



SCRUTINY PANEL
CHILDREN AND LEARNING
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS
January 2023

Petra Pankova
Performance Manager



Priority Areas

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Practice and Performance Overview

Since Ofsted focused visit in November 2022, I have a number of updates to give you. Firstly, regarding the visit, our letter was published on 13th January 2023. We were pleased that the strategic direction for the service was endorsed, and we know that we need to focus more attention on children's assessment and plans, and quality assurance.

We know that our practice managers are key to improving practice. Stuart Webb, Head of QA is working with the HOS team and our service leads to deliver four workshops in February and March 2023, focusing on areas of practice that most need to improve and the audit learning loop.

The safeguarding service, under Jacqui Schofield is ready to embark on the next phase of our journey. The pace in other areas will now accelerate as we welcome our two new heads of service, Anisha Reed, Head of Service for Pathways through Care and Matt Jenkins, Head of Resources.

Alongside getting core practice right we want to continue to stretch the service and be innovative. The Young People's service has successfully launched our new young people's hub and are also part of a national pilot for Risk Outside the Home (ROTH) conferences, as an alternative to child protection planning. This work has been led by our CP Advisor, Laura Trevett and involves work with Carlene Firman from Durham University.

Staff recruitment and retention remain a firm focus. Leadership visibility, genuine learning from honest mistakes and having fun together as a service are all important aspects of this. We held a hugely successful Christmas party, orchestrated by the practice development team, with a bespoke award for every service. Our new recruitment campaign goes live on 13th January, and I will be asking you all to support this. We need to work really hard to retain our existing staff and we will be stepping up the creativity and energy we invest in this in the coming months, starting with a comprehensive local authority comparison exercise.

As we move into the new year, we have engaged with our staff about rebranding our improvement work for children and I am pleased to say that after over 200 staff voted, we will be collectively getting behind Building for Brilliance 2023 and our six priorities:

- Ensure that all children get the right support at the right time, meeting need early, reducing demand and spend on statutory services
- Develop strong, vibrant localities where families can receive the help they need and practitioners can share their knowledge and expertise
- Establish a permanent, diverse, energised workforce, increasing consistency for children and reducing agency spend
- Enable children in care to return to their birth families, seeking out & reuniting families, reducing care costs and freeing up placements for other children
- Promote permanence and placement stability, creating strong forever families and reducing increasingly costly alternatives
- Embed our practice framework and practice standards across the whole service, doing the basics brilliantly and being ambitious in our practice expectations.



Steph Murray
Deputy Director
Children's Social Care



Effective Assessment and Intervention

Indicator	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Target	Southampton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of referrals in the month	270	370	334	325	286	314	276	399	299	Not set	Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	21% (57/270)	21% (76/370)	24% (79/334)	26% (83/325)	28% (79/286)	30% (93/314)	27% (75/276)	26% (104/399)	30% (89/299)	23%	27%	21%	26%	21%
Number of referrals into Early Help	282	271	228	174	220	205	203	180	187	N/A	Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Number of Early Help assessments completed	106	130	146	162	99	106	92	156	84	TBC				
Rates of Single Assessments completed per 10,000	67	125	185	244	318	395	454	525	591	700 (accumulative)	672	637	554	518
Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days	79% (264/333)	82% (234/285)	86% (255/295)	72% (209/291)	78% (289/369)	61% (233/379)	70% (203/289)	69% (245/353)	78% (254/325)	90%	86%	0.87	0.89	0.88

Effective Assessment and Intervention

Analysis

Since the last submitted report looking at performance up to October 2022, the volume of contacts entering the Children's Resource Service had seen an increase in November by 17% (307 contacts per month, that is by 14 contacts per working day) and dropped to the lowest volume since the start of the financial year in December 2022.

Number of referrals to statutory services had seen an increase by 30% in November 2022 compared to October and the previous six months average, and dropped to a similar volume in December that was seen in October and some previous months (under three hundred per month).

Re-referral rates have been reviewed and updated, and stood at 30% of re-referrals in December 2022, 26% in November and 27% in October, with 25% average for the period between April and October 2022, just short of our target of 23%.

More statutory single assessments have been completed this year compared to previous and there is evidence of improved performance in completing statutory assessments within 45 working days, but still short of the target of 90%.

In December 2022, we have seen the lowest number of early help assessments since the start of the financial year, but overall this year there has been an increase in referrals to Early Help and the number of children and families receiving early help services.

