

# Children & Learning Service Performance Report

January 2024



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& Learning  
Making a difference



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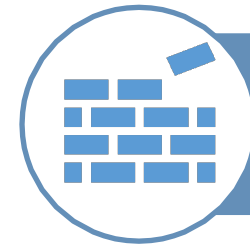
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# Purpose

In order to evidence that **Children & Learning Services** are making a **positive difference for children in the city**, we consider our monthly performance data that is linked to the key outcomes of our governing strategy, **Building for Brilliance 2023**.



## Building for Brilliance; Building for Sustainability; Building for Families, with Families



Ensure that 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



Support children to **remain within, or return to, their birth families**, seeking out and reuniting family members, reducing care costs and freeing up placements for other children.



Promote **permanence and placement stability**, creating strong forever families and reducing increasingly costly alternatives



Build a **permanent, stable, energised workforce**, increasing consistency for children and reducing agency spend



Embed our **practice framework and practice standards** across the whole service, doing the basics brilliantly and being ambitious in our practice expectations





# Right support at the right time



Indicator	Dec-21	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of referrals into Early Help	164	179	220	172	183	131	181	154	172	162	109	139	166	142		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of referrals that were stepped down from CSC (no assessment required)		61	37	40	33	28	35	35	21	46	27	16	23	18		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of Early Help assessments started	160	102	112	89	110	73	74	82	119	71	66	89	91	80		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of contacts in the month	1597	1428	1839	1598	2023	1544	1828	1948	1804	1471	1532	1923	1763	1459		-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of contacts per 10,000 population under 18 years old		4233	4222	4240	4289	4265	4213	4229	4272	4173	4123	4166	4159	4171		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Number of referrals into statutory service in the month	375	298	343	330	433	282	301	285	310	263	267	276	315	216	273	●	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of referrals per 10,000 population under 18 years old		749	751	753	777	780	770	762	761	760	754	747	732	720	647	●	↑	759.8	640.1	-	544.5
Number of C&F assessments completed	329	326	322	317	400	309	425	283	292	259	231	222	255	216	174	●	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of assessments per 10,000 population under 18 years old		783	784	788	804	800	830	827	829	807	776	756	736	716	630	●	↑	778.4	628.5	-	557.4
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD)	36	648	584	538	535	639	524	493	467	462	433	388	464	449	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (CWD)		222	222	227	231	233	238	244	254	243	243	237	230	228	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of strategy discussions held		191	200	196	217	184	185	207	144	161	152	152	173	124	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Number of Section 47 enquiries completed		139	103	158	169	138	126	124	121	86	81	131	112	101	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of Section 47 enquiries completed		364	351	353	356	360	356	355	346	336	320	323	306	301	260	●	↑	352.2	253.0	-	191.6
Percentage of Strategy discussions resulting in Section 47		73	52	81	78	75	68	60	84	53	53	86	65	81		-	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of Section 47s (not already CP or in our care) resulting in ICPC		16	22	22	38	34	26	43	21	45	20	20	33	12			↓				
Number of children subject to CP Plan at end of month	449	302	288	301	315	347	355	351	345	346	318	311	320	309	295	●	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of children subject to CP plans	91	61	58	61	64	70	72	71	70	70	64	62	64	62	60	●	↑	63.90	52.90	-	43.20
Number of children in our care	547	543	543	553	545	539	505	517	518	507	510	503	507	510	495	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Rate of children in our care per 10,000	111	113	110	112	111	109	102	105	105	103	103	101	102	102	100	●	→	-	-	-	-
Number of children open to the service (Assessment, CIN, CP, CLA, CL)	2339	2404	2363	2401	2402	2425	2326	2304	2297	2259	2112	2085	2111	2036	-	-	↑	-	-	-	-
Rate of children open to the service (Assessment, CIN, CP, CLA, CL)		466	478	479	492	482	455	453	448	422	414	418	423	408	362	-	↑	524.8	428.8	-	642.7

