



**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

8 MARCH 2022

QUARTER 3 2021/22 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 on the Children and Family Services Department's performance for the period to December 2021 (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 was agreed by the Council setting out priority outcomes for delivery and supporting performance metrics, and this was refreshed in 2020. A new draft Strategic Plan is currently out for consultation and, when agreed, will result in an update to the performance reporting arrangements. The Children and Family Services Department has also produced a Departmental Plan 2020-2023 which identifies ambitions and measures to monitor progress. The following report and accompanying dashboard aim to report on the priority areas identified by both plans and monitor performance of key indicators on a quarterly basis. The current performance dashboard is appended and has been refreshed to concentrate on indicators where new data is available for Quarter 3.
4. Quartile positions are added where comparative national data is available. Comparative data is not available for all indicators.

Overview

5. From 25 measures that have been reported, 12 have improved, one shows no change and six have declined. In addition to this, five indicators provide information only with no polarity, and one cannot be calculated due to missing data from the previous period.

6. From 12 measures that have a national benchmark, three are in the top quartile, six are in the second quartile, two are in the third quartile and one is in the fourth quartile.

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

7. Local Authority comparisons used are most recent figures published by the government for end of year benchmarking.
8. The percentage of Child Protection cases reviewed within timescales was 94.2% at the end of Quarter 3 which places Leicestershire in the third quartile of all local authorities by published benchmarks.
9. The percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time decreased to 27.5% at the end of Quarter 3. In this period 47 children began a second or subsequent plan, a similar total to 48 reported in the preceding quarter. Leicestershire remains in the fourth quartile of local authorities compared to most recent national results published for 2020/21. This is an area of focus for the service and regular audits are completed, to understand any themes around the circumstances leading to repeat periods of child protection planning.
10. The percentage of re-referrals to Social Care within 12 months was 19.6% at the end of quarter 3 compared to 19.3% in the previous quarter, with 264 children 're-referred' within the quarter. Leicestershire remains in the second quartile of local authorities.
11. The percentage of single assessments completed within 45 days was 91.0% at the end of quarter 3, a slight decrease from quarter 2 (91.6%). This represents 919 assessments completed within timescale in quarter 3 compared to 850 in the preceding quarter. Leicestershire remains in the second quartile of local authorities.
12. Nine Child Protection plans lasting two years or more were open at the end of quarter 3, representing 1.7% of cases. This is a similar number and proportion as the end of quarter 2 (10 children, 2.1%). Leicestershire remains in the second quartile of local authorities.
13. At the end of quarter 3, the percentage of children with three or more placements during the year was 2.5% (17 children). This is very low and continues to place Leicestershire in the top quartile nationally. The percentage of children in the same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption has increased to 71.2% (188 children). This represents a further improvement compared to 67.2% (174 children) at the end of the previous quarter and now places Leicestershire in the second quartile of local authorities.
14. The percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation was 95.8% at the end of quarter 3 (205 young people). This is a small increase from quarter 2 and

places Leicestershire in the top quartile of local authorities using available comparisons.

15. The percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training was 62.1% at the end of quarter 3 (133 young people). This is a small decrease from 62.6% at the end of quarter 2, however continues to place Leicestershire in the top quartile by comparison with other local authorities. 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.
16. The percentage of Children in Care who have had a dental check was 44.7% (301 children), an increase from 42.8% (291 children) at the end of the previous quarter. Routine dental treatment has been limited during the period of the Covid-19 lockdown and figures are now beginning to rise.
17. The percentage of 'Children in Care who have had an annual health assessment within the last 12 months was 80.9% (545). This is a decrease of 5.4% compared to the end of the previous quarter.
18. 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

19. During quarter 3, the Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS) worked with 3,797 individuals and 1,417 families across Leicestershire. This is slightly lower than quarter 2 in both cases when the figures were 4,089 and 1,569 respectively.
20. The Children and Families Services Departmental plan states the intention to ensure that the needs of young people are identified as early as possible so that timely and appropriate support is provided in the right setting, therefore reducing the risk of needs escalating at the same time as ensuring children and young people's best outcomes are achieved.
21. The number of children in mainstream schools in Leicestershire with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 2,169 in the Autumn 2021 school census. This is 75 lower than the Summer 2021 census and are the highest recorded for the Autumn term since the completion of the phasing in of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice changes in 2017.
22. The number of children in mainstream schools in Leicestershire without an EHCP but in receipt of SEN Support was 11,324 in the Autumn 2021 school census. This is 47 lower than the Summer 2021 census. The Autumn 2021 school census SEN support numbers are the highest recorded for the Autumn term since the completion of the phasing in of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice changes in 2016.

