



Report for: INFORMATION
Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO
Title	Management Information Summary – Children Looked After
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Portfolio(s)	Cllr Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal
For Consideration By	Corporate Parent Committee
Date to be considered	Thursday 17th June 2021
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 12 months to March 2021 performance for children looked after (CLA), child protection (CP) and care leavers.	

1 Review of Performance Indicators for Children Services

Children & Families Performance Assessment Framework 2020/21

- 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:

1.4.1 Children Looked After

As at end of March 2021, there were 307 looked after children in Ealing, down by 8% from 332 at the same time in March 2020.

The number of CLA in Ealing is now the lowest for at least a decade. The equivalent rate in March 2021 is 37.3 children per 10,000, a reduction of 3.0 per 10,000 from last year. The rate is below the London (45) and National average (67).

Of the CLA cohort, the biggest age group is 16 to 17 years with 109 young people (36%), followed by the 13–15-year group with 90 or 29% of the children in care at end of March 2021.

The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) at end of March 2021 stands at 27, the lowest number since 2016 (25), this also represents a 37% reduction since March 2020.

In the last year to March 21, a total of 150 children and young people have become looked after; this is down from 193 (-22%) on last year. Over a third (38%) of the total number of new children and young people coming into care in this period is 16-17-year-old with 57 young people and 25 young children aged between 1-4 years equating to 17% of all children becoming CLA.

A total of 18 young people was taken into care as UASC this year, this is down by 10 from same period last year reflecting the overall reduction of UASC population.

A total of 175 children and young people have ceased care between April and March 2021, down from 209 (-17%) from last year. Many of the CLA ceasing care have returned to a more permanent and stable environment. 33% (58) have returned home to their families, while 35% (62) turned 18 years old and 11% (19) were granted special guardianship order.

1.4.2 Child Protection

At the end of March 2021, the number of children subject to a CP plan is 240, which is now the highest since a peak in 2018 (250). The latest CP number is 23% higher than last year's 195 and reflects the current trend of rising children on CP plans across London.

The rate per 10,000 for the current CP population is 29.2; this is significantly lower than our neighbours at 34.2 London at 35.0 and England at 42.8.

The largest age groups of children and young people (CYP) subject of CP plan are aged between 5-9 years old and 10-15 years old; with 67 and 80 children and young people in each group respectively and represents a combined 61% of the 240 CP population.

Emotional abuse (47%) and Neglect (45%) are the prevailing reasons for those CYP subject of a CP plan.

A total of 312 children and young people were made subject of a CP plan between April and March 2021, whilst 266 have been deregistered reflecting an overall increase in children on CP plan this year so far.

This is reflected across London boroughs where there are increasing number of children on CP plans, whilst falling in number of looked after children.

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

A total of 312 children were registered on CP Plan from April 20 - March 21. Of those, 68 children were re-registrations. This equates to 21.7% of all new CP registrations in 2020/21. This is higher than previous year's outturn and is above the SN and London average of 18%, but below the national average of 21.90%

This indicator is calculated regardless of when the child was last on plan in Ealing; the majority registrations show that children had a period of stability and the returning children consist of large sibling groups.

The breakdown re-registrations show 9 out of the 68 children had been on plan between 0-12 months, 20 between 1-2 years, and 39 children between 2- 12 years ago.

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)

Provisional 2020/21 CFA performance is 72.4% and has increased from 68.9% and below our comparators. The anticipated rate improvement is impacted by Covid on staffing levels, increasing referrals in the last quarter.

A total of 3,970 assessments have been completed in 2020/21, which is lower than the 5,152 reported last year (-23%)

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:

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

A total of 10 children have been adopted between April and March 2021, one less than in 2019/20. Of the 10 children who have been adopted, half were placed for adoption within 12 months of the ADM decision.

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.

Figures to end of March 2021 show 9.4% (29 children out of 307) of the total number of looked after children have had 3 or more placement moves, which means nearly 91% of the children are living in stable environments.

Ealing has seen sustained performance improvements in this area for the last couple of years reducing the rate from 9.5% in 2018/19 to 7.8% in 2019/20, which means more children in care have fewer placement moves. Good performance is indicated by a low percentage

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

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.

Performance at the end of March 2021 shows a total of 13 children coming off CP plan that have lasted 2 years or more. This equates to 4.8% of the 266 CP de-registrations. This is good improvement from last year's outturn of 9.3%. At end of March 2021, there were no children on CP plan for 2 years or more.

Managers are 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

Provisional performance at end of March 2021 shows 97.6% of the 293 eligible children in care have had their reviews completed on time during the year. End of March 21 performance is an improvement from last year's outturn of 91.9%.

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

1.5.5 Reviews of child protection cases

Latest provisional performance in the period between April to March 2021 shows 98% of all reviews have been completed to timescales for 158 out of the 161 eligible children. This compares well with our statistical neighbour (92.84%) and national (91.5%) averages.

All eligible children are required to be reviewed within 3 months from the start of the plan and then 6 months thereafter. Good performance is represented by a high percentage.

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.

Data for 2019/20 shows 60.2%, up from 56% in previous year, for 19- 21-year-old care leavers and 76.9%, up from 67% previous year for 17- 18-year-old care leavers were in EET. Performance exceeds national average of 52% and 64% respectively.

Data as at the end of March 21 is yet to be confirmed. However, Provisional performance¹ for 9 months to December 2020 shows 69% of 17-18-year-olds and 66% for 19-21-year-olds are in EET.

¹ Data source: Ofsted Annex A report based on a snapshot at end of December 2020

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	June 2021	June 2021	
Cllr Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal	Portfolio	June 2021	June 2021	

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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