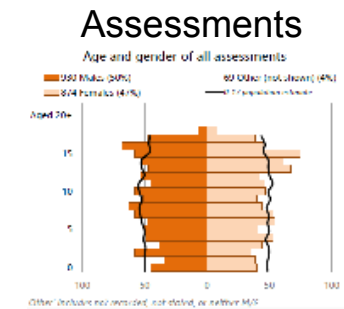
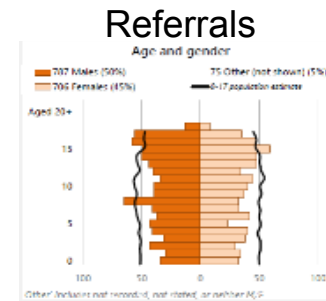
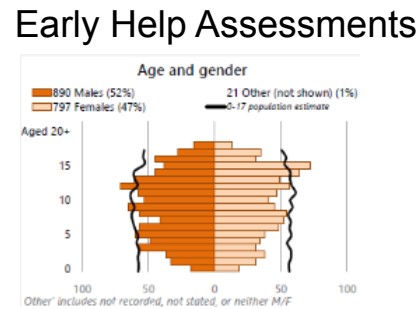
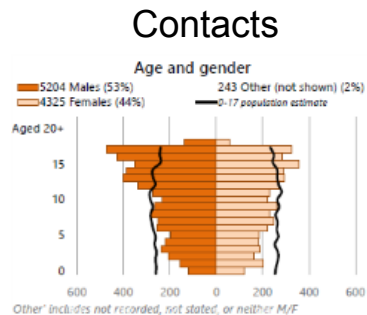
# Right support at the right time

## Desired outcome

Improved shared understanding of thresholds resulting in less contacts a month, an increase in referrals and assessments for Early Help, a reduction in statutory referrals and assessments and children open to statutory services. This will result in more focused and intensive work with families requiring statutory services resulting in less children subject to CP planning and coming into our care.

## Progress analysis

- The national, statistical and local statistics have now been updated from 21/22 to 22/23, so the comparisons are for the last financial year.
- Only 18 children were stepped down to Early Help in December, this is due to current capacity in the East and West (which will be addressed through the service redesign).
- Adolescent males are significantly over-represented in the contacts that we receive, of which 62% come from the police. These do not translate into Early Help interventions, or referrals in Children's Services to the same extent:



- Due to the Christmas break, there was a reduction in referrals, assessments, strategy discussions and S.47s completed, however, these were down comparatively with December 2022 and 2021. Despite the lower number of S.47s (101), only 12% resulted in an ICPC being convened.
- The rate of children with a CP plan remains slightly higher than our target, and we currently have 303 children on a CP plan.





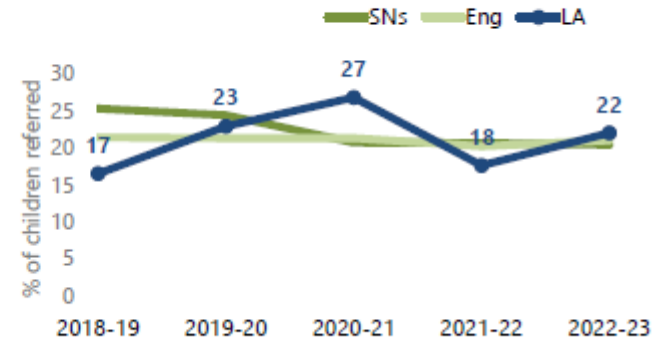
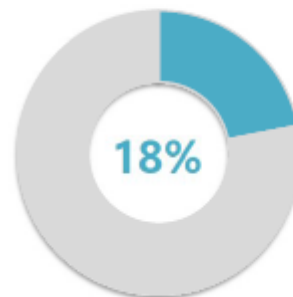
# Strong, safe & vibrant localities

269 children with previous referrals within 12 months of latest referral

First referral	1,202
1 prev referral	210
2 prev referrals	51
3 prev referrals	8
4+ prev referrals	0
Not recorded	0

Re-referrals: children with a previous referral within 12 months of their latest referral

■ Re-referral ■ First referral □ Not recorded



\*\*"Last 6 months" calculation differs slightly from national statistics, due to data structure in Annex A

