

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Performance

Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – 1st September 2020

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 – June 2020

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 – June 2020

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 2018/19 outturn
- 2.5 The narrative supplied within the report has been informed by the Assistant Director for Children's Services and the Head of Looked After Children Services.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Through this reporting period all services and interventions offered by the council have been impacted upon by Covid -19. The narrative offered below will reflect some of the challenges this has posed for the Looked After Children of Rotherham and how RMBC CYPS have worked to minimise the negative impact to ensuring effective care planning continues to support each young person's stability and progress.
- 3.2 Looked After Children Profile
 - 3.2.1 At the end of June, the number of looked after children remained consistent at 603 with 11 children entering care in the month and 11 children discharged from care in the month.
 - 3.2.2 We continue to support children to safely return home with their wider family network and continue to seek permanency for them where this is not possible. Right Child Right Care (RCRC) continues to track those children in scope to discharge from care by December 2020. However, there are a number of children whose plan to cease being looked after has been delayed due to court as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. There has been some slight

progress in June as court recommenced a small number of hearings, but the adoption hearings seem to be delayed. This has been escalated to the lead Judge. At the end of July there will be 30 adoption applications sitting before the court and a further 5 Discharge of Care Orders.

3.2.3 This delay with court ultimately impacts the percentage of children who discharged from care due to permanence, including SGO, Residence Order and Adoption with a year to date figure of 18.9% at the end of June 2020.

3.2.4 For our 603 total LAC, the 10k population rate remains high at 105.9% in comparison to our statistical neighbours of 92%.

3.3 LAC Plans, Reviews and Visits

3.3.1 116 LAC cases were reviewed in June, a decline from the previous months (131 in May). Timeliness however remained consistent at 94.3% within timescale. Through Covid-19 many LAC reviews have been supported virtually, with some positive results around engaging more young people in their review.

3.3.2 LAC with an up to date plan also remained consistent in June at 94.2%, similar to the previous 3 months and an improvement on the pre Covid months (90.1% in February).

3.3.3 LAC visits in time (NMS) increased in June to 84.9% in comparison to the previous months where we had reduced to 80.4% following the social distancing measures implemented by government. However, the figures do not include any Virtual Visits carried out since Covid-19 Lockdown began on 23/03/2020. If we were to include virtual visits this would be 96.4% (581/603). This figure has not been pulled through into the main performance data set in order to show complete transparency about how work is being completed through the Covid-19 pandemic. For each young person, the need to visit is reviewed weekly by the allocated social worker and the subsequent decision making (rag rating) is overseen by the team manager. Moving forward all visits should be face to face unless an exemption is agreed at Head of Service level due to individual circumstances.

3.4 Placements

3.4.1 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.

- 3.4.2 The number of young people experiencing placement stability increased in June. There is a maintained focus on supporting family based placements and reducing our reliance on external placements.
- 3.4.3 Long-term placement stability has increased to 65.5% at the end of June. This measure is the percentage of LAC who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years and remained in stable placements for at least 2 years.
- 3.4.4 The number of children with 3 or more placement moves in the previous 12 months had increased by 2 children to 10.1% at the end of June but remains in line with the statistical neighbour and national averages (both 10%). This reflects a small number of young people and their carers who have had placement disruptions. However, we have also had some positive moves for young people to semi independence as part of their transition planning in preparation for adulthood.
- 3.4.5 The number of children in family-based setting has remained consistent throughout the year with 81.7% at the end of June.

3.5 Health and Dental

- 3.5.1 Dental checks are continuing the downward trend that started in October 2019 (88.1%) to 64.8% in June 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic beginning in March 2020 enforced the closure of dentists, giving a further impact on this measure. Now that the dentists have reopened, this will be an area of focus for our looked after children.
- 3.5.2 Performance for Initial Health Assessments (IHA) in June was 83.3% with 5 out of 6 children receiving their assessment in time.
- 3.5.3 Up to date health assessments for all LAC has declined from 89.3% in April to 83.5% in June.

3.6 LAC Education

- 3.6.1 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).
- 3.6.2 At the end of the Spring Term, 97.7% of eligible LAC population had a Personal Education Plan and 86.3% of LAC had a PEP meeting during the term. Both measures were slightly improved compared to the previous term.

- 3.6.3 During the spring term, 7.1% of sessions were lost due to absence for those children who have been LAC continuously for the previous 12 months.
- 3.6.4 For the same cohort, 19.1% of LAC were classed as persistent absentees in the spring term. This means they missed 10% or more of their sessions.
- 3.6.5 Of those who were LAC for at least 12 months, 14.5% had at least one fixed term exclusion during the spring term. Exclusions at the end of the Spring term were higher than they were in the same term for the previous year. The increase in exclusions from autumn to spring term was also greater than the previous year.
- 3.6.6 7.2% of all LAC were on reduced timetable arrangements during the spring term.
- 3.6.7 Since the start of Covid-19, there have not been any exclusions and attendance are not being reported in the same way. As a result, figures for exclusions, persistent absence and reduced provision will see a significant reduction for the summer term.

3.7 Care Leavers

- 3.7.1 The number of care leavers has continued an upward trend reaching 332 at the end of June.
- 3.7.2 The performance of Pathway Plans reduced slightly to 92.4% of care leavers having a plan and 90.8% having an up to date plan at the end of June. Further work around Pathway Plans has commenced as a number of cases still sit within the LAC Service
- 3.7.3 Care leavers in suitable accommodation has seen a slight decrease to 94.9% at the end of June reflecting a small number of young people in custody.
- 3.7.4 Education, Employment and Training (EET) has positively increased by 5.5% in June to 65.1% of care leavers in EET.

3.8 Fostering

- 3.8.1 At the end of June we remained consistent with 67.8% of our LAC in fostering placements. Fostering placements includes both those placed with our in house foster carers and those placed with Independent Fostering Agencies.

3.8.2 We approved 3 new fostering households in June and had no de-registrations, offering a potential of 4 additional in house fostering placements for our looked after children.

3.9 Adoptions

3.9.1 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.

3.9.2 There were no adoptions in May and June reflecting the direct impact of Covid-19.

3.9.3 The national target for the number of days between a child entering care and having an adoption placement is a maximum of 426 days. The A1 measure for 2020/21 is currently reporting at 0 days because the 1 adoption case complete in April was placed with their adoptive family on the same day as entering care.

3.9.4 The national target for the number of days between a child receiving a placement order and being matched to an adoptive family is a maximum of 121 days. The A2 measure is unreportable due to the 1 adoption case in April not requiring a Placement Order.

3.1.1 At the end of July there will be 30 adoption applications waiting with the court. Some have been waiting since February but hearings did not progress due to court reducing the number of hearings, delaying contested hearings and halting hearing new applications. Court did resume face to face work at a much reduced level on 01/06/20 but adoption hearings are not yet being planned. This has been escalated by legal service to the lead Judge.

3.2 Caseloads

3.2.1 In June the average caseload for LAC teams reduced to 16.5 in teams 1-3 (-0.8) and 17.2 in teams 4-5 (-0.4). The highest caseload in LAC teams remains at 26.

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 Subgroup 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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