



Report for: INFORMATION
Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO
Title	Management Information Summary – Children Looked After
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Portfolio(s)	Schools and children' services
For Consideration By	Corporate Parent Committee
Date to be considered	19 th March 2020
Implementation Date if Not Called In	Not Applicable
Affected Wards	All
Area Committees	All
Keywords/Index	Performance Assessment Framework, performance indicators.
Purpose of Report: To provide a brief analysis on the April 2019 to January 2020 performance for children looked after (CLA), child protection and care leavers.	

1 Review of Performance Indicators for Children Services

Children & Families Performance Assessment Framework 2019/20

1.1 The use of Performance Indicators (PIs) in assessing performance enables the council to evaluate its current performance, monitor improvements and inform service development. Performance is reviewed monthly by operational service management and by the departmental senior management team.

1.2 The external inspection and assessment of services led by Ofsted uses the indicators as part of the evidence to inform their assessments of the council's performance. These indicators, however, must be considered as part of a broader set of performance evidence including inspection and review, regular liaison and monitoring of services and the commissioning and delivery of services with partners, particularly with the schools' service and health.

1.3 The service has identified all key measures through developing the business planning processes, service and team plans and it is through monitoring these alongside the indicator set that we will make ensure that we achieve what we have set out to do.

1.4 To set the performance data for CLA and leaving care in the context of the whole remit for safeguarding, the report contains information on assessment and child protection activity as follows:

Performance April 2019 – January 2020

1.4.1 Children Looked After

The Brighter Futures programme has made significant impact on managing the demand and continue to reduce Ealing's CLA population in a safe and responsible manner.

There has been a steady decline in the number of CLA since the start of the 2019/20 year. As at 31st January 2020, there were 342 children in care, down from 352 at end of June 2019. However, the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (USAC) in Ealing has risen sharply in recent years from 15 in March 2013 to 55 in March 2019. However, numbers have declined steadily this year from 56 in April 2019 to 50 at end of January 2020.

Despite the increase in UASC, the number of CLA in Ealing remains one of the lowest for many years. Since 2011/12 to end of 2018/19, there was a 14% reduction in the overall CLA population, the reduction is higher at 23% if UASC number is excluded from the population. Ealing has buck the national trend of 12.4% growth children looked after.

For the current CLA population, the equivalent rate of CLA per 10,000 local under 18 population is 41.8, which is below the national (65) and London picture (50).

Between April 2019 and January 2020, 162 children and young people have become looked after; this is down from 180 (-11%) in the same period last year. The largest group of children and young people (CYP) becoming looked after in the year is 16-17-year-old with 51 young people (31%), followed by the 27 young people age 13 to 15 (17%). These two age groups combined show 48% of CYP coming into care are in the adolescent stage of their lives.

In the year to end of January 2020, 159 children and young people have ceased care, down from 172 (-8%) from the same period last year. The net effect of the activities is a reduction in CLA population this year.

1.4.2 Child Protection

At the end of January 2020, 218 children and young people were subject of a child protection (CP) plan; this is a 3% increase on last year's figure of 211. This is also one of the lowest numbers in last 5 years.

The equivalent rate per 10,000 under 18 local population is 26.6, which is below the national (43.7) and London average (36.7)

Between April 2019 and January 2020, a total of 238 children and young people were made subject of a CP plan, whilst 219 have deregistered from the CP register.

1.4.3 Re registrations of children & young people to child protection plans

12% of children registered on the CP plan in the year to end January 2020 were re-registrations. This is better than last year's (January 2019) figure of 23% and currently below the national average of 20.8%¹ and statistical neighbours of 16% in 2018/19.

To put into context, of the 238 children and young people becoming subject of a CP plan in the year, 28 were re-registrations (last on CP plan regardless of timescales). Of which, 24 children were last on plan between 1 and 10 years previously, indicating a period of stability for majority of the children and families. The remaining four children (2 from same family) were last on plan 7 months prior.

In some circumstances, re-registration of children to CP plan is essential to keep the child safe and from harm.

1.4.4 Timing of Children and Family Assessments (CFAs) assessments

There has been a significant year on year increase in the number of CFAs completed. The volume of CFAs completed this year (4,166) so far has already exceeded the total for 2018/19 by 659, (+19%). This has impacted on the timeliness completion rate of 82.7% last year vs 69.1% this year. The average monthly CFAs completed last year was 292 vs 417 this year. Current performance is below national (83.1%) and London average (84.1%).

¹ Source: Department for Education Children in Need census 2018/19 publication

Senior managers have implemented a series of actions to improve performance via regular monitoring, reducing the internal timescales target and a clear commitment to reduce the time children and families should wait for completion of assessments.

1.5 There are several key measures for children looked after and child protection, they are as follows:

Performance April 2019 – January 2020

1.5.1 Percentage of looked after children adopted during the year who were placed for adoption

Between April 2019 and January 2020, 10 children have been adopted, of which 9 were within 12 months of being placed for adoption, which equates to 90%. This is an improvement from the 2018/19 year where there was one child (1 out of 5) adopted within the timescale. The number of children adopted in this year so far has doubled from last year.

