

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES
DATE OF DECISION:	4 NOVEMBER 2021
REPORT OF:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
N/A	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
<p>This paper offers an oversight of two of the primary statutory functions within the Special Educational Needs and Disability Service, highlighting the performance against statutory Education, Health and Care Assessments and appeals associated to this process and the statutory timescales for children open to the Jigsaw (Children with Disabilities) social work team, highlighting current challenges and areas for focus.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
(i)	That the Panel note the current position relating to timeliness of statutory Education, Health and Care Assessments, including appeal rates, and that from 2022 the service will be required to report on performance against annual reviews of Education, Health and Care Plans.
(ii)	That the Panel note the current performance of statutory social work assessments for children held in the JIGSAW Team (for children with disabilities).
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	Southampton City Council has statutory responsibilities relating to the assessment of children and young people with SEND, as underpinned by the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated legislation.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**Timeliness of Education, Health and Care Assessments**

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| 3. | In August 2021 the service achieved a 100% completion rate for 24 months consecutively for EHC Assessments completed in timeframe. For context, this is from a baseline completion rate of 5.3% for 2018 and 50.2% in 2019. Southampton were one of only 8 LA's nationally to achieve a 100% completion rate and only 58% of all EHC Plans were issued within timescales nationally. |
| 4. | The % of pupils with EHCP's in Southampton is 4.4% against a national 3.7% average. |
| 5. | From 2023 LA's will be required to report on timeliness of Annual Reviews of Education, Health and Care Assessments in the annual data collection for the Department for Education. There have been delays to annual reviews being completed by schools and processed by the service, owing to COVID and staff changes in both the SEN Team and the Business Support Unit. The service has completed a full data cleanse by manually checking and updating in excess of 2000 records, with all schools now receiving termly notifications of the list of annual reviews and when these are due. The service is in the process of developing an alert system on the database so that when timescales lapse these send automatic prompts for chasing schools. We will be partaking in the voluntary data submission to the DfE throughout 2022 for % of annual reviews completed in timescales. We have not been required to submit this previously so there is no historical data available. |
| 6. | Whilst comparative national data is not published on tribunals, anecdotally we are aware that these figures are high in Southampton. We have a very active Information, Advice and Support Service, and strong parental representation in the city. This is positive but can result in increased demand. In 2020 we had 62 appeals raised. 32 of these were relating to the decision to assess and 25 relating to a specific school. 31 went to a hearing with the others being resolved before this date. Whilst the proposals relating to an expansion and reconfiguration of special schools will seek to reduce the number of appeals that we receive against the school named in the EHC Plan, there is work to do to avoid appeals against decisions to assess. This will be a focus for the service in the next 12 months, with intentions to increase the uptake of informal mediation and improve information sharing at the point at which a request for assessment is made. |
| 7. | In September 2021 two assessments fell outside of statutory timescales. One of these was owing to the complexity of the case – we could have issued in timescales if we had decided to name a “type” of school, however, this would have been strongly opposed by the parents and the service prioritised the maintaining of relationships in this case. The other was due to an administrative error in the business support unit that sits separately from children's services. This has been raised with and addressed by senior management in that service area. |

8.	The service is currently experiencing capacity issues at a management level. We have one longstanding vacant Assistant Team Manager post and the Team Manager has been absent for two months as a result of long COVID. This is putting pressure at both management and officer level. This presents a risk to service delivery but at this stage we are not anticipating a risk to statutory timescales.
Forecast Performance for 2021	
9.	We predict that our overall completion rate for 2021 will be above 95% which will still place us in the highest percentile nationally.
Timeliness of statutory social work assessments and visits for Jigsaw (Children with disabilities)	
10.	See document attached as Appendix 1 – this presents performance against assessments, visits and supervisions from April 2021 – October 2021.
11.	A recent focus on timeliness has led to an improvement in performance, with 90% of visits in timescales and 80% supervisions. Assessments in timescales are challenged and are a priority focus, but have been significantly impacted by staff changes, staff sickness/those isolating and an increase of 42 children open to the team since April, which is a 13% increase. This has resulted predominantly from a decision to transfer children with SEND into the team from PACT where it is felt that Jigsaw can offer a more fitting service to the children and families' needs.
12.	Staff turnover has been high with 3 social workers leaving, 1 on maternity leave and another 2 currently serving notice, with 13 new members joining the team, including a new team manager, social workers, family engagement workers and 1 assistant team manager returning from maternity leave.
13.	The team have been significantly impacted by COVID in the past 2-3 weeks in relation to those who have tested positive and those required to isolate, which has added pressure to those staff remaining in the service, having an impact on staff morale. This will impact visiting and assessment timescale data for the current period.
14.	The focus of a recent staff away day was staff wellbeing considering the impact of change relating to staffing and the direction of the service as part of the Destination 2022 developments.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
15.	N/A
<u>Property/Other</u>	
16.	N/A
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
17.	N/A

<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
18.	N/A
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
19.	Steps being taken to manage the risks associated with placement sufficiency are outlined in Appendix 1.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
20.	N/A

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Highlight report: Key Performance Indicators – JIGSAW

Documents in Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None