

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Corporate Parenting Panel – 13 June 2023

Report Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – Outturn 2022/23

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides a summary of performance for key performance indicators across the Looked After Children (LAC) services. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data reports, Appendix 1 which provides performance on a page giving an overview of the services performance in comparison to the same period 2021-22 and Appendix 2 which provides trend data, graphical analysis, and latest benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

Recommendations

1. The panel is asked to receive this report with the accompanying dataset (Appendix 2) and consider any issues arising.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Performance on a page

Appendix 2 Looked after children performance – March 23 (Outturn 2022/23)

Background Papers

Children's Social Care Monthly Performance Report – March 23 (Outturn 2022/23)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

1. Background

- 1.1 This report provides evidence to the council's commitment to continuous improvement and providing performance information to enable scrutiny of 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 latest benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages.
- 1.2 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 local service context.
- 1.3 All benchmarking data is as at the latest data release by the DfE and relates to 2021/22 outturn.
- 1.4 The narrative supplied within the report has been informed by the Assistant Director for Children's Services and the Head of Service – Children in Care.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 **Looked After Children** – At the end of Q4 (2022/23 outturn) we saw the number of children and young people we look after decrease by 17 to 545 when compared to the end of 2021/22 when there were 562 LAC.

During Q4 33 children became looked after, 181 in total for 2022/23, compared to 46 in Q4 last financial year (175 2021/22). 39 children ceased to be looked after (195 2022/23), compared to 57 in Q4 equating to 212 in 2021/22.

The benchmark measure of 10k population rate of children looked after has reduced to 96.7 at the end of Q4 compared to 97.8 last year. This remains below the latest statistical neighbour's average of 102.4 but remains significantly higher than the national average of 70.0.

There are currently 36 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), an increase of 22 when compared to the end of Q4 2021/22 when there were only 14 UASC looked after by the local authority (LA). The commissioning team are working to ensure we are able to offer placements and accommodation commensurate to need. We know this is a potential ongoing pressure due to the growing need to support more UASC, and impact on local placement sufficiency is being monitored.

- 2.2 **Plans** – At the end of this financial year, 94.7% of eligible LAC had an up-to-date plan, which is a 1.9% decrease in comparison to last year when it was 96.6%.
- 2.3 **Placements** – The percentage of LAC in a family-based setting has remained fairly stable during 2022/23 with an average of 77.4%, lowest being 75.2% in November 22 and highest 79.8% in June 22. At the end of Q4 77.0% of LAC were in a family-based setting compared to 79.4% at the end of Q4 2021/22. 65.2% of long-term LAC had been in a stable placement for at least 2 years at the end of the financial year showing a 5.0% decrease when compared to the end of 2021/22 (70.2%). The 65.2% outturn figure for 2022/23 continues to be

below the latest stat neighbour (71.1%) and national (71.0%) averages. Placement stability is an area of focus that the fostering service, responsible Team manager and IRO have been engaged with to review what works and what their roles are in working to prevent placement breakdowns. The fostering service has sought to strengthen placement stability via completing the mapping assessment to identify support needs and ensure these are met via the service. The fostering service is expanding their support offer recruiting additional Family Support workers and an extended on-call support offering after hours and weekend contact, as these have been highlighted as best practice. Team Around the Child meetings are in place to support all placements, with a particular focus at linking in support from the agency or Rotherham Therapeutic Team earlier, to prevent disruption.

The percentage of children having had 3 or more placements in the last rolling 12 months has increased to 9.7% when compared to 9.3% at the end of 2021/22. However, the 2022/23 outturn figure (9.7%) remains below the latest national average (10.0%) but above the statistical neighbour (8.6%). The work linked to the team around the child will support strengthening placement stability. Additional support packages to grow foster carers for older children, have also been proposed and piloted, to improve local sufficiency.

2.4 In-house fostering – There were 111 in-house foster carer households registered at the end of the 2022/23, a decrease of 14 in comparison to 125 at the end of the last financial year (2021/22). There were 2 foster family approvals in Q4, making 11 approvals in the financial year. However, 4 families also ceased to be foster carers in the quarter bringing the year end 2022/23 total to 25, therefore equating to 14 less foster families at the end of the year. At the end of the period there was a total of 8 prospective foster families in the recruitment process, 6 of which had panels scheduled.

Placement sufficiency remains a key challenge and Brightsparks continue to support us in fostering recruitment work. After a boost last quarter this three-month period has been quieter with 2 approvals creating 2 new placements. Placement sufficiency linked to our residential offer also continues to be positive with a 3rd young person moving into our 4-bed provision.

