



**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 1 SEPTEMBER 2026**

QUARTER 1 2026/27 PERFORMANCE REPORT

**JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY
SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

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 April to June 2026 (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 and Overview

3. The following report and accompanying data aim to report on the priority areas identified by the Children and Family Services Departmental Plan. The Plan identifies ambitions and measures to monitor progress. The current performance data is appended and has been refreshed to concentrate on indicators where updated data is available for Quarter 1.
4. Quartile positions are added where comparative national data is available. Comparative data is not available for all indicators.
5. From eight measures reported that have a national benchmark, six are in the second quartile, and two are in the bottom quartile.

Tableau Dashboard Usage

6. Across the Children and Family Services department, in Quarter 1 2026/27 there were 639 active Tableau Server users, an increase from Quarter 4 2025/26 (621). Across the Department there were 41,745 views, up from 41,464 views in the previous quarter, at a rate of 65.3 views per user, down slightly from the previous quarter (66.8).
7. Across the two main service areas, in Quarter 1 2026/27 there were 325 users and 20,702 views in Targeted Early Help and Social Care at a rate of 63.7 views

per user. In Education and SEND there were 194 users and 10,444 views, at a rate of 53.8 views per user.

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

8. Local Authority comparisons used in this section are most recent figures published by the government for end of year benchmarking of performance in 2024/25. Updated comparison data is expected in Autumn which will strengthen comparison nationally with the publication of the annual children in need (CIN) census data.
9. The percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time in the year to date increased to 37.6% at the end of Quarter 1 compared to 25.4% at the end of Quarter 4. In the most recent quarter 47 of 125 children began a second or subsequent child protection plan compared to 72 of 215 in the previous quarter. Leicestershire is now placed in the bottom quartile of local authorities compared to most recent national results published for 2024/25. A key piece of audit work has been completed to provide insight into this significant area of performance with headlines evaluated by the senior management team. It is noted that for some children the repeat plan is after an extended period of time since the previous plan ended. For some the current child protection issues are new and auditors have confirmed that the previous plan ending was correct and a new plan was necessary to safeguard the child. The audit work has recommended actions for the Service to further strengthen practice which includes enhanced responses to domestic abuse which is a common feature identified. Regular audit work continues to drive improvement.
10. The percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months was 26.5% at the end of Quarter 1 which is an increase compared to 24.7% at the end of the previous quarter; 437 children were 're-referred' within Quarter 1 compared to 532 children in Quarter 4. Leicestershire continues to be placed in the fourth quartile of local authorities. Key pieces of work have been undertaken to respond to data errors linked to the implementation of a new contact and referral form in April 2026 which continues to make some data unreliable. Alongside this, analysis of audit findings identifies work in response to standard and medium risk domestic abuse incident reported by the police are a key element of the repeat referral cases. A new approach to provide earlier offers of support in the extended domestic abuse team has been put in place since early July with impact being analysed within three months. This activity forms part of short-term responses to the issue of repeat referrals with longer term solutions linked to the development of the integrated front door within the Families First partnership programme.
11. The percentage of assessments completed within 45 days to the end of Quarter 1 was 88.5%, a slight increase compared to the end Quarter 4 (87.5%). Within Quarter 1, 1,632 assessments were completed, with 1,444 within timescale. Leicestershire continues to be placed in the second quartile of local authorities using most recent comparisons.

