

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Performance

Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – 5th January 2021

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 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 – Aug 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 Children in Care.

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 During October we had 12 children entering care and 16 children discharging from care, leaving us with a decreased number of 610 LAC at month end. Although we had a decrease, it is still higher than our relatively static numbers around 603 during the first half of the year. 37.5% of those leaving care, left due to permanence.
 - 3.2.2 This decrease slightly reduced our 10k population rate to 106.0% at the end of October. This is still very high, in comparison, our statistical neighbours are at 92%.

3.2.3 Of those who left care, 2 children secured SGO's in October, taking the 2020/21 year to date number to 13. These figures continue to reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on court and progression to final hearings. Court dates are continuing to be planned in for both final hearings and adoption applications so this is expected to increase through the next few months.

3.3 LAC Plans, Reviews and Visits

3.3.1 96.9% of LAC reviews were held within timescale during October 2020. When compared to previous months in 2020/21 and indeed 2020 to date, this is the highest of recent performance.

3.3.2 LAC with an up to date plan increased to 93.3% in October 20 from 88.8% (September 20), and this sees a return to better performance nearing the April 2020 high of 94.5%.

3.3.3 LAC visits in time showed a slight reduction in October at 97.5% from 98.2% in September. Additionally, there were a further 2 visits undertaken virtually in October due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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 children and young people experiencing long term placement stability increased in October with 155 long term looked after children having a placement stable for at least 2 years, out of a cohort of 229 (67.7%). This is the highest performance has been in 2020 to date.

3.4.3 The percentage of children having 3 or more placements in the last rolling 12 months has increased again in October to 8.2% from 7.6% in Sep 20. This is a slight increase and reflects a small number of children & young people and their carers (50/610) who have had placement disruptions. This is in comparison to 47/615 for September and seems to be, in part, from a cumulative impact on placements linked to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4.4 The percentage of children in a family based placement continues to consistently range between 81-82% (October 20 was 81.3%). Similarly, LAC in a commissioned placement ranges between 50-52% (October 20 was 51.1%).

3.5 Fostering

- 3.5.1 The number of LAC in a fostering placement has seen a decline in October with 397 children (65.1% of LAC) in foster care; a reduction from 417 in Sep 20 (67.5%). This does include some of the young people exiting care for permanent family arrangements but reflects that there has also been some pressure on fostering families.
- 3.5.2 A further 2 new foster carers were recruited during October. There were no deregistrations in the same month taking the number of foster carers to 151. The number of foster care households at the start of 20/21 was 150 (April 20) so overall the number is staying consistent.

3.6 Adoptions

- 3.6.1 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.
- 3.6.2 Up until September Covid-19 had significantly impacted on the 2020/21 performance for adoptions due to courts being closed. However, September (9) and October (11) have seen 20 adoptions completed, which brings the year to date total to 23. Court dates for adoption hearings are continuing to be agreed, which will support a positive year end picture reflecting that, while courts have been impacted upon, the work behind this to support transitions has continued.
- 3.6.3 The national target (A1) 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 398.5 days for the 23 children adopted so far this year. Note that this will change as more adoption orders are granted throughout the year and timeliness is affected by the impact of Covid-19.
- 3.6.4 The national target (A2) 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 currently reporting at 176.2 days for the 23 children adopted this year. Again, this will fluctuate as more adoption orders are granted over the coming months.

3.7 Health and Dental

- 3.7.1 Health checks had remained relatively consistent at the start of the 2020 calendar year but since the Covid-19 pandemic beginning in

March 2020, health checks have seen a gradual decline to 87.7% in October from 90.4% in April. This has been noted and work is ongoing to support the improvement of timeliness of consent, which has been a recent barrier and challenge.

- 3.7.2 Dental checks are continuing the linear downward trend since the beginning of the year. Current data shows that only 34.1% were up to date at the end of October. However, there is a known delay in inputting so this figure is likely to increase slightly. The September figure is currently showing at 46%. The Covid-19 pandemic enforced the closure of dentists, giving a further impact on this measure. Dentists have reopened for emergency treatment only and this continues to be an area of focus for our looked after children and has been picked up and explored via the health and wellbeing partnership workstream.
- 3.7.3 Performance for Initial Health Assessments undertaken in October slightly increased to 85.7% (12/14) of children receiving their assessment in time. The cases where there have been challenges have been carefully reviewed so we understand these.

3.8 LAC Education

- 3.8.1 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).
- 3.8.2 The Summer Term PEP completion rates show a slight increase in LAC with a PEP (98.9%) and a significant increase in the number of PEPs in time (96.5%) when compared to the previous Spring term. These figures also show an improvement on last year's performance (97.5% with a PEP and 95.0% with an up to date PEP). This is due in part to the impact of home working supporting increased capacity for the advisers.
- 3.8.3 Since the start of Covid-19 in March 20, there have been no further exclusions and as such the figure has remained the same.
- 3.8.4 During Covid-19 schools closed with vulnerable pupils and key worker's children being able to attend if required. Monitoring for LAC (including whether children physically attended or were being educated by their foster carer etc) was undertaken by the Virtual School and this was reported on a weekly basis to CYPS DLT and the strategic GOLD meeting.
- 3.8.5 Autumn term 2020/21 performance will be available in January 2021.

3.9 Care Leavers

- 3.9.1 The number of care leavers has stabilised over the last few months and sits at 333 at the end of October.
- 3.9.2 The performance of Pathway Plans increased slightly to 94.6% of care leavers having a plan but has reduced to 74.7% having an up to date plan at the end of October. This has been flagged as a key area of work to address with managers.
- 3.9.3 Care leavers in suitable accommodation has positively increased over the summer months to 96.1% at the end of October, the highest performance of 2020.
- 3.9.4 Education, Employment and Training (EET) slowly but progressively increased to 62.8% in September but slightly decreased to 62.2% in October. There is an ongoing programme linked with Unravel and Affinity to support building skills around education and employment skills for Care Leavers.

3.1 Caseloads

- 3.1.1 In October the maximum caseload of workers in the LAC teams reduced to by 5 to 20, the lowest number of 2020. The average number of cases in LAC teams was slightly higher than earlier months with 18.2 in October compared to 17.4 in April 2020.

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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