



**Report for:
INFORMATION**

Item Number: 15

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	27 th June 2019
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 2018 to March 2019 performance for children looked after (CLA), child protection and care leavers.	

1 Review of Performance Indicators for Children Services

Children & Families Performance Assessment Framework 2018/19

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:

Provisional Performance April 2018 – March 2019

1.4.1 Looked after children

As at 31st March 2019, there were 354 children and young people looked after by Ealing children services, up on last year's 343. However, this still represents one of the lowest number of children looked after in 10 years, with an annual average of 376 over the decade. The equivalent rate of CLA per 10,000 local under 18 population is 43.2, which is below the national (64) and London picture (49).

The latest number of CLA of 354 is a return to levels seen in December 2016, but the number of UASC at the time was 21, which has increased to 55 at the end of March 2019.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, 209 children and young people have become looked after; this is up by 17% (30 children) on last year. The increase this year has been attributed to increasing UASC (43 started as UASC this year vs 37 2017/18) and young children particularly the 16-17 age group (71 compared to 59 in 2017/18)

190 children and young people have ceased care, down by 1.6% (3 children) from the same period last year.

1.4.2 Child Protection

At the end of March 2019, 210 children and young people were subject of a child protection (CP) plan; this is a 16% reduction on last year's figure of 250. This is also one of the lowest numbers in last 5 years, the lowest being in June 2017 with 200 children on CP plan.

The equivalent rate per 10,000 under 18 local population is 25.6, which is below the national (45.3) and London average (39.6)

In the year to March 2019, a total of 233 children and young people were made subject of a CP plan, whilst 269 have deregistered from the CP register.

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

24% of children registered on the CP plan in the year to end of March 2019 were re-registrations. Ealing is above the national average of 20.2¹

Of the 56 children who were previously registered, 40 children were last on plan between 1 and 8 years ago, indicating a period of stability for most of the children and families. Thirteen children were last registered 2-5 months previously, with just three families accounting for 10 out of the 13 children. These three large sibling groups were de-registered transferring to another borough and then returned to Ealing, leading to the unusual spike in re-registrations.

1.4.4 Timing of Children and Family Assessments (CFAs) assessments

Data shows factors captured from completed child and family assessments (CFA) in the last year shows a decrease in parental factor (parent/carer) which could have led to fewer children becoming subject to child protection plan; these include alcohol misuse -34% and drugs misuse -49%. Domestic Violence remains a prominent factor of all completed assessments, with factors involving domestic violence (where the child is the subject) increasing by 167% (from 103 to 270 assessments)

Performance at end of March 2019 is reported at 81.3%. Senior managers are implementing a series of actions to further improve CFA performance via regular monitoring, reducing internal timescales target and a clear commitment to reduce the time children and families should wait for completion of assessments.

Ealing's 2017/18 final performance was 90.90% which is above our statistical neighbours, London and national average.

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

Provisional Performance April 2018 – March 2019

¹ Source: Department for Education Children in Need census 2017/18 publication

1.5.1 Percentage of looked after children adopted during the year who were placed for adoption (NI 61)

Between April and March 2019, 5 children have been adopted, of which one was within 12 months of being placed for adoption, which equates to 20%. In 2017/18 there were 80% (8 out of 10) of children adopted within the 12 months of being placed for adoption. The average length of time children in care before adoption has fallen from 857 days (from 10 adoptions in 2017/18) to 781 days with 5 adoptions.

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 (NI 62)

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.

32 children or 9% of all looked after children at end of March have had 3 or more placement moves during the year, which means the majority (91%) of the children in care are living in stable environments with fewer placement moves. Ealing is below 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.

Latest figures show 2% (5) of the 269 children de-registered to date have been on plan for 2 years or more, which is better than the national average of 3.4%.

In 2017/18, 6.2% (19) of children de-registered have been on a CP plan lasting for 2 years or more.

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 a 343.

The Department for Education have stopped 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%.

Performance in 2018/19 shows 98.8% of children with a CP plan as at 31st March 2019 and who had been on plan continuously for at least three months have had their review/s completed within timescales. This is better than our statistical neighbour (85.5%), national (90.5%) and London (94.1%) averages.

There were 2 children out of 171 who had their reviews completed out of time.

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.

Provisional performance for April to March 2019 shows 57% of all care leavers are in education or employment or training. Broken by DfE age categories; 17 and 18-year olds, 64% are in EET and 57% for 19-21-year olds, which is better or equal to the statistical neighbours and national comparators.

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	Jun 2019	Jun 2019	

Report History

Decision type: For information)	No	Urgency item?
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Authorised by Cabinet member:	Date drafted:	reportReport deadline:	Date report sent:
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