Last 6 months

Indicator	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbourhoods	South East	England
Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	30%	27%	25%	28%	27%	25%	35%	26%	19%	21%	21%	32%	25%	23%	🔴	⬆️	22%	20%	-	21%
Percentage of referrals leading to NFA	4%	6%	5%	8%	7%	5%	8%	9%	10%	10%	8%	4%	5%	7	🟢	⬇️	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children subject to 2nd or more CP plan	32%	33%	32%	32%	33%	34%	33%	33%	31%	31%	32%	33%	34%	24%	🔴	⬇️	33%	25%	-	24%
Percentage of children subject to child protection plans with recent core group held in time	77%	76%	76%	78%	77%	85%	83%	79%	69%	85%	84%	89%	74%	95%	🔴	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD) with CIN review within last 12 weeks	88%	84%	83%	83%	79%	84%	83%	86%	79%	80%	70%	76%	81%	95%	🔴	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Percentage of initial health assessments delivered within 20 working days of date child became looked after.	28%	32%	10%	31%	22%	60%	50%	76%	20%	57%	9%	0%	33%	95%	🔴	⬆️	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children in care for at least 12 months for whom health assessments are up to date.	88%	90%	91%	89%	88%	86%	85%	84%	82%	80%	79%	78%	78%	95%	🔴	➡️	-	-	-	-



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# Strong, safe & vibrant localities – needs updating

## Outcomes

Stronger partner relationships will lead to a better understanding of referral thresholds. Multi-agency plans will be effective at increasing the safety and wellbeing of children. This will lead to a reduction in the referrals from schools, increase in partner agency led Team Around the Family plans, timeliness of Core Group activity, decrease in children with more than one period of CP planning, and increase in Child In Need Plans concluding within 6 months.

## Progress analysis

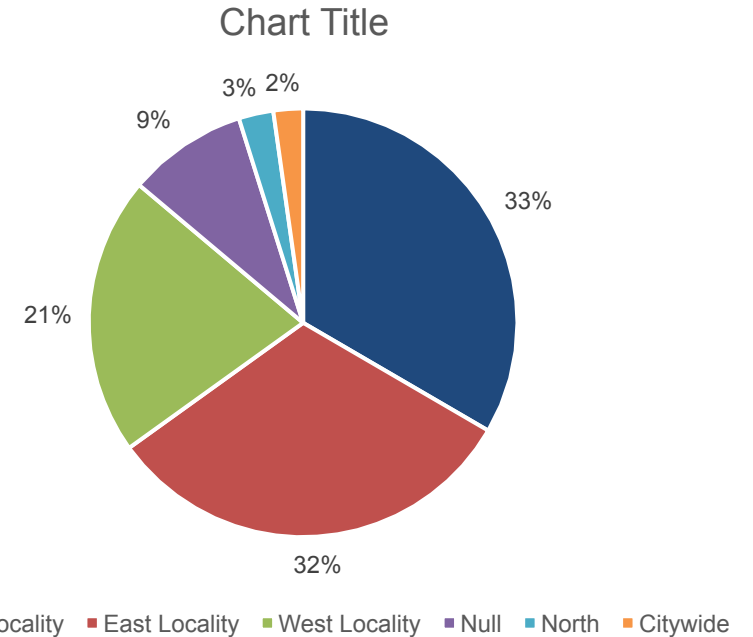
- With the two-week closure of schools in December, referrals followed the annual pattern of reducing, but were lower than December 2022 and 2021.
- Re-referrals were down to 25% from 32% in November and 30% last December. The Southeast region rate is 28% with Portsmouth at 33%, Hampshire at 41%, and Isle of Wight 45%.
- The data regarding initial and review health assessments for children in our care shows improvement in comparison to the previous two months, but still needs to improve markedly.
- Core group activity reduced in December, this is linked to the availability of professionals that often have time off over Christmas, but also the busy period of meetings and visits leading up to the Christmas break.
- Whilst the number of children subject to CP planning has reduced over the last 6 months, the percentage of those on repeat CP plans has increased to 34% in December. The expectation is that the introduction of the Family Safeguarding approach and an increased focus on early interventions with families will support families experiencing difficulties to reduce the need for child protection planning by the end 2024/25.



