

## **Council Report**

Corporate Parenting Performance

### **Title**

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 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)**

Cathryn Woodward (Performance and Data Officer – Social Care)  
Rebecca Wall (Head of Children in Care)

### **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 – Dec 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 – Dec 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 December, we had 14 admissions to care and 12 discharges, resulting in an increase to 615 LAC at month end.
  - 3.2.2 This increase in LAC slightly increased our 10k population rate to 106.9% at the end of December, a very high rate in comparison to our statistical neighbours at 98.2%.
  - 3.2.3 Of those who left care, 4 children secured SGO's in December, taking the 2020/21 year to date number to 23. There remains a number of children in the adoption pathway as we catch up with Adoption Order appeals and hearings.

### 3.3 LAC Plans, Reviews and Visits

- 3.3.1 LAC reviews remained consistent in December at 96.2% held within timescale.
- 3.3.2 LAC with an up to date plan remained at 91.1% in December, similar to the previous month, but a slight drop on performance compared to April to July at around 94%.
- 3.3.3 97.1% of visits were undertaken within timescale in December and no visits were recorded as virtual visits (as in previous months in response 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 long term looked after children and young people experiencing long term placement stability increased in December to 68% of children and young people remaining in placement for at least 2 years. 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 12 months has increased slightly in December to 8.8% (54/615) from 7.8% in September 20. The increase since October reflects some of the placement instability brought by Covid-19.
- 3.4.4 The percentage of children in a family based placement continues to consistently range between 80-82% with 80.8% at the end of December. Similarly, LAC in a commissioned placement ranges between 50-52% with 51.2% at the end of December.

### 3.5 Fostering

- 3.5.1 The number of LAC in a fostering placement has seen a decline in December with 391 children (63.6%) in foster care; a reduction from 395 in November. This figure does not include those children and young people placed with family and friends.
- 3.5.2 1 new foster family was approved during December, however we concluded 2 resignations. This brings the number of new Foster

carer approvals to 17 in 2020-21, and the total number deregistered to 15.

3.5.3 A key element to factor in to fostering placement capacity is that carers who resign are often more established and are often approved for 2 or more young people. New carers usually start with an approval of only 1 or, less frequently, 2 children. The combination of newer carers coming in, resignations of experience carers concluding, and some placements being on hold due to Covid-19 means, while the number of fostering households look the similar to the year start, the number of young people in fostering is lower than at the start of the year.

3.5.4 Our newly approved foster carers will grow with time and experience and have potential for more placements in future.

3.5.5 The themes around resignations are linked to families revisiting their commitments in light of their own families.

### 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 The current year to date number of adoptions is 26, with 23 of these taking place since September due to delays as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The increase in adoptions completed is reassuring to see and highlights that, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the service has continued to ensure transitions to support adoption.

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 427.3 days for the 26 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 185.4 days for the 26 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 80.1% in December from 90% in February.
- 3.7.2 Dental checks are continuing the linear downward trend since the beginning of the year when we had 86.1% of dental assessments up to date. Current data shows that only 20.7%% were up to date at the end of December. The Covid-19 pandemic enforced the closure of dentists, giving a significant impact on this measure. Dentists have since reopened for emergency treatment. There is focused work in place via the Health and Wellbeing partnership and as dentists seek to reopen there is a clear plan to support a focused increase in dental checks for looked after children.
- 3.7.3 Performance for Initial Health Assessments undertaken in December increased to 84.6% (11/13) of children receiving their assessment in time. Year to date, 78.8% of initial assessments have been completed in time which is not currently meeting the year end performance of 2019/20 (86.4%) but is above other previous years and is considered to be positive under the current demands and pressures related to Covid-19.

### 3.8 LAC Education

- 3.8.1 All measures are reported termly, Autumn term 2020/21 performance will be reported in February 2021 as the new reporting system is still being worked on to ensure data is as accurate as possible.
- 3.8.2 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).
- 3.8.3 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.
- 3.8.4 Since the start of Covid-19 in March 20, there have been no further exclusions and as such the figure has remained the same.
- 3.8.5 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.

### 3.9 Care Leavers

- 3.9.1 At the end of December, the care leavers cohort had increased by 4, up to 337.
- 3.9.2 All care leavers measures continue to fluctuate slightly month on month and in December, both pathway plan measures saw a fall in how many care leavers have a plan (89%) and how many are up to date (72.9%).
- 3.9.3 However, performance for care leavers in suitable accommodation (97%) and care leavers in employment, education, or training (65.3%) both continued to increase during December, which shows the ongoing positive work of the network around the young people, despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and acknowledged impact on this age group nationally.

### 3.1 Caseloads

- 3.1.1 In December, the maximum caseload of workers in the LAC teams was at its lowest this year so far (19) from a high of 29 at the start of 2020.
- 3.1.2 The average number of cases also reduced to its lowest so far in 2020 to 16.7 in December from a high of 18.6 in February.

## **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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