Action/next steps

Ongoing focus on threshold application, quality of referrals from partner agencies and interface with early help.

Planned external SESLIP audit of contacts, decision making and threshold application will take place in February 2023.

Purposeful Direct Contact

Indicator	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Target	Southam 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England	
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan for whom a visit has taken place within last 10 working days	92% (420/458)	86% (370/429)	86% (364/421)	84% (321/384)	82% (315/384)	93% (325/348)	87% (270/309)	91% (262/289)	93% (266/286)	90%	Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)				
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks (20 Working Days)	98% (447/458)	97% (417/429)	98% (414/421)	96% (368/384)	98% (375/384)	98% (341/348)	98% (302/309)	99% (285/289)	99% (283/286)	100%					
Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales (6 weeks or less visits)	85% (479/566)	82% (456/559)	85% (473/554)	85% (470/554)	81% (448/551)	84% (461/548)	85% (471/552)	88% (491/558)	82% (445/543)	100%					
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan not allocated to CWD for whom a visit has taken place within last 6 weeks (CIN*)	94% (483/516)	95% (504/533)	93% (524/563)	94% (532/569)	94% (527/560)	94% (525/558)	95% (512/539)	97% (498/514)	94% (450/479)						

Analysis

Visiting children who have child protection plans and 4 weeks visiting frequency has consistently been a strength, nearing 100%. Some challenges remain in the Pathways Through Care teams to complete and record visits to children looked after. Visits to children who have an active child in need plan are also showing a good performance. Children with agreed visiting frequency above 6 weeks continue to be included in the cohort of up to six weeks, performance data development is ongoing. There has been delay in producing additional data, due to competing priorities in the Business Intelligence Data Team. In December 2022, the local authority was in touch with 79% of 16–17-year-olds and 97% of 19–21-year-old care leavers. 78% of 16-17 year olds and 90% of 19–21-year-olds were in suitable accommodation.

Action/next steps

Increased capacity in staff numbers (oversees social workers have undergone a long induction and low protected caseloads over the last twelve months and are now transitioned to holding more cases), reduction in numbers of children in care and with child protection plans should contribute to improvement in several areas of practice, including timeliness of visits and supervision.

Management Support for better Practice

Indicator	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Target	Southampton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England	
Percentage of children who had their supervision and was within the timescales	76% (1771/2331)	77% (1839/2390)	71% (1707/2394)	70% (1707/2439)	72% (1727/2411)	69% (1620/2353)	71% (1648/2317)	75% (1758/2353)	78% (1752/2255)	80%	Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)				
Percentage of CPP who had their supervision and was within the timescale	89% (409/458)	92% (394/429)	91% (382/421)	84% (321/384)	89% (342/384)	85% (296/348)	88% (271/309)	95% (275/289)	94% (268/286)	90%					
Percentage of CLA who had their supervision and was within the timescale	82% (462/566)	87% (488/559)	82% (454/554)	83% (459/554)	81% (447/551)	78% (427/548)	75% (416/552)	72% (400/558)	73% (395/543)	90%					
Percentage of Care Leavers who had their supervision and was within the timescale	25% (52/218)	25% (57/226)	78% (165/212)	39% (86/221)	44% (90/204)	51% (128/251)	60% (152/252)	45% (115/252)	67% (174/259)	80%					

Analysis

Overall 78% of case supervision happened in time in December 2022 and 75% in November compared to 71% in October, making it a 75% year to date, with the target being 80%. Best performance for November and December 2022 is showing in the children with child protection plan cohort with 94% visits on time, 73% for children looked after and 67% for care leavers (the best performance since 78% in June 2022).

Actions / next steps

Monthly reports are now broken down by individual teams and managers and are analysed in Assurance Clinics, with managers being asked to provide performance analysis and action plan to improve performance.

Monthly audits are focusing on the frequency and quality of supervision as a matter of course. Focused conversations are taking place with managers who are consistently not achieving minimum standards.