2.5 Youth Offending – Of the 545 children and young people looked after by Rotherham at the end of the quarter, 9 were also known to the Youth Justice Service. At the same period last year there were 3 out of 562 looked after children.

2.6 Adoptions – 24 children have been adopted since April 2022 which is a decrease (-9) when compared to the same period last year when there had been 33 adoptions.

At the end of 2022/23, the A10 measure (Average number of days between a child becoming LAC and having an adoption placement) was 492.5 days (418.9 days 2021/22) and the A2 measure (Average number of days between placement order and being matched with adoptive family) was 197.4 days (292.2 days 2021/22). The A2 figure from placement order to adoptive match indicates that we are matching children and placing with adoptive families sooner. The A10 measure performance is directly linked to the court delays caused by the recent Covid-19 pandemic.

2.7 Health – The percentage of LAC having an initial health assessment (IHA) within timescale has decreased in 2022/23 with 61.5% of IHA's being in time, compared to 68.5% in 2021/22. However, data within the Liquid Logic Management System suggests both the number of up-to-date health checks and dental checks have improved.

The number of up-to-date health checks at the end of March 23 had increased to 78.7% when compared to 71.0% at the same point last year. We often see a delay in accurate performance figures being reported via Liquid Logic due to delays in assessments being signed off and delayed inputting. The named nurse for LAC & Care Leavers can confirm that the below figures are correct for the end of March 23:

- Children placed in Rotherham aged under 5 - 98%
- Children placed in Rotherham aged over 5 - 94% (98% if those that decline are removed from figures)
- Children placed out of Rotherham aged under 5 - 88%
- Children placed out of Rotherham aged over 5 - 94%

Up to date dental checks has also seen an increase from 44.0% (2021/22) to 69.4% (2022/23). Similarly, to health assessments, dental performance will also be higher when not taken from Liquid Logic, but this is still being clarified as part of the 903 statutory return for the DfE. Dental assessments continue to be an area of focus and is being reviewed via the LAC Health and Emotional Well Being Partnership and is a national issue that we want to ensure does not become a trend here in Rotherham.

2.8 Reviews and visits – 91.5% of reviews during 2022/23 were completed within the timescales set, which equates to 1428 reviews in time out of 1560 that were completed April 22 to March 23 (94.3% (1561/1655) in 2021/22).

At the end of the financial year, 95.6% of visits were up-to-date and within timescale of the national minimum standard. At the end of the same period in 2021/22 96.8% were in time, showing a 1.2% decrease this year.

2.9 Education – The performance reporting for PEP's has moved from being a manual data matching process to being recorded and reported by the ePEP system. Currently the system can only report % of up-to-date PEP's and not the % of children and young people with a PEP in the last 3 terms. Rotherham's local standard which ensures that each PEP is refreshed every term (rather than the annual minimum standard) was 82.1% at the end of the spring term 2022/23, compared to 92.1% spring term 2021/22.

2.10 Care Leavers – At the end of 2022/23 there were 319 young people in the care leavers cohort which shows an increase of 27 when compared to 2021/22 (292). The Leaving Care Cohort remains high with the level of UASC growing making up 29 of the current cohort. The service is working close with the wider partnership to ensure there is a clear pathway of support recognising the vulnerability of this cohort.

74.5% of care leavers had an up-to-date pathway plan at the end of the year which is an 8.3% decrease when compared to the same period last year (82.8%). 97.2% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation compared to 96.6% at the end of last year. This remains above the latest stat neighbour (90.2%) and

national (88.0%) averages. Of the 9 young people in unsuitable accommodation 6 are in custody.

69.6% of care leavers were in employment, education, and training (EET) at the end of the year compared to 71.6% at the end of 2021/22. However, this remains above the latest stat neighbour (53.7%) and national (55.0%) averages. There is a steady improvement in the numbers of our young people activity engaged in EET, which occasionally fluctuates as it has this quarter. The service remains ambitious but want to ensure this translates through to Plans. Pathway planning continues to be an area where we are scrutinising quality, as well as compliance.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The full corporate parenting performance report attached at Appendix 2 represents a summary of performance across a range of key national and local indicators. Corporate Parenting Panel members are therefore recommended to consider and review this information.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Not applicable

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Not applicable

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

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

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

7.1 There are no legal implications to this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

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

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no direct implications from this report.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no direct implications within this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 The Partners and other directorates are engaged in improving the performance and quality of services to children, young people, and their families via the Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (RSCP). The RSCP 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 monthly performance meetings mitigates 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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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).