People are safe in their daily lives

23. Youth Offending statistics are usually reported one or two quarters in arrears. This is because data must be produced and validated by legal bodies such as the Police and courts before being released to local authorities.
24. The Leicestershire Quarter 2 2021/22 figure (latest available) for 'first time entrants to the criminal justice system aged 10-17' was 17. This is compared to 18 for Quarter 1 2021/22. For Quarter 2, four children were previously known to the Children and Families service. The figures for the first-time entrants remain low compared to regional and national data.
25. The rate of re-offending for the year to Quarter 2 2019/20 (latest available) was 3.2. This is a slight increase when compared to the previous year, to Quarter 2 2018/19 (3.18). However, Leicestershire's performance remains ahead, when compared to that of Regional and National performance, 3.91 and 3.77 respectively.

Help every child to get the best possible start in life

Early years

26. 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 2021 Autumn term.
27. During the Autumn term, the percentage of eligible 3-year-olds taking up their FEEE place was 95.8% (7,156), an improvement on the previous term (93.5%). The percentage of eligible 2-year-olds was 77.6% (1,266), an improvement on the summer term (68.5%). Eligibility for 2-year-olds is more targeted towards disadvantaged families, hence the smaller number of children.
28. The figures for the past year have been heavily affected by the Covid-19 disruption which has meant that newly eligible children were unable to begin their placement and some parents preferred to keep their children at home. However, recent figures are now approaching pre-pandemic levels.

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

29. The percentage of primary schools rated Good or Outstanding was 90.6% at the end of quarter 3. This is 0.4% higher than the quarter 2 figure, which was the position at the re-commencement of routine inspections from September 2021. This figure is within the second quartile of local authorities, and 2.4% above statistical neighbours.
30. The percentage of secondary schools rated Good or Outstanding was 75.6% at the end of quarter 3. This is the same as the quarter 2 figure, which was the position at the re-commencement of routine inspections from September 2021.

This figure is within the third quartile of local authorities, and 3% below statistical neighbours.

31. The number of children Electively Home Educated (EHE) was 829 at the end of quarter 3, an increase of 80 since quarter 2. This was also an increase of 65 students (8.5%) in comparison to the end of quarter 3 2020/21.
32. This seems to follow the national trend of an increasing EHE population. The Association of Directors of Children's Services complete an annual survey which includes 124 of the 152 local authorities nationally responding with data on their EHE cohort. In November 2021, the latest findings were published which suggested that the EHE population in the UK had increased by 7% in comparison to October 2020 and an increase of 34% since October 2019.
33. Leicestershire figures appear to closely follow the national trend since 2019 with the cohort at the end of Quarter 3 2021 increasing 35.4% since Quarter 3 2019.¹
34. The trend has been driven by two factors during this period: 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 reopened. 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 Leicestershire NEET data (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training) for the end of Quarter 3 (December 2021) shows a rate of 1.2%. This is a decrease on the Quarter 2 rate (September 2021) of 1.4%.

Conclusion

36. The report provides a summary of performance at the end of quarter 3 of 2021/22, covering the period December 2021.
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.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

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

Background Papers

None.

¹ Report available online at:
https://adcs.org.uk/assets/documentation/ADCS_EHE_Survey_2021_Report_FINAL.pdf

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Officers to Contact

Jane Moore, Director
Children and Families Service
Tel: 0116 305 2649
Email: Jane.Moore@leics.gov.uk

Sharon Cooke, Assistant Director
Children's Social Care
Tel: 0116 305 5479
Email: Sharon.Cooke@leics.gov.uk

Emma Jones, Business Partner
Business Intelligence Service
Tel: 0116 305 7526
Email: Emma.j.Jones@leics.gov.uk

Alex Lea, Senior Research and Insight Manager
Business Intelligence Service
Tel: 0116 305 6803
Email: Alex.Lea@leics.gov.uk

Appendix

Children and Family Services Department Performance Dashboard for Quarter 3,
2021/22