Right Service at the Right Time

Indicator	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Target	Southampton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	21% (57/270)	21% (76/370)	24% (79/334)	26% (83/325)	28% (79/286)	30% (93/314)	27% (75/276)	26% (104/399)	30% (89/299)	23%	27%	21%	26%	21%
Number of Early Help assessments completed	106	130	146	162	99	106	92	156	84	TBC	Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Rates of Single Assessments completed per 10,000	67	125	185	244	318	395	454	525	591	700	672	637	554	518
Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days	79% (264/333)	82% (234/285)	86% (255/295)	72% (209/291)	78% (289/369)	61% (233/379)	70% (203/289)	69% (245/353)	78% (254/325)	90%	86%	87%	89%	88%
Number of contacts	1665	2100	1866	1594	1959	1789	1487	1794	1428	<17K	Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Number of referrals in the month	270	370	334	325	286	314	276	399	299	N/A				
Rates of referrals per 10,000 of Under 18 Population	54	129	197	263	321	385	441	521	582	700	790	647	561	494
Number of CLA at the end of the month	566	559	554	554	551	548	552	558	543	540	497	640	10480	80850
Number of children with an active Child in Need Plan not allocated to CWD (CIN*)	516	533	563	569	560	558	539	514	479	N/A	Comparison data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Number of children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan as at the end of month	458	429	421	384	384	348	309	289	286	406				
Number of care leavers	218	226	212	221	204	249	252	252	259	N/A				

Right Service at the Right Time

Analysis

- Number of Referrals to statutory services had seen an increase by 30% in November 2022 compared to October and previous six months average, and dropped to a similar volume in December that was seen in October and some previous months (under three hundred per month).
- More statutory single assessments have been completed this year compared to previous and there is evidence of improved performance in completing statutory assessments within 45 working days, but still short of the target of 90%.
- Single assessments: annualised rate to 1st January 2023 that we are on track to achieve target of 700 (the lower the better), higher than performance in 2021/22 and higher than comparative group.
- Sustained trend of reducing the numbers of children with child protection and child in need plans, reaching 286, the lowest number since the start of the financial year, currently outperforming target of 406 children with child protection plan at the end of financial year.
- Children Looked After numbers also continue to decrease, with the lowest numbers recorded in December 2022 (543) since the start of financial year.
- In December 2022 we saw fewer entrants into the care system than in previous months and more exits from care – the highest figure since the start of the financial year. This is evidence that the re-unification drive and edge of care services are having an impact on supporting children to live within their families.

Action/next steps

- Ongoing focus on intervening early and effectively to prevent unplanned entries to care. Focus on children with child protection plans for twelve months and more to plan an exit strategy and prevent delay in securing positive permanent outcomes for children.
- Edge of care services and intensive support are offered to children who are on the edge of care, preventing family breakdown where possible and whilst still safe for the child.
- Managers and IROs continue to review permanency plans and identify children where re-unification with family or a permanent arrangement with extended family would be an option. The Permanency Panel is tracking the progress of these children.

Robust Corporate Parenting

Indicator	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Target	Southampton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of CLA at the end of the month	566	559	554	554	551	548	552	558	543	540	497	640	10480	80850
Rate of CLA per 10,000 under 18 population	114	113	112	112	111	111	111	113	110	100	96	100	53	67
Number of CLA at the end of the month who are UASC	25	25	24	21	24	27	31	36	35	<37	20	23	820	4070
Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales (6 weeks or less visits)	85% (479/566)	82% (456/559)	85% (473/554)	85% (470/554)	81% (448/551)	84% (461/548)	85% (471/552)	88% (491/558)	82% (445/543)	97%	N/A Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Percentage of CLA children with an up to date review	98% (556/566)	98% (545/559)	98% (542/554)	98% (544/554)	99% (544/551)	100% (546/548)	99% (547/552)	99% (552/558)	98% (534/543)	95%				
Percentage of children in care for at least 12 months for whom health assessments are up to date.	73% (295/402)	73% (299/411)	73% (294/405)	74% (303/411)	78% (317/408)	80% (342/426)	81% (350/433)	84% (365/432)	83% (350/423)	95%	83%	93%	89%	91%
Percentage of CLA at end of month with 3 or more placements during the year	25% (143/566)	25% (140/559)	25% (139/554)	24% (135/554)	23% (126/551)	21% (116/548)	20% (112/552)	18% (101/558)	16% (87/543)	<10%	14%	10%	11%	9%
Number of CLA allocated to CWD	32	32	31	31	30	29	29	30	29	N/A	N/A Comparative data with these groups is not available (not part of statutory returns)			
Number of CLA accommodated on S20 (exc UASC) as at the end of the month	31	30	28	33	28	26	25	30	26	N/A				
Percentage of CLA with a permanence plan in place within 6 months of BLA	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC				
Number of Children Looked After (CLA) placed for adoption at period end	46	46	35	35	30	30	26	26	20	TBC	11	21	300	2270
Percentage of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	24% (135/566)	25% (138/559)	25% (140/554)	25% (141/554)	26% (145/551)	26% (145/548)	27% (150/552)	27% (152/558)	28% (153/543)	<36%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Robust Corporate Parenting

