against a wide range of health and wellbeing outcomes, both through childhood and later life.

Summary of equality implications

12. Children and young people who are disadvantaged, vulnerable, have additional needs and have BAME heritage could be disproportionately affected by permanent exclusion.
13. Some groups of children are more likely than others to be referred to social care services. For example, disabled children have been found to be at greater risk of abuse and neglect, and recognition and assessment can be delayed for this group, as signs of neglect and abuse may be confused with the underlying disability or condition. Disabled parents, and parents with a learning disability, may require additional support to engage with children's services.
14. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children are without parental protection and may face language barriers (NICE Social Care Guideline Equality Impact Assessment).

Summary of risk assessment

15. None

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Children's Services Corporate Performance Indicators Scorecard (Children's Services Indicators only)

Appendix 2: Exception Report – Children who are Missing out on Education

Appendix 1: Children's Services Corporate Performance Indicators Scorecard (Children's Services Indicators only)

Measure	Q1 Target 2023/24	Q1 Intervention 2023/24	Q1 Actual 2023/24	Q2 Target 2023/24	Q2 Intervention 2023/24	Q2 Actual 2023/24	Q3 Target 2023/24	Q3 Intervention 2023/24	Q3 Actual 2023/24	Reason for level of Performance	Actions taken or planned
2023/24 - Existing - Social Care: Number of approved fostering households	n/a	n/a	271	271	250	270	271	250	274	In Q2 it was reported that there was a reduction in one approved carer, following a number of assessments that took place during Q3, the total of approved foster carers has increased by 4 households and is on an upward trajectory.	
2023/24 - Existing - Social Care: Percentage of Children in Care attending a good/outstanding school (cumulative figure)	90%	60%	79.30%	79.30%	60%	79.30%	79.30%	60%	85.00%	An improvement can be seen in Q3 compared to Q1 and Q2 23/24 - at the start of this	
2023/24 - Existing - Social Care: Percentage of children in care who are NEET	12%	25%	18%	18%	25%	18%	18%	25%	21%	Although not shown in this quarterly dataset, this figure has reduced from 24% at the start of this academic year (HT1) to 21% in (HT2 - Q3). BCP have commissioned bespoke provision for UASC cohort in Southampton, hence why the reduction has been seen across Autumn term.	Education Improvement Programme Plan in development
2023/24 - Existing - Percentage of children in care with an achieved plan for permanence	tbc	tbc	47.30%	45%	40%	43%	45%	40%	44.4%	Improvement in from end of Q2 23/24. Service is continuing to improve processes.	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Number of children who are missing out on education	285		339	285	340	302	285	340	403	BCP is not an outlier, this is happening nationally also. Several reasons for this increase, including: • Increased monitoring of any young person who is not receiving a full-time education in the usual way	Education Improvement Programme Plan in development

										i.e. as in the same way as their peer group. • CIC cohort - More young people are moving out of area due to lack of foster placements, and this delays processes and admissions times in securing young people in an education placement. They remain on roll at previous provision and will be receiving AP while awaiting admission but identified and monitored as PMOE. • Lack of special placements in BCP • Lack of Alternative Provision	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Permanent exclusions as a percentage of all primary school age children	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.05	0.06	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.02	5 primary exclusion since the start of this academic year. Main reasons: · Increased complexity in cases that schools are having to manage. · Insufficient resources undermining school's ability to provide school-based support or commission external support services, for pupils at risk of exclusion.	Education Improvement Programme Plan in development
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Permanent exclusions as a percentage of all secondary school age children	0.18	0.23	0.46	0.18	0.23	0.04	0.18	0.23	0.16	34 exclusions in HT2 23/24 (Q3), lower in comparison to same point last year HT 2 22/23 (Q3) where it was 41 exclusions. .	Service continuing to keep an eye on permanent exclusions and are working closely with schools to reduce exclusions, as it is anticipated that this figure will continue to rise throughout the academic year may be equal or exceed 22/23's end of year exclusions total = 111 PEX

