

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1ST SEPTEMBER 2020

QUARTER 1 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Committee with an update of the Children and Family Services Department's performance for the period April to June 2020 (Quarter 1).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Children and Family Services Department's performance is reported to the Committee in accordance with the Council's corporate performance management arrangements.

Background

3. A Strategic Plan 2018-2022 has been agreed by the Council and has recently been refreshed. Children and Families Services has also produced a Departmental Plan 2020 -2023 which identifies a number of ambitions and measures to monitor progress. The following report and accompanying dashboard aim to report on priority areas identified by both plans and monitor performance of key indicators on a quarterly basis. The current performance dashboard is attached as Appendix A, and this has been refreshed to concentrate on indicators where new data is available for Quarter 1.
4. The United Kingdom entered a period of lockdown from March 23, 2020. The data included in the report reflects the first full quarter of activity in this period.
5. Due to the closure of schools, no school inspection data or education outcome data is available.
6. Quartile positions are added where comparative national data is available. Comparative data is not available for all indicators.

Overview

7. From 27 measures that have been reported, 9 have improved, 5 show no significant change and seven have declined. In addition to this, 6 indicators provide information only with no polarity.

8. From 15 measures that have a national benchmark, four are in the top quartile, five are in the second quartile, three are in the third quartile and three are in the fourth quartile. Quartiles are based on the more stable COVID-19 period so should be treated with caution.

Helping children in Leicestershire live in safe, stable environments and have secure attachments

9. Local Authority comparisons used are figures published by the government for end of year benchmarking. All local authorities saw significant disruptions to 'business as usual activities' in quarter 1 and it should be acknowledged that nationally published figures reflect pre-COVID 19 activity.
10. The number of 'Child Protection cases reviewed within timescales' was 94.9% in quarter 1. This is 2.4% higher than quarter 4 and places Leicestershire in the second quartile of all local authorities by available.
11. The percentage of 'Children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time' increased by 5% to 26.4% (62 children) in quarter 1. This would be in the fourth quartile by previously published benchmarks.
12. The percentage of re-referrals to Social Care within 12 months was 26.4% (312) children) in quarter 1, a rise of 7.7% from the previous quarter. This would be in the fourth quartile by previously published benchmarks.
13. Work to respond to the issue of repeat referrals and repeat plans has been taking place in quarter 2 by audit work. This will inform action to respond to these key performance measure
14. The percentage of 'single assessments completed within 45 days' was 90.4%. This represents 1104 assessments and is 3.6% lower than quarter 4. The Leicestershire figure is in the second quartile nationally and better than statistical neighbour comparisons.
15. Two Child Protection plans lasting two years or more were open at the end of quarter 1, representing 0.3% of cases. This is the same number as quarter 4. The current figure places Leicestershire in the second quartile of local authorities using available comparators.
16. The 'percentage of children with three or more placements during the year' was 7.3% (48 children). This is an improvement on quarter 4 and places Leicestershire in the top quartile nationally. The 'percentage of children in the same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption' was 55.6% (127 children). This is lower than quarter 4 would be in the fourth quartile by previously published benchmarks. However, the Quality Assurance and Improvement Team have investigated this and believe there is an issue with the data for this report being drawn from the electronic recording system. This will be confirmed and addressed in the next month.
17. The percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation was 84.6% at the end of quarter 4 (33 young people). This is lower than quarter 4 and would place Leicestershire in the third quartile of local authorities using available comparisons.
18. The percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training was 61.7% at the end of quarter 1 (24 young people). This is higher than quarter 4

and places Leicestershire in the top quartile by comparison with other local authorities.

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19. The service provides careful oversight to the care leaver indicator and is driven by a corporate commitment for creating mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers.
20. The percentage of 'Children in Care who have had a dental check' was 61.7% (406 children). This is lower than quarter 4 when the proportion was 75%. It should be noted that routine dental treatment has been suspended during the period of CV-19 lockdown which accounts for the decrease in dental checks for children in care. Full dental provision is not yet in place.
21. The percentage of 'Children in Care who have had an annual health assessment' within the last 12 months was 86% (566). This is similar to quarter 4. Completion of health assessments continues to be overseen by the Children in Care Head of Service and Service Manager, with specific actions identified to address delays and barriers including systems support, processes and staffing pressures. Both managers attend quarterly operational and strategic meetings with health partners to discuss and address the health needs of children in care and how best to meet these needs.

