



**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**9 March 2021**

**QUARTER 3 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 October to December 2020 (Quarter 3).

**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 3.
4. Due to the closure of schools, no school inspection data or education outcome data is available.
5. Quartile positions are added where comparative national data is available. Comparative data is not available for all indicators.

**Overview**

6. From 18 measures that have been reported, twelve have improved, one shows no significant change and two have declined. In addition to this, five indicators provide information only with no polarity.

7. From 14 measures that have a national benchmark, four are in the top quartile, six are in the second quartile, four are in the third quartile and none are in the fourth quartile. Quartiles are based on the more stable pre-Covid-19 period so should be treated with caution.

### **Children and Families Performance Benchmarking 2019/20**

8. The County Council as part of its corporate performance processes carries out an annual benchmarking exercise against other County Councils and Unitary authorities. Following receipt of nationally published figures for 2019/20 the Council has been able to update its benchmarking accordingly. For the Children and Families element there are two main theme dashboards, one for Children's Social Care and one for SEND, based on a number of key supporting indicators. A copy of the two benchmarking charts are attached as Appendix B.
9. In relation to Children's Social Care the Council's performance now ranks 3<sup>rd</sup>, up from 8<sup>th</sup> in 2018/19 and reflects a continued strong performance focus and improvements through the post Ofsted Inspection Social Care Improvement Plan. The Council's expenditure is 30<sup>th</sup> up from 31<sup>st</sup>. In relation to SEND outcomes the Council ranks 4<sup>th</sup>, down slightly from 2<sup>nd</sup> the year before. The Council is ranked 11 out of 32 for spend, recognising some of the investment into new SEND provision as well as increased high demand and some of the high cost placement elements.

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

10. Local Authority comparisons used are figures published by the government for end of year benchmarking. It should be acknowledged that nationally published figures reflect pre-Covid-19 activity.
11. The number of 'Child Protection cases reviewed within timescales' was 96.4% in quarter 3. This is higher than quarter 2 (94.6%) and Leicestershire remains in the second quartile of all local authorities by published benchmarks.
12. The percentage of 'Children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time' decreased by 8% to 17.3% in quarter 3 (28 children). This raises Leicestershire from the bottom quartile to the top by previously published benchmarks.
13. The percentage of re-referrals to Social Care within 12 months was 21.1% in quarter 3 (292), a reduction of 2.9% compared to quarter 2. Leicestershire would remain in the third quartile by previously published benchmarks.
14. The percentage of 'single assessments completed within 45 days' was 90.6%. This represents 1028 assessments and is 5.7% lower than quarter 2. This would place Leicestershire in the second quartile nationally by available comparisons and well above statistical neighbour comparators.
15. Three Child Protection plans lasting two years or more were open at the end of quarter 3, representing 0.5% of cases. This is a decrease compared to quarter

2. The current figure places Leicestershire in the second quartile of local authorities and is lower than statistical neighbours using available comparators.
16. The 'percentage of children with three or more placements during the year' was 2.7% (19 children). This is very low by any standard and places Leicestershire in the top quartile nationally. The 'percentage of children in the same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption' was 65.1% (170). This is also an improvement on quarter 2 and Leicestershire would move up to the third quartile by previously published benchmarks.
17. The percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation was 95.2% at the end of quarter 3. This is 4% higher than quarter 2 and would place Leicestershire in the top quartile of local authorities using available comparisons.
18. The percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training was 65.1% at the end of quarter 3 (123 young people). This is higher than quarter 2 and Leicestershire remains in the top quartile by comparison with other local authorities.
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 37.5% (263 children). This is the lower than quarter 2. However, it should be noted that routine dental treatment was suspended during the period of the Covid-19 lockdown which accounts for the decrease. Full dental provision is still not yet in place.
21. The percentage of 'Children in Care who have had an annual health assessment' within the last 12 months was 83.3% (584). This is 1.1% higher than quarter 2. 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. During quarter 3, the Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS) worked with 3,744 individuals and 1,303 families across Leicestershire. This is slightly lower than quarter 2 in both cases when the figures were 3,855 and 1,303 respectively.
23. New figures on children with an EHCP and SEN Support are not yet available due to the disruption to usual school services.

### **People are safe in their daily lives**

24. 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.
25. The Q2 2020/21 figure (latest available) for 'first time entrants to the criminal justice system aged 10-17' was 16. This is a decrease of five compared to the previously reported quarterly figure. The figures for the first-time entrants remain low compared to regional and national data.
26. The rate of re-offending per young offender for quarter 1 2020/21 (latest available) was 0.4 offences per offender. This is lower than the annual 2019/20 rate of 0.76.
27. Two young people were sentenced to custody during quarter 2 2020/21 (latest available). This figure is usually low, for example one or two.

### **Help every child to get the best possible start in life**

#### **Early years**

28. The percentage of eligible two-year and three-year olds taking up the Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) is reported termly and latest figures include the autumn term up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.
29. During the autumn term, the percentage of eligible 3 year olds taking up their FEEE place was 90.8%. The percentage of eligible 2 year olds was 71.7%, a significant rise. The figures were 91.5% and 63.9% respectively in the summer term.
30. The figures for the past two quarters were heavily affected by the Covid-19 disruption which meant that newly eligible children were unable to begin their placement and some parents preferred to keep their children at home. Vulnerable and key worker children were also given priority as capacity was frequently limited. The percentage of 2 year olds taking up a place increased during quarter 3. Eligibility for this age group is more targeted towards disadvantaged families.

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

31. No school inspections took place during this period. School inspections are expected to resume in Autumn 2020 to provide support for schools but will not result in a graded judgement of the school.
32. All school examinations and assessments were cancelled for the 2020 academic year. Any data subsequently published by the Department for Education will be reported.
33. The number of children Electively Home Educated (EHE) was 790 at the end of quarter 3. This is higher than the reported quarter 1 figure of 718. This figure counts children whose parents have chosen to educate their child at home, rather than the local authority providing home tuition (for example, if a child cannot be in school due to medical reasons).

34. Although the long term national trend has been for a rise in children who are Electively Home Educated (EHE), there has been a noticeable rise in Leicestershire over the previous quarter. This has been driven by two factors: firstly, having experienced a period of enforced home schooling, some parents have opted for EHE as a lifestyle choice and have chosen to continue this even when schools returned in September. The second factor has been ongoing health concerns which could be for the child, vulnerable parents or general safety concerns. The numbers will continue to be monitored closely.
35. Latest NEET data (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training), is for the end of December 2020 and shows a Leicestershire figure of 2.4% representing 339 young people. This is an increase of 41 young people compared to quarter 2 when the figure was 2.9%. The current figure is in line with the statistical neighbour average.

### **Conclusion**

36. The report provides a summary of performance at the end of quarter 3 of 2020/21, covering the period October to December 2020.
37. 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**

38. None

### **Officer to Contact**

Jane Moore, Director – Children and Families Service  
 Tel: 0116 305 2649  
 Email: [Jane.Moore@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Jane.Moore@leics.gov.uk)

Sharon Cooke, Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care  
 Tel: 0116 305 5479  
 Email: [Sharon.Cooke@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.Cooke@leics.gov.uk)

Stewart Smith, Business Partner – Performance and Business Intelligence  
 Tel: 0116 305 5700  
 Email: [Stewart.Smith@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Stewart.Smith@leics.gov.uk)

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A - Children and Family Services Department Performance Dashboard for Quarter 2, 2020/21

Appendix B – Annual corporate benchmarking dashboards

**Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

39. 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.