

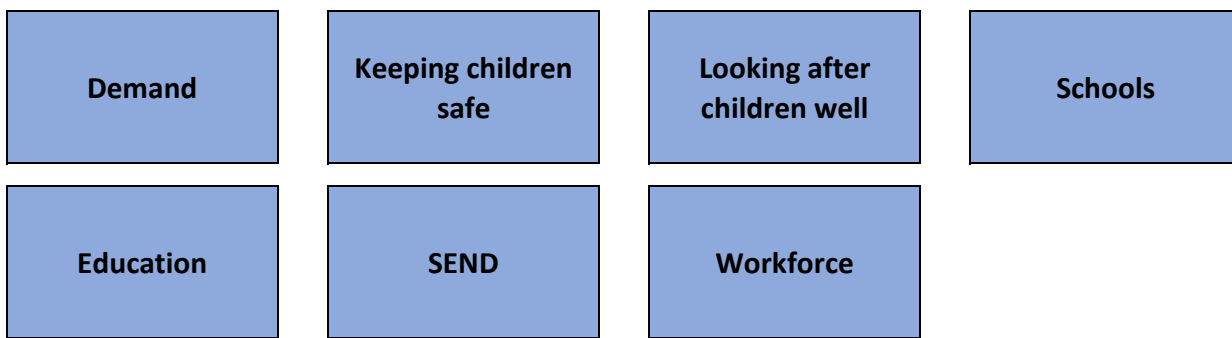


CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday 5th March 2025

REPORT TITLE:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

Children, Young People & Education Committee - indicator sets



Demand

	Year-end			2024/25			National (23/24)	North West (23/24)	Stat Neighbours (23/24)	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3				
Social care contacts	10732	12252	24103	6940	6258	6646	-	-	-	
Early Help contacts	11128	9148	11114	3634	3245	3508	-	-	-	
Referrals to social care	3244	3355	4152	1094	911	965	-	-	-	
% of domestic abuse referrals to children's social care	27.4%	20.4%	23.6%	27.4%	25.0%	26.0%	-	-	-	
Child In Need rate per 10,000 population	392.2	399.8	424.0	438.6	417.6	408.8	333.0	380.0	438.0	
Child Protection rate per 10,000 population	58.6	57.1	56.6	55.4	58.6	53.4	42.0	49.0	51.0	
Children Looked After rate per 10,000 population	121.0	118.0	116.0	116.1	113.5	107.3	70.0	94.0	112.0	

Supporting narrative

Contacts - Quarter 3 contact numbers have slightly increased from quarter 2 and as expected from the start of the new school term. Of the 6,646 contacts received, 32% were from police with 20% relating to domestic abuse. Similar to Quarter 2, 14% of all contacts received during Q3 were progressed to referral.

The highest number of contacts from individual wards were generated from Seacombe (11%), Bidston St James 910%), and Rock Ferry (9%). Secondary to domestic abuse, the following categories received a higher level of contact:

- Managing behaviour
- Neglect
- Physical abuse

Referrals - The number of referrals has increased slightly from the end of quarter 2 from 911 to 965 and the rate of referrals per 10,000 (602.8) is above stat neighbours (566) and also above North West (512.4) and the national (518.3). The Integrated Front Door have a quality assurance process to oversee threshold decisions to give assurance that the right children are receiving statutory support.

Child in Need (CIN) - Our child in need rate per 10,000 has decreased further from the end of quarter 1 and quarter 2 to 410. This is below our statutory neighbours but above the North West and England average. This decrease ties in with some of the work within the localities to have more rigour around children no longer needing statutory support, with support being identified within the partnership when appropriate.

Child Protection per 10,000 is 53.6 which puts us in line with our target range of 52.3 – 56.7. Child Protection numbers have decreased this quarter from 386 in September to 352 in December. They are also lower than they were twelve months ago (371 in December 2024).

Children Looked After (CLA) - The number of CLA has decreased further this quarter from 730 to 707. Our CLA rate per 10,000 is 107.6 which is below our statutory neighbours but in line with our target range of 102. – 110.6. We continue to see less children coming into care and more children supported within their family networks. The Care Programme Board provides effective management oversight to ensure that services work together efficiently to support children and families and improved outcomes are achieved for children requiring care outside of their family unit.

