

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Performance

Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – 17th December 2019

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of performance for key performance indicators across Looked After Children (LAC) services. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report at Appendix A which provides trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

Recommendations

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to receive the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) and consider issues arising.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – Corporate Parenting Monthly Performance Report – Oct 2019

Background Papers

Ofsted Improvement Letter
Children's Social Care Monthly Performance Reports

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required No

Exempt from the Press and Public No

Title: Corporate Parenting Performance Report – August 2019

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to receive the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) and consider issues arising.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report provides evidence to the council's commitment to improvement and providing performance information to enable scrutiny of the improvements and the impact on the outcomes for children and young people in care. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report which provides trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages.
- 2.2 Targets, including associated 'RAG' (red, amber, green rating) tolerances, are included. These have been set in consideration of available national and statistical neighbour benchmarking data, recent performance levels and, importantly, Rotherham's improvement journey.
- 2.4 Please note that all benchmarking data is as at the latest data release by the DfE and relates to 2017/18 outturn
- 2.5 The narrative supplied within the report has been informed by the Deputy Director for Children's Services and the Head of Looked After Children Services.

3. Key Issues

3.1 Looked After Children Profile

- 3.1.1 In the month October, we had 16 children admitted to care and 14 children discharged from care. This gave us a total of 626 LAC at the end of the month.
- 3.1.2 There are a further 47 children with confirmed plans for discharge before the end of the year (2019). Considering the average monthly rate of admissions to care in 2019/20 (19) we are projecting that the numbers of LAC will reduce by the end of 2019.
- 3.1.3 The percentage of children who have discharged from care this financial year due to permanence, including SGO, Residence Order and Adoption, is positive at 37.3%. This is higher than our previous 2 years of 31.5% in 2018-19 and 27.3% in 2017/18.
- 3.1.4 The average age of children admitted to care in October was 5 years old which indicates a permanence outcome will be likely for most of these children. Performance data evidences that the younger a child comes into care the shorter the time they spend in

care, the greater the chance of them moving to permanence and the less expensive their placement costs.

3.1.5 Table 1 provides a breakdown of the LAC population by age group against the latest national comparator data. This shows that, overall, Rotherham's LAC age profile follows a similar distribution to the national.

Table 1 – Age distribution of Looked After Children at the end of the month

Age Band	Number	% of total	Latest National comparative data (Mar-18)
Under 1	40	6%	6%
1 – 4	99	16%	13%
5 - 9	122	19%	19%
10 - 15	251	40%	39%
16+	114	18%	23%
Total	626		

3.1.6 For our 626 total LAC, the rate 10k population has reduced slightly in this reporting month, but remains at 109.9%. This is exceptionally high in comparison to our statistical neighbours at 87.8%.

3.2 LAC Plans, Reviews and Visits

3.2.1 Since the last Corporate Parenting report, there has been an improvement in performance for Care Plans, LAC Reviews and Statutory Visits.

3.2.2 Statutory Visits increased to 96.8% at the end of October. Consistently above 94% for the whole year evidences embedded good practice compared to 74% achieved only 2 years ago.

3.2.3 There has been a further positive response to senior management intervention in respect of up to date care plans which have increased to 91.4% (from 82.6% in August), although there remains more work to do to achieve the desired standard of 95%.

3.2.4 89.2% of LAC cases were reviewed within timescales during October. The timeliness around reviews continues to be an area of work to improve and maintain and the joint work undertaken with the IRO team will need to be extended if the end of year with an aim to exceed 90%.

3.3 Placements

3.3.1 As is evidenced by research the best indicator of a positive outcome for looked after children is the extent to which they have

been supported to remain living in the same placement or with as few placement disruptions as possible. Placement stability is most likely to be achieved by good matching processes; high levels of support provided to foster carers; and strong relationships being developed by social workers with their young people to ensure they are best placed to address any issues as and when they arise.

- 3.3.2 Long-term placement stability has slightly decreased to 61.7% of children in long term placements for at least 2 years. However, there is an increase of actual numbers of children in long term stable placements. The reduction in percentage is due to an increase in the number of children eligible to meet the measure rather than a reduction in the number of children in a stable placement. The statistical neighbour average is 67.6%.
- 3.3.3 The number of children with 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months improved in performance with a slight reduction to 11.9% in October compared to 12.3% in August. This is the best performance of the year so far for this measure and is closing the gap to the statistical neighbour average of 10.6%.
- 3.3.4 Children placed in family based settings remains stable at 78.3%, which includes internal fostering, independent fostering, pre-adoption placements and those placed with parent/family/friends.
- 3.3.5 The number of children living in a commissioned placement reduced to 53.4% in October. However, this performance needs to be sustained for some months in order to address the ongoing placement budget pressures. Further work is planned to identify the children who can move from an IFA to in-house placements to assist this issue. This may impact on the above placement stability measures in the coming months.

3.4 Health and Dental

- 3.4.1 We now have an automated system set up to notify Health Colleagues as soon as a child becomes LAC in the Social Care LCS system. The work on Initial Health Assessments continues to produce positive results demonstrated by a year to date figure of 83.7% complete within 20 working days. This is significantly higher than the previous year end figures, the best year being 2017/18 with 55.7% and last year's 2018/19 figure being 51.1%.
- 3.4.2 Overall, 84.4% of all LAC had an up to date health assessment at the end of October. This is the lowest performance for this measure this year so far. Further investigation shows that 19 of the overdue health assessments are due to young people refusing their assessments.
- 3.4.3 Dental Assessments have increased to 86.1% up to date, which is the highest performance reported since April. Again, some of the

shortfall is due to young people refusing to access their dental assessments.