This measures the effectiveness of an important part of the adoption process and timescales. When placing children for adoption, the timeliness in which they are adopted will be affected by how easy or difficult it is to find an adoptive placement. Good performance is represented by a high percentage.

1.5.2 Stability of placements of children looked after

A stable placement for our looked after children is important for their health and well-being and we have been doing well in minimizing children with frequent placement moves.

20 children or 5.85% of all looked after children at end of January 2020 have had 3 or more placement moves during the year, which means the majority (94%) of the children in care are living in stable environments with fewer placement moves. Latest position place Ealing below the 7.1% reported in the same period last year and the national average of 10%

Placement moves are regularly monitored by senior managers however, some placements moves are essential to keep children and families safe and from harm.

Good performance is indicated by a low percentage which means fewer placement moves for our children.

1.5.3 Child protection plans ceased lasting 2 years or more

This measure provides an indication on the effectiveness of social care work towards specified outcomes which should lead to the child being removed from the CP register within two years. Good performance is typified by a lower percentage.

The proportion of child protection plans lasting more than 2 years prior to de-registration has decreased from 11.6% at end of December 2019 to 10.5% in January 2020. This equates to 23 children and young people out of 219 have been on plan for 2 years or

more when coming off plan. Ealing's performance in 2018/19 was 3% and 6% in 2017/18, which are in line with our statistical neighbours and national average of 4.5% and 3.4% respectively.

Current performance is high in comparison with previous years. This is attributed to a large sibling group who remained on a CP plan from July 2016 to May 2019 and 2 further large sibling groups who ceased CP plans during quarter three of this year. Excluding this group, the rate would be 5.9%

Managers are made informed of children who are approaching the two-year mark to ensure their cases are reviewed and, if appropriate, to de-register the children in a safe and timely manner.

1.5.4 Timeliness of looked after children reviews

Performance at end of March 2019 shows 98% of reviews have been completed within timescales; equating to 335 children out of 343.

Current reports are in the process of being validated.

The Department for Education have ceased publishing comparison data for looked after children reviews for several years.

1.5.5 Reviews of child protection cases

Ealing children services strive to ensure all child protection reviews are carried out on time, and we have demonstrated that by maintaining a high performance over the last few years, achieving between 99% and 100%.

Between April 2019 and January 2020, 99% (160) of CP reviews have been completed on time for the 162 eligible children who is subject of a plan for 3 months or more.

Performance in 2018/19 shows 98.1% of eligible children have had their reviews completed on time. Only three reviews were out of time for the year. This is better than our statistical neighbour (94.0%), national (91.8%) and London (95.7%) averages.

1.5.6 Employment, education and training (EET) for care leavers

Ealing continue to exceed expectations by supporting many of our care leavers into education, employment and training.

Published data for 2018/19 shows 56% of 19- 21-year-old care leavers and 67% of 17-18-year-old care leavers were in employment, education and training. Performance exceeds national average of 52% and 64% respectively.

Provisional data to end of December 2019 shows 61% of all care leavers are in EET. Broken down by DfE age categories; 85.1% of 17 and 18-year olds are in EET and 52.1% for 19-21-year olds. This is higher than the statistical neighbours and national comparators for the 17-18 age group, while the 19-21 is below the national 52.3% but on par with our statistical neighbour's average (52.1%).

Research shows that care leavers experience high levels of unemployment and are at risk of homelessness and social exclusion. The monitoring of whether care leavers are in Education, Employment or Training (EET) is used to show the performance of local authorities in improving outcomes for young people leaving care, so that they are enabled to achieve, to make a positive contribution and to be offered the opportunity to secure their future economic well-being. A higher percentage would represent good outcomes for young people.

2. Other Implications

2.1 Risk Management

The service has in place a risk register linked to the current business plan and priorities. The register is reviewed regularly by the senior management team and where appropriate remedial and action in mitigation are considered and agreed.

2.2 Links to Strategic Objectives

Children Services is key to delivering the strategic objectives of supporting young people to be safe, healthy and prosper. The vision will be achieved by working on shared priorities with key partners and stakeholders via the Children and Young People Board.

2.3 Equalities and Community Cohesion

An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken for each area of development within the services

2.4 Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

None.

2.5 Property and Assets

None.

2.6 Any other implications:

None.

2.7 Consultation

Consultation arrangements across internal partners, external partner agencies and strategic partnerships will be to be determined and managed through the Children and Young Peoples Board.

Background papers – None

Consultation

Name of Consultee	Department	Date sent to Consultee	Date response received from Consultee	Comments appear in report para
Internal Director	Director C&F	January 2020	January 2020	

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency Item?		
For Information	No		
Authorised by Cabinet Member	Date report drafted	Report deadline	Date report sent
Report No:	Report author and contact for queries		
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