Helping children and their families build strength, resilience, confidence and capacity

22. The Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS) has refreshed and improved recording of individuals and families using the service. However, data will not initially be comparable to that previously reported.
23. During Quarter 1, the CFWS worked with 3,622 individuals and 1,323 families across Leicestershire which is similar to numbers the previous year.
24. The Children and Families Services Departmental plan states the intention to support more young people in mainstream Leicestershire schools by increasing the number of children effectively supported by Special Educational Needs Support (SEN Support) and decreasing the number of cases which subsequently require an Education and Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
25. The number of children in mainstream schools in Leicestershire with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) was 1906 in the Spring 2020 school census. This is 339 higher than the Spring 2019 census.
26. The number of children in mainstream schools in Leicestershire without an EHCP but in receipt of SEN Support was 10,375. This is 240 higher than the Spring 2019 census.

People are safe in their daily lives

27. Youth Offending statistics are usually reported one or two quarters in arrears. This is because data has to be produced and validated by legal bodies such as the Police and courts before being released to local authorities.
28. The Q4 2019/20 figure (latest available) for 'first time entrants to the criminal justice system aged 10-17' was 30. This is an increase of six compared to the same period last year. The figures for the first-time entrants remain low compared to regional and national data.

29. The rate of re-offending per young offender for quarter 3 2019/20 (latest available) was 0.51 offences per offender. This is a significant decrease in the re-offending rate compared with the same period last year where the rate was 1.1.
30. Two young people were sentenced to custody during quarter 4 2019/20 (latest available). This figure is usually low, for example one or two, and is the same as number as the same period last year.

Help every child to get the best possible start in life

Early years

31. The percentage of eligible two-year and three-year olds taking up the Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) is usually reported termly. Due to the impact of COVID-19 regulations, data is unavailable for this report. Many Childcare providers were required to close to all but key worker and vulnerable children.

Help every child to have access to good quality education to ensure they achieve their maximum potential

32. The percentage of applicants obtaining their first preference for first time admission to primary school (i.e. children starting school for the first time) was 92.4% in 2020. This is higher than 2019 when the figure was 90.3% and is in the top quartile of all local authorities.
33. The percentage of pupils offered their first preference secondary school was 89.3%. This was similar to 2019 when the figure was 89.5% and is in the top quartile of all local authorities.
34. No school inspections took place during this period.
35. All school examinations and assessments were cancelled for the 2020 academic year. Any data subsequently published by the Department for Education will be reported.
36. The number of children Electively Home Educated (EHE) was 735 at the end of quarter 1. This figure has been gradually rising during recent years, which is also the trend in other Local Authorities. This is new to the quarterly performance report and counts children where parents have chosen to educate their child at home, rather than the local authority providing tuition (for example, if a child cannot be in school due to medical reasons). This figure will be monitored on a quarterly basis.
37. Latest NEET data (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training), is for the end of June 2020 and shows a Leicestershire figure of 2.8% representing 374 young people. This is an increase of 102 young people compared to quarter 4 when the figure was 2%. This is consistent with increases amongst statistical neighbours where the average is also 2.8%.

Conclusion

38. The report provides a summary of performance at the end of Quarter 1 of 2020/21, covering the period April to June 2020.

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39. Details of all metrics will continue to be monitored on a regular basis throughout the year and any subsequent changes will be notified in future reports.

Background Papers

None

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

40. None

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List of Appendices

Appendix A - Children and Family Services Department Performance Dashboard for Quarter 1, 2020/21

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

41. Addressing equalities issues is supported by this report, with a focus on vulnerable groups within Leicestershire, including children in care. Education data relating to different context groups including children with Special Educational Needs and Free School Meals is reported when data becomes available.

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