3.5 LAC Education

- 3.5.1 Rotherham has a local standard to ensure that each Personal Education Plan (PEP) is of good quality and refreshed every term (rather than the annual minimum standard).
- 3.5.2 At the end of the Summer Term, 97.5% of eligible LAC population had a Personal Education Plan and 95% of LAC had a PEP meeting during the term 2018-19. Autumn Term data will be reported in January.
- 3.5.3 Of the children who have been in care for 12 months or more, 14.4% of LAC were classed as persistent absentees (more than 10% of sessions missing) at the end of October. This is a reduction compared to the previous months but remains above the statistical neighbour average of 10%.
- 3.5.4 Of the children who have been in care for 12 months or more, 7.8% had at least one fixed term exclusion as at the end of October. For this measure, we sit below the statistical neighbour average of 13.7%.
- 3.5.5 At the end of October, we had 5.5% of all LAC on reduced timetable arrangements.

3.6 Care Leavers

- 3.6.1 The numbers of Care Leavers eligible for a service stands at 321 at the end of October, which is an all year high.
- 3.6.2 Pathway Plans remain stable for our care leavers with 89.3% having a plan and 86.4% having an up to date plan at the end of October.
- 3.6.3 We continue to perform higher than the statistical neighbour averages with 96.6% of care leavers in suitable accommodation and 62% of our care leavers living in employment, education or training.

3.7 Fostering

- 3.7.1 At the end of August we had 67.1% of our LAC in fostering placements (both in house and IFA households). This figure excludes relative and friend placements.

- 3.7.2 Since April, we have recruited 12 new households and deregistered 2. A further 9 have resigned from our in house fostering service giving us a total of 148 in house fostering households.
- 3.7.3 There are a further 13 assessments of potential new fostering households to be presented to Panel by the end of the financial year and an additional 11 placements will also become available by the end of January by virtue of the revised allowance scheme.
- 3.7.4 In addition the Brightsparks work is starting to show some impact with 29 information visits taking place over the course of October and 10 more strong leads to be followed up.

3.8 Adoptions

- 3.8.1 Rotherham's policy is to persevere in seeking adoptive placements for all children for as long as it is reasonable to do so. Whilst this can impact on performance figures, this practice does give the necessary reassurance that the adoption service is 'doing the right thing' by its children by doing everything it can to secure permanent family placements.
- 3.8.2 There were 3 adoptions finalised over the course of October bringing the yearly 2019/20 total to 20.
- 3.8.3 A further 26 children are already living in their adoptive placements, 5 having already 'lodged' their adoption application, 3 of whom have a court date set.
- 3.8.4 We have another 12 children with a match identified and family finding ongoing for another 9 children.
- 3.8.5 The current forecast is approximately 34 adoptions by the end of 2019/20.
- 3.8.6 The LAC Service is currently undertaking 7 revocations of Placement Orders. This means we are no longer planning for adoption for these children. The service is undertaking an internal review to clarify if there are any lessons to be learned from these changes in plans for children.
- 3.8.7 The national target for the number of days between a child entering care and having an adoption placement is 426 days. The average for our 20 adoptions so far is slightly above target at 451 days. However, we still remain lower than the latest published statistical neighbour average of 479 days.
- 3.8.8 The national target for the number of days between a child receiving a placement order and being matched to an adoptive family is 121 days. The average for the children adopted so far is

above the target at 161 days. Again, this is still lower than the latest published statistical neighbour average of 205 days.

3.8.9 In adopter recruitment 8 adoptive families have already been approved this financial year.

3.8.10 There are currently 16 potential adopters in assessment; 8 at stage 1 and 8 at stage 2.

3.9 Caseloads

3.9.1 The average caseload in the LAC Service has decreased slightly for the long-term LAC teams (1-3) but increased for the court and permanence teams (4 & 5) due primarily to 3 social workers and 1 advanced practitioner leaving the team over the course of the month. However, there is now a new team manager in post and the team is being re-built via a combination of some social workers transferring from the long-term teams and new recruitment.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 The full corporate parenting performance report attached at Appendix A represents a summary of performance across a range of key national and local indicators with detailed commentary provided by the service director. Corporate Parenting Panel members are therefore recommended to consider and review this information.

5. Consultation

5.1 Not applicable

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 Not applicable

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report. The relevant Service Director and Budget Holder will identify any implications arising from associated improvement actions and Members and Commissioners will be consulted where appropriate.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no direct legal implications to this report.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct human resource implications to this report. The relevant Service Director and Managers will identify any implications arising from associated improvement actions and Members and Commissioners will be consulted where appropriate.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 The performance report relates to services and outcomes for children in care.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 There are no direct implications within this report.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 Partners and other directorates are engaged in improving the performance and quality of services to children, young people and their families via the Rotherham Local Children's Safeguarding Board (RLSCB). The RLSCB Performance and Quality Assurance Sub Group receive this performance report within the wider social care performance report on a regular basis.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Inability and lack of engagement in performance management arrangements by managers and staff could lead to poor and deteriorating services for children and young people. Strong management oversight by Directorship Leadership Team and the ongoing weekly performance meetings mitigate this risk by holding managers and workers to account for any dips in performance both at a team and at an individual child level.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

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