Analysis

- Children Looked After numbers also continue to decrease, with the lowest numbers recorded in December 2022 (543) since the start of the financial year 2022/23.
- In December 2022 we saw fewer entrants into the care system than in previous months and more exits from care – the highest figure since the start of the financial year. This is evidence, that the re-unification drive and edge of care services are having an impact on supporting children to live within their families.
- Performance in delivering a timely review of the progress of children looked after care plans has been consistently high, outperforming the set target.
- We now have data to measure performance around updating children’s care plans and pathway plans. This financial year average 80% of Care Plans are up to date and 73% of Pathway Plans are up to date.
- The service is checking its data relating to Initial Health Assessment (IHAs) for children entering care and will provide further update to the improvement board.
- Fewer children experienced short term breakdown (3 or more placements in 12 months) with 16% being the lowest figure since the start of the financial year.

Action/next steps

- Continue with re-unification drive and edge of care services to support children living with their families.
- Delivering timely CLA Review to track care and pathway plans and suitability and sustainability of placement for children.
- Introduce Placement Planning meetings to plan for placements for children with their input and placement stability.
- Increase placement sufficiency locally to keep more children and young people within closer distance from home.

Performance Culture

Analysis

- The Business Intelligence Team with input from social workers and managers on all levels continues to develop the existing Performance Management Data framework and dashboards, with a number of key pieces of work in progress to support operational level management as well as understanding the 'bigger picture', for example demographics and groups of clients, supporting the Diversity Project with bespoke data intelligence.
- All managers receive weekly bespoke reports as well as monthly performance reports, with having daily access to live data for their team/service.
- Caseload management tool has been recently launched for piloting and is enabling managers to understand caseload levels and trends over time.
- Assurance Clinics are ongoing and we have introduced a new process of operational managers making representations about their team and service performance and proposing remedial actions to improve.
- We continue to experience challenges in some areas of reporting, this is due to the modifications that have been made to the Care Director recording system and how that aligns to the data collection formulas. The Care Director Board has oversight of these challenges and is working towards resolution.
- The senior leadership team is driving completion of monthly case audits.
- In response to the most recent Ofsted focused visit, the Improvement Plan was redeveloped and a new set of Key Performance Indicators agreed.

Action/next steps

- Care Director Board to continue to oversee the development of the CD recording system and linking with the Business Intelligence team to ensure data integrity is maintained
- Development of Performance Management Data framework and dashboards to continue in line with agreed development priorities
- Monthly Assurance Clinics to continue with greater accountability around performance placed on managers
- Supporting early engagement with families in their communities and providing culturally sensitive services by understanding the profile of children and families living in Southampton

Rigorous Quality Assurance

Analysis

Between June 2022 and December 2022, 174 graded audits were completed across (CRS, BIT&SWF, Jigsaw, ICAS, C&FF, Adoption and Fostering Teams). Indicative grades (prior to full moderation) were:

- Outstanding - 15
- Good - 96
- Requires Improvement - 55
- Inadequate - 8

In addition, 71 graded, themed audits were completed by Service Leads, Q&A and Multi-agency partners. Indicative grades (prior to full moderation) were:

- Outstanding - 4
- Good - 34
- Requires Improvement - 28
- Inadequate – 5

Moderation activity in 2022 identified that the overall level of practice was closer to ‘requires improvement’.

Action/next steps

A new audit process, with a greater emphasis on management oversight, moderation and evidencing better outcomes was launched in January 2023. As part of this, there will be themed audits completed by Practice Managers across all social work teams and C&FF Service on monthly basis. It is anticipated that this activity will produce approx. 470 audits by December 2023. With other multi-agency audits that will run alongside this, the service is forecasting that the annual audit total for 2023 will be between 550 and 600.

Each service area is committed to the monthly audit programme and recognise the importance of this as a means by which teams/services can measure the impact of interventions and also measure progress against key performance targets. In addition, the regular audit activity will support C&L’s focus on driving practice forward towards the attainment of ‘Good’ status uniformly across all service areas.