2023/24 - Existing - Education: Early Years: percentage of children attending a setting rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted	90%	85%	97.80%	90%	85%	96.00%	90%	85%	96.40%	Is above target level	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Primary: percentage of children attending Good/Outstanding Schools	90%	85%	96.6	90%	85%	96.7	90%	85%	96.7%	Is above target level	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Secondary: percentage of children attending Good/Outstanding schools	90%	85%	93.3	90%	85%	92.9	90%	85%	92.9%	Is above target level	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Special Schools: percentage rated Good/Outstanding	90%	85%	100	90%	85%	100	90%	85%	100%	Is at target level	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Reduce attainment gap and improve learning outcomes for vulnerable groups at all key stages	n/a	n/a	-13.7	-15.2	n/a	not avail	-15.2	n/a	-13.9	Attainment gap has increased slightly by 0.02 but remains below -15.2 which is a positive.	
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Percentage all providers in BCP signed up to an inclusive education standard by September 2023	not avail	n/a	not available	25%	n/a	not avail	25%	n/a	n/a		
2023/24 - Existing - Education: Percentage of young people aged 16-18yrs in an apprenticeship (academic age)	n/a	n/a	6.60%	3.00%	0%	3.00%	3.00%	0%	5.00%	Is above target level	

2023/24 - Existing - Education: Percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and percentage of not know ns	4.7%	6.0%	3.7%	25.4%	30.0%	22.8%	25.4%	30.0%	3.4%	Significantly below target which is a positive.	
2023/24 - Existing - Skills and Learning: Learner Achievement Rates	n/a	n/a	n/a	84%	80%		84%	80%	85.7%	Minor 0.1% change compared to indicative annual values from Q2, due to slight differences in ESFA QAR methodologies that are difficult to replicate.	Not applicable, above target
2023/24 - New - Percentage of good and outstanding Targeted Support assessments for children and families		50%	71%	71%	50%	74%	71%	50%	62%	Above intervention level, however a significant decrease can be seen when compared again Q2 performance. Service continuing to work to improve quality of assessments.	
2023/24 - New - % of cyp stepped down from Early Help (targeted support) with no re-referral within 12 months	90%	85.0%	91.8%	90%	80.0%	83.2%	90%	80.0%	88.7%	Increase compared to Q2 remaining above intervention level - fluctuations are expected due to needs of the child and family. Service continuing to monitor closely.	
2023/24 - New - % of CIN cases closed with no re-referral within 12 months	22%	25%	23.5%	24%	30%	25%	24%	30%	25%	No change from previous quarter. The service is continuing to closely monitor performance data - due to legacy practices improvements will take time to be seen through the data as changes in culture and practice occur	

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Education: Number of children who are missing out on education

2022/23 Q3 outturn: 403

Quarterly Target: 285

Reason for level of performance:

Inclusion team have worked with the MIT to improve the referral form, used by schools, to inform the local authority that a child is missing out on education including part time timetables. This has been updated to ensure that schools are able to inform the local authority accurately and give specific reasons for this. However not all schools are sharing this information with the local authority. There is not capacity in the Inclusion Team to monitor the information submitted by schools allowing IAG to be provided or ensure that an accurate end date of the period of missed education can be entered on the system. Therefore, the number of children showing as missing out on education is not accurate.

Summary of financial implications:

Where children are missing out on education for a long period of time this could lead to the need for alternative provision. Currently registered AP places are all taken and unregistered AP is being used but this is at a significantly higher cost.

The increase in the use of part-time timetable will have no immediate financial implication for the Local Authority.

However, in the medium-term children missing significant amounts of and falling behind with their education, may have a financial implication for the Local Authority in increased demand to fund specialist and alternative education provision.

In the long-term children not receiving a suitable education are likely to have financial implications for the Local Authority and society in general.

Summary of legal implications:

Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Local Authorities (LA's) to make suitable alternative education for children of statutory school age who cannot attend school because of illness, exclusion or for any other reason.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to arrange alternative education provision for children that are unable to attend school due to medical or any other reason provided. It has been argued that a child being placed on a part-time timetable for a significant time is sufficient evidence that they are unable to attend school and consequently, should have alternative education provision arranged by the Local Authority.

Not to provide alternative education provision in such circumstances could result in legal challenge regarding the Local Authorities failure to fulfil its statutory duties and has already led to a number of complaints.

Summary of human resources implications:

The increase in exclusions and the increased use of unregistered AP has meant that officers that were assigned to work with children missing out on education have had to be reallocated to work on ensuring that our children who are permanently excluded have a provision and if it is unregistered that they monitor this.

Summary of sustainability impact:

No impact

Summary of public health implications:

No impact

Summary of equality implications:

Children that have special educational needs or who are eligible for free school meals are more likely to be placed on a part time timetable.

Actions taken or planned to improve performance:

The Inclusion Team continue to promote the use the online referral form to ensure we can report accurate data.

Completed by: Kelly Twitchen

Service Unit Head approval with date: Sharon Muldoon 7/2/24