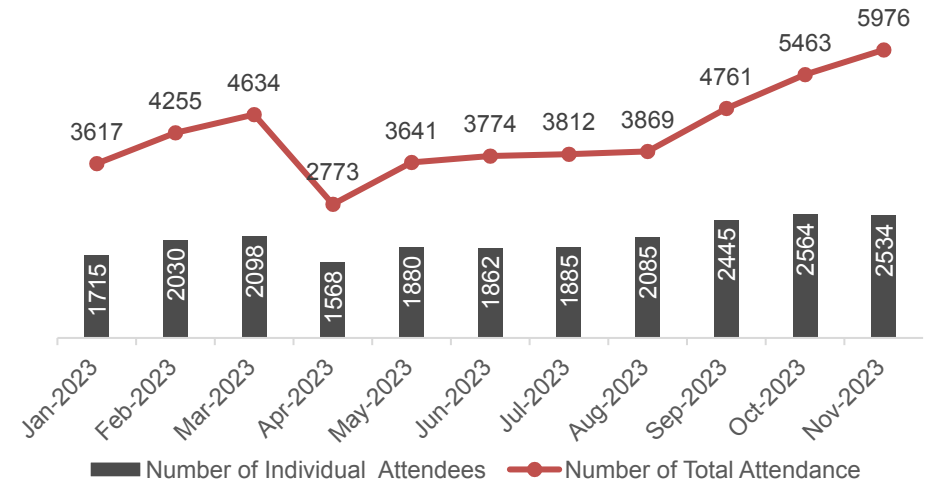
# Strong, safe & vibrant localities

## Attendance at Family Hubs

- Family Hub attendance has been gradually increasing since April 2023, with a high of 2564 individuals attending a Hub in October 2023, and 5976 visits in November.
- A third of attendance is at the Hubs in Central, which is the smallest locality suggesting the Hubs are more widely accessed. Central has the smallest Children Services activity.
- West is under-represented in attendance with 21% of activity.
- In the Southeast region, we have a rate of 144 children per 10,000 accessing our Early Help services, this is higher than the Southeast regional average of 122.