12. The percentage of Care Leavers aged up to 21 in Suitable Accommodation was 92.4% at the end of Quarter 1 (85 out of 92 young people), a decrease compared to the end of the previous Quarter (95.8%). Leicestershire is now placed in the second quartile of local authorities using available comparisons, although performance continues to exceed the target set.
13. The percentage of Care Leavers aged up to 21 in Education, Employment or Training was 62.0% at the end of Quarter 1 (57 out of 92 young people), a decrease compared to the end of the previous Quarter (63.2%). Leicestershire is now placed in the second quartile of local authorities using available comparisons, although performance continues to exceed the target set. The Service continues to provide careful oversight to the care leaver indicators and is driven by a corporate commitment for creating mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers.
14. The percentage of Children in Care at the end of Quarter 4 who had a dental check in the preceding 12 months was 71.8% (540 children), and similar to 72.1% reported for the previous quarter. For Children in Care aged up to 13 years, the percentage with a dental check is higher at 77.4% compared to 64.7% for young people in care aged 14 years or more. Targeted work with carers and providers aims to improve take up of dental care across all age groups.
15. The percentage of Children in Care at the end of Quarter 1 who had an annual health assessment within the preceding 12 months was 85.6% (644 children), and similar to 86.5% reported for the previous quarter. For Children in Care aged up to 13 years, the percentage with an annual health check is higher at 87.4% compared to 83.4% for young people in care aged 14 years or more. The Corporate Parenting Board provides opportunities to collaborate with health partners to review take up of health assessments and drive improvement.

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

16. 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.
17. The number of children in mainstream schools in Leicestershire with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 4,290 at the Summer term 2026 school census. This is 251 children higher than at the Spring term 2026 school census (4,039). 92% of the additional EHCP children in mainstream schools at Summer 2026 were on roll at the same school in the previous term. The Spring term 2026 school census EHCP numbers, and the proportion of the pupil population it represents, are the highest recorded for any school census term since the phasing in of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice changes were completed. 4.33% of all pupils on roll now in Leicestershire mainstream schools have an EHCP.

18. The number of children in mainstream schools in Leicestershire without an EHCP but in receipt of SEN Support was 13,690 at the Summer term 2026 school census. This is 582 higher than the Spring term 2026 school census (13,108). The Summer term 2026 school census SEN support numbers, are the highest recorded for any school census term since the phasing in of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice changes were completed. It also presents a return to the trend of year-on-year comparative increases, which was reversed in the termly data for Autumn and Spring of the 2025/26 academic year.

People are safe in their daily lives

19. Local Youth Justice statistics are regularly reported to the Youth and Justice Partnership Board. The latest report was presented at the June 2026 board.
20. The number of First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice System in Q4 2025/26 (latest data) was 17. This is an increase of four compared to the previous quarter (Q3 2025/26). Local data is currently unavailable for Use of Custody and Re-offending, although Ministry of Justice figures are available in the report.

Help every child to get the best possible start in life

Early Years

21. In the Summer term 2026, 66% of eligible two-year-olds took up their Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE). This is a decrease from the Spring term 2026 (68%). For three-year-olds, the figure was 84.7%, a decrease over the Spring term 2026 (87.1%).
22. Due to issues reporting FEEE adjustment, there may be slight inaccuracies in the above figures. Data on the quality of provision is currently unavailable due to changes in the Ofsted Inspection framework. Work is ongoing to develop data and reporting in these areas, and an update will be available later in the year.

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

23. The official benchmarking data has been made available by the Department for Education (DfE) for offers relating to primary and secondary school entry in September 2026.
24. The percentage of applicants obtaining their first preference for first time admission to Primary school in 2026 was 94% (approx. 6.4k out of 6.8k applicants). This is 1.4% lower than in 2025 (95.4%). This figure is within the second quartile of local authorities nationally, and the same as the average for Leicestershire's Statistical Neighbours (94%).
25. The percentage of applicants obtaining their first preference for Secondary school transfer in 2026 was 90.2% (approx. 6.8k out of 7.5k applicants). This is 1.8% lower than in 2025 (92%). This figure is within the second quartile of local

authorities nationally, and 0.5% lower than the average for Leicestershire's Statistical Neighbours (90.7%).