All Attendance by Month at Family Hubs



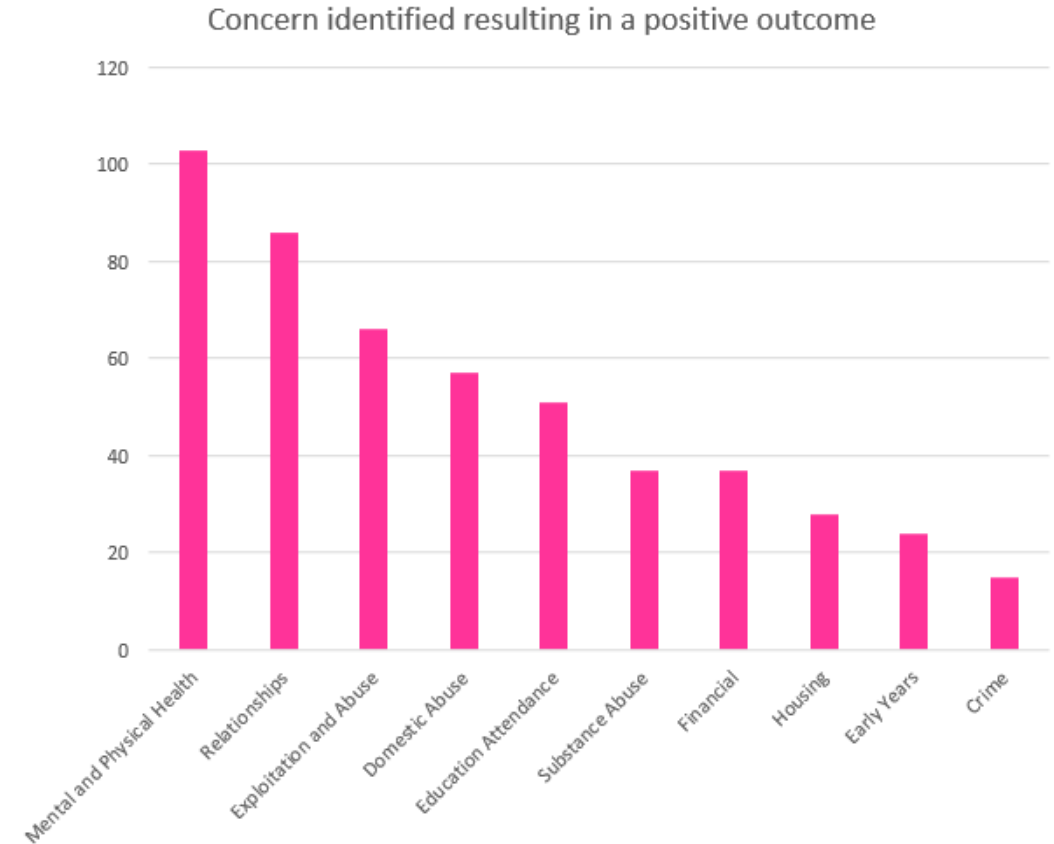


# Strong, safe & vibrant localities

## Supporting Families Benchmarking

In November and December, some audit resources were redirected to undertake Supporting Families benchmarking. The benchmarking looks at specific positive outcomes for children and their families.

- 147 benchmarking forms were completed and recorded on Care Director
- 74 have 3 or more unique positive outcomes, and 59 have 1 or 2.
- The chart here shows the overall benchmarking activity and the number of positive outcomes for each of the 10 concerns identified at the end of the intervention with families.



# Children remain within or return to their birth families

Indicator	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Number of children in our care	543	553	545	539	505	517	518	507	510	505	504	507	510	495	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	⬇️
Rate of children in our care per 10,000	110	112	111	109	102	105	105	103	103	102	101	102	102	100	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	➡️
Number of new CLA in month	16	23	19	14	3	31	17	10	17	15	13	17	21	-	-	-
Number of new CLA in month who are UASC	3	4	4	5	1	2	2	2	3	4	2	1	1	-	-	-
Number of Ceased CLA in the month excluding UASC	27	10	23	18	34	15	18	13	14	17	13	10	15	-	-	-
Number of CLA achieved CAO or SGO	5	4	5	3	6	4	4	2	3	5	3	1	1	-	-	-
Number of CLA returned home as part of care planning	5	0	2	5	8	2	5	3	5	6	6	6	5	-	-	-
Number of CLA placed with parents at the end of the month	46	48	48	48	42	48	44	39	39	34	33	38	43	-	-	-
Number of CLA placed in Connected Carer placements at the end of the month	61	60	56	59	54	52	50	47	40	42	41	51	56	-	-	-





# Children remain within or return to their birth families

**Outcomes** – Children in our care return to live with their birth families, and more children are enabled to remain with their birth families, so we bring less children into our care through intensive working with families at child in need and child protection.

## Progress analysis –

- The rate of children in our care is down to 102 from 110 in December 2022. We are closer to our target of 100, which is linked to the statistical neighbour average.
- During quarter 2 (July, August & September) 2023-2024, we had a rate of children subject to care applications into court of 1.8, this was below the Southeast region average of 3.1, and England 4.0. Portsmouth had a rate of 8.0, Isle of Wight 5.1 and Hampshire 3.5.
- In December, we took 21 children into our care, of those, 16 remain in our care. 4 children are placed with parents, 9 are placed with family/friends, 2 with foster carers (1 in house), and 1 is placed in a fostering for adoption placement.
- There are currently 10 children in residential care where plans are in place to move them across to foster placements or to family members.





# Promote permanence and placement stability

Indicator	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 22/23	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of children in our care	543	553	545	539	505	517	518	507	510	505	504	507	510	495	Red	Down				
Percentage of CLA at end of month with 3 or more placements during the year	16	15	15	14	15	15	14	16	18	17	19	18	19	10	Red	Down	13	10.5		10
Number of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	134	136	137	139	140	144	146	141	147	142	141	137	133	100	Red	Up				
Percentage of CLA placed in IFA placements as at the end of the month	24	24	24	25	27	27	26	27	29	28	28	27	26	20	Red	Up				
Number of CLA placed in Residential placements including semi-independent	73	74	71	75	71	70	70	75	76	76	80	78	77	60	Red	Up				
Number of CLA placed in residential - Independent Sector	42	42	43	42	42	43	43	42	43	43	39	38	35	30	Red	Up				
Percentage of CLA placed in Residential placements - independent sector	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	6	Red	Up				
Number of CLA placed in unregulated/ unregistered settings at the end of the month	30	31	29	33	30	30	36	42	42	44	48	48	49	20	Red	Down				
Percentage of CLA placed in unregulated/ unregistered settings at the end of the month	6	6	5	6	6	6	7	8	8	8	10	9	10	4	Red	Down				
Number of CLA placed for adoption at period end	36	36	30	30	20	19	19	13	15	15	17	15	13							
Number of children placed with SCC foster carers (including connected carers)	224	228	230	214	202	213	206	195	193	198	201	206	205	285	Red	Down				
Percentage of children placed with SCC foster carers (including connected carers)	41	41	42	40	40	40	39	38	38	39	40	41	40	58	Red	Down				



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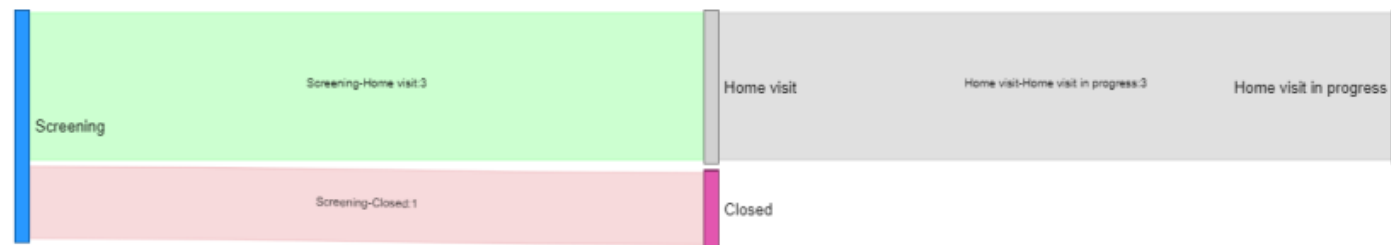


# Promote permanence and placement stability

## Progress analysis

- The net number of children in our care increased by 3 in December.
- The placement instability rate has been impacted by children returning to parents and family members, as well as 1 young person who is waiting for a matched foster placement.
- In December, 27 children changed placements. 10 went to live with a family member, 5 returned to parents, 1 was placed for adoption, 1 was placed in a fostering to adopt placement, 2 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children went to supported living arrangements. 6 children changed foster placements and 2 young people are in transitional arrangements with a view to finding long term placements near Southampton.

Applicants by Process and Outcome



## Fostering recruitment

- Following the successful months of recruitment in October and November, December typically sees a downturn in recruitment activity. 4 screenings have progressed to 3 home visits.



# Promote permanence and placement stability

## Education

There are 5 children in our care under 16 that are out of education, or not accessing education, all 5 have Special Educational Needs. 2 have tuition arrangements in place for 2 and 3 hours a day. 2 of these children have had a placement change which has impacted on access to education. 1 child is applying for college, and 2 have searches for specialist provisions underway.

22 looked after young people aged 16 and 17 are not in employment, education or training. 4 of these have Special Educational Needs.