26. The number of children Electively Home Educated (EHE) was 1,460 at the end of Q1 2026/27. This is an increase of 56 students since the end of Q4 2025/26 (1,404 students), and compared to the same period last year, end of Q1 2025/26 when there were 1,461 students, it represents a stabilisation of the numbers for the first time in recent years.
27. Between August 2025 and June 2026, there have been 495 young people join the EHE cohort for some time period, 267 of these young people (54%) were aged between 12 and 15 years of age, 277 (56%) were female, 158 (32%) had identified Special Educational Needs (either SEN Support or an Education, Health and Care Plan), and 195 were eligible for a Free School Meal (40%). Each of these groups are overrepresented compared to the general population profile of Leicestershire compulsory school aged residents attending Leicestershire state funded schools, which at the Summer Term 2026 recorded 36% aged between 12 and 15, 49% as female, 21% with Special Educational Needs, and 19% as Free School Meal eligible. During this period there have also been 302 young people that left the EHE cohort, with 220 (73%) of these young people returning to school or an alternative provision.
28. The main reasons for young people joining the EHE cohort between 1st August 2025 and 30th June 2026 (495 young people) were:

Reason	Total Young People	% of Total
Mental health	111	22.4%
Other	94	19.0%
No reason given	89	18.0%
Difficulty in accessing a school place	78	15.8%
School provision not meeting need	75	15.2%
Cultural/Life choice	46	9.3%

29. The official benchmarking data has been made available by the Department for Education (DfE) for suspensions and permanent exclusions during the 2024/25 academic year.
30. The number of permanent exclusions from Leicestershire schools as a percentage of the school population in the 2024/25 academic year was 0.09%. This rate is 30% higher than last year, 0.07% in 2023/24, and almost 400% higher than in 2018/19, which was a rate of 0.02%. The number of permanent exclusions increased to 94 in 2024/25, from 72 in 2023/24, and 19 in 2018/19. 2024/25 saw the highest number of permanent exclusions from Leicestershire schools since 2006/07, when there were 108.
31. Leicestershire is in the second quartile of performance nationally. The national benchmark was 0.12%, a decrease from 0.13% in 2023/24, which was the highest national number and proportionality of permanent exclusions since the data collection started in its present form in 2006/07. The average for

Leicestershire's Statistical Neighbours was 0.10%, which is 0.01% higher than the average for Leicestershire. This group of Local Authorities saw a 0.03% annual decrease in rate (with rounding), from 0.12% in 2023/24.

32. Unvalidated data up to the end of March 2026 for the 2025/26 academic year is showing permanent exclusion numbers to be lower than for the same period last year, 59 compared to 61.
33. The number of children receiving at least one fixed term suspension from Leicestershire schools as a percentage of the school population in the 2024/25 academic year was 3.45% (3,473 children). This rate is 5% lower than for the last academic year (3.62% and 3,654 children), and 82% higher than the rate for 2018/19 academic year (1.9% and 1,860 children). The 2024/25 performance for Leicestershire represents the first academic year after 2019/20 to see a fall in the number and rate of pupils suspended from the previous academic year, although the performance remains the second highest since collection of this data began by the Department of Education (DfE) in 2005/06.
34. Leicestershire's performance is in the second quartile nationally, and is better than both the national performance, which decreased by 4% to a rate of 3.89%, and Leicestershire's Statistical Neighbours, who saw a 4% decrease to a rate of 3.96%.
35. Unvalidated data up to the end of March 2026 for the 2025/26 academic year is showing the number of children suspended to have continued to reduce, 2,480 compared to 2,799 for the same period last year. This is the lowest number for this time period since 2022/23, when the number was 2,424.
36. The percentage of young people (16-17) in Leicestershire not in education, employment, or training (NEET) at the end of Q1 2026/27 was 1.4% (216 young people). This rate was 0.1% higher than at the end of Q4 2025/26 but remains below the target of less than 2.1%.

Conclusion

37. The report provides a summary of performance at the end of Quarter 1 2026/27, covering the period April to June 2026.
38. 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

Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67375fe5ed0fc07b53499a42/Keeping_Children_Safe_Helping_Families_Thrive_.pdf

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Appendix

Children and Family Services Department Performance Dashboard Quarter 1, 2026/27

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