# Permanent, stable workforce

Indicator	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Average number of children per primary caseholder (based on 1 FTE)	<b>14.92</b>	14.92	15.88	15.43	15.31	16.19	15.87	16.40	15.64	14.50	14.21	15.12	<b>15.82</b>			↓
Average number of children per qualified Social Worker (1 FTE)	<b>15.75</b>	15.75	16.65	15.80	15.66	16.38	15.76	16.67	16.46	14.98	14.76	16.33	<b>17.92</b>			↓
Total number of case holders with 20+ children	<b>45</b>	47	48	54	53	50	43	47	36	37	34	43	<b>44</b>			↓
Average number of children per worker with 20+ children (1 FTE)	<b>22.31</b>	22.55	23.27	22.72	23.15	22.76	22.65	22.74	22.88	22.30	21.53	22.16	<b>22.77</b>			↓
Average number of children per worker in top 40	<b>22.55</b>	22.98	23.93	23.68	24.05	23.45	22.85	23.23	22.40	22.05	21.15	22.33	<b>23.05</b>			↓
Percentage of CLA that have been in care for 12+m, with same social worker for last 6 months	<b>56</b>	54	50	49	47	59	62	68	74	75	80	78	<b>73</b>	80	🟡	↓
Percentage of children open for 6+ months that have had 2 or more social workers in the last 6 months	<b>36%</b>	38%	38%	37%	36%	34%	35%	33%	32%	39%	38%	36%	<b>37%</b>	25	🔴	↓



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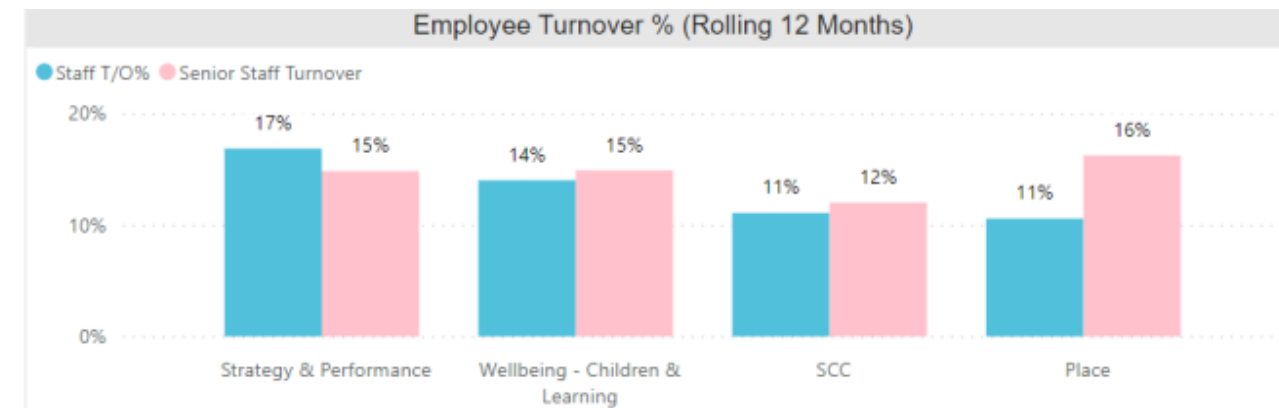
# Permanent, stable workforce

## Progress analysis

- Caseloads for social workers have increased to take into account how children with disabilities on a child in need plan are allocated. This is more representative of the caseloads being held by practitioners.
- Employee turnover has remained stable in Children & Learning. In our neighbouring local authorities, they have seen an increased reliance on agency staff, which drive up costs and create increased instability for families.
- Maintaining a stable and high-quality workforce remains a key priority for leadership, especially at a time of change and where neighbours offer higher wages to attract permanent staff. The reconfiguration of the Pathways Through Care service, to incorporate a team focused on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, may impact upon service stability performance moving forward.

## Outcomes

Children and families maintain working relationships with consistent practitioners, who benefit from stable management support and oversight. Agency staff numbers will reduce contributing towards financial responsibility.







# Embedding Practice Framework and Standards

## Outcomes –

### Audits will evidence

- An improved quality of supervision and standard of practice.
- Contingency planning will be clear in all plans from the beginning of interventions and involvements.
- Systemic practice will be evidenced in care recording audits of visits, assessments, plans, supervisions, chronologies.
- Safe & Together will be evident in work with families increasing involvement of perpetrators, partnering with survivors and achieving long term safety for children.

## Progress analysis – November Audit overview:

- 22 audits allocated across 10 service areas, 22 (100%) completed – with 82% of auditors holding discussions with practitioners/case managers (7% increase from October).
- Outstanding (14%), Good (45%), Requires Improvement (36%), Inadequate (5%)
- Highlights of good practice:
  - CWD – Child’s lived experience captured, evidence of direct work to gain child’s views. Strength based approach evident.
  - PTC – 100% of case summaries in timescale. High quality assessment, visits gather views of child using translator and observations.
  - ICAS – Outstanding work with families, well recorded with management oversight.
  - Fostering – Evidence of engagement in placement care planning for fostered children.
  - YPS – Good quality assessments that reflect voice of the child & exploitation concerns. Plan is updated & impact considered.
  - Inclusion & Prevention – Plan goals linked to initial step down recommendations and are SMART. Good comms with school.
- Highlights of areas for improvement:
  - CWD – Completion of chronology, case summary and cultural genogram
  - PTC – Prioritise completion of chronologies, cultural genograms and visiting in statutory timescales.
  - ICAS – Use the “plan” section of visits to state aim of the next visit or further work and the date.
  - Fostering – Clear recording of mandatory training the foster carer has attended
  - YPS – Timely supervision and visiting even when children are placed at a distance / in secure units.
  - Inclusion & Prevention – Further exploration of why parents that are “reluctant to engage” and what this could represent.



# Performance - Visiting

## Progress analysis

Visits to children on Child in Need and Child Protection Plans both met or exceeded the target for statutory time scales. 3 weekly visiting to CiN children improved towards the target of 90%.

Visiting remains a key focus in assurance clinics.

Indicator	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of children open to Early Help with a visit in the last 4 weeks	57%	54%	66%	62%	71%	61%	60%	66%	67%	58%	71%	69%	62%	95%	Red	Down
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (not CWD) visited within last 6 weeks	95%	98%	98%	97%	96%	98%	95%	96%	94%	96%	96%	95%	96%	95%	Green	Up
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (not CWD) visited within last 3 weeks	83%	80%	81%	77%	84%	81%	74%	77%	77%	77%	86%	85%	89%	90%	Red	Up
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (CWD) visited within agreed timescales	85%	89%	92%	86%	85%	86%	95%	88%	77%	73%	80%	82%	77%	95%	Red	Down
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan visited within last 10 working days	94%	95%	93%	87%	90%	92%	90%	84%	86%	90%	88%	92%	85%	95%	Yellow	Down
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan visited within last 4 weeks	99%	99%	98%	98%	97%	98%	98%	97%	96%	98%	97%	99%	96%	95%	Green	Down
Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within agreed timescales	86%	81%	79%	86%	89%	92%	89%	89%	83%	81%	81%	85%	83%	95%	Red	Down



# Performance - Supervision

## Progress analysis

- Supervision for children with a Child in Need plan and Child Protection Plan both exceed the targets in December.
- Supervision within the Early Help service improved again towards the target.
- There was a dip in supervision within the Care Leavers service.
- Supervision is one element of management oversight and decision making for children and families.

Indicator	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of children open to Early Help with supervision in timescales	72%	67%	87%	74%	78%	82%	72%	82%	89%	82%	81%	68%	79%	95%	🔴	⬆️
Percentage of children open for assessment who had supervision in timescales	96%	96%	93%	93%	93%	91%	91%	97%	94%	94%	98%	92%	93%	95%	🟡	⬆️
Percentage of children with a Child in Need Plan (not CWD) who had supervision within timescales	86%	93%	90%	89%	90%	96%	85%	79%	84%	86%	89%	91%	97%	95%	🟢	⬆️
Percentage of children with a Child in Need Plan (CWD) who had their supervision within timescales	99%	100%	99%	98%	96%	86%	84%	79%	77%	77%	83%	87%	84%	95%	🔴	⬇️
Percentage of CPP who had their supervision and within timescales	94%	93%	96%	86%	91%	98%	87%	85%	89%	93%	96%	94%	96%	95%	🟢	⬆️
Percentage of CLA who had their supervision and was within the timescale	76%	86%	86%	78%	85%	94%	88%	90%	78%	73%	81%	83%	83%	95%	🔴	➡️
Percentage of Care Leavers who had their supervision and was within the timescale	60%	45%	86%	81%	86%	92%	92%	88%	83%	79%	83%	81%	77%	95%	🔴	⬇️