Keeping children safe

	Year-end			2024/25			National (23/24)	North West (23/24)	Stat Neighbours (23/24)	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3				
% of Early Help cases closed with outcomes met	83.5%	88.7%	85.3%	77.6%	91.3%	93.9%	-	-	-	
% Repeat referrals within 12 months period	21.5%	23.3%	23.2%	22.6%	25.0%	20.6%	22.0%	21.0%	22.0%	
% Assessments completed within timescale	81.1%	75.5%	72.7%	76.0%	76.0%	76.0%	84.0%	82.0%	82.0%	
Children who were subject to a section 47 enquiry Rate per 10,000 YTD	207.3	214.9	208.0	56.5	116.7	163.8	187.0	204.0	244.0	
% of children who were subject to a section 47 enquiry that led to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)	38.0%	31.1%	30.0%	33.6%	28.9%	19.8%	32.0%	33.0%	35.0%	
% Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) taking place in the month and within timescales	75.6%	59.5%	68.4%	75.2%	70.3%	71.0%	80.0%	82.0%	82.0%	
Child Protection Plans ceased Rate per 10,000 YTD	64.0	63.2	56.5	15.3	30.1	46.5	52.0	57.0	77.0	
% of children on second or subsequent Child Protection Plan	23.0%	31.4%	21.9%	20.8%	17.9%	23.4%	25.0%	25.0%	24.0%	
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - Child in Need (CIN)	82.8%	78.9%	70.2%	75.5%	68.8%	78.2%	-	-	-	
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - Child Protection (CP)	81.4%	74.7%	85.5%	86.3%	88.6%	94.3%	-	-	-	
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - Children Looked After (CLA)	90.5%	90.8%	91.4%	91.8%	91.7%	90.5%	-	-	-	
Reduce first time entrants into the criminal justice system (rate per 100,000)	114	86	141	31	63	101	166	184	180	
Reduce young people re-offending (%)	41.9	41	75	18.2%	33.3%	40.0%	-	-	-	
Reduce the use of Custody (rate per 1,000)	0.16	0.16	0.13	0.00	0.00	0	0.11	0.15	0.16	
Children currently open to MACE (Multi-Agency Child Exploitation)	-	-	56	64	61	47	-	-	-	
Children removed from MACE due to lowered risk	-	-	12	4	7	21	-	-	-	

Supporting narrative

Repeat Referrals - Our repeat referral rate for quarter 3 has decreased to 20.5% from 25% in quarter 2. There were 198 repeat referrals during quarter 3 (Oct – Dec) compared to 228 during quarter 2 (Jul – Sept). The primary reason for rereferrals for the same reason is domestic abuse.

Assessments - The percentage of assessments completed in timescales has remained stable at 76% this quarter. During quarter 3, there were 835 assessments completed within timescale out of 1,093 assessments completed. There is a focus on improving the timeliness and quality of assessments. Performance is overseen in monthly meetings with the Heads of Service and the Assistant Director. There has been a number of staff changes including movement and promotion of staff across children’s services in line with the Pathfinder work, some impact on this change was anticipated.

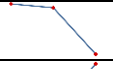
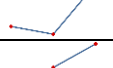

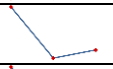



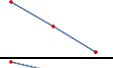

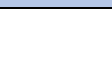
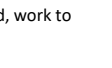
Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) - The percentage ICPCs completed within timescale during quarter 3 was 71% (54 within timescale out of 81) . This is disappointing, the Safeguarding unit track all of these children and have been working with the service to improve this performance. Some of these reasons have been a delay in the reports being ready, and the availability of parents/carers and CP chairs. The Head of Safeguarding is working with the safeguarding unit to improve this area of work.

Reduce first time entrants into the criminal justice system - As you will see from the figures there is an increase in the number of first time entrants in quarter 3 this has been a gradual increase both Locally and Nationally, the increase can also be linked to the time of year in the third quarter given school holidays we generally see and increase. We are however still below statistical neighbours and the national picture. To counterbalance this, we have recently taken on a pilot of no comment pathway for young people who are arrested and state no comment this would usually lead to a First Time Entrant the new pilot will reduce this number.

Reduce re-offending – there has been an increase in young people re-offending this quarter, given the numbers of young people open to Youth Justice Service on Statutory Orders is so small, the increase in percentages don’t take this into account and the actual numbers of young people that are within the re-offending cohort this quarter there were 10 young people with 4 young people re offending. Young people in custody remains the same.

Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) - Children on MACE this quarter has decreased. This is a positive as there have been reductions in risks to the young people due to targeted interventions from the Compass Team and Partners. Working with the young people to recognise exploitation, and support young people to move away from the risk’s.

Looking after children well

	Year-end			2024/25			National (23/24)	North West (23/24)	Stat Neighbours (23/4)	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3				
% CLA visits completed within timescale	90.5%	90.8%	91.4%	91.8%	91.7%	90.5%	-	-	-	
% Completed health assessment reviews YTD	91.0%	78.0%	86.7%	49.3%	45.9%	67.3%	89.0%	92.0%	93.0%	
% Completed dental checks YTD	86.0%	79.0%	78.2%	10.2%	37.1%	60.8%	79.0%	83.0%	84.0%	
% Completed Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) YTD	96.0%	97.3%	91.5%	55.9%	56.3%	80.3%	77.0%	85.0%	83.0%	
% of CLA adopted in year	8.0%	11.0%	8.8%	12.5%	8.2%	8.9%	9.0%	10.0%	9.0%	
% of CLA placed with Foster carers	71.0%	69.0%	70.0%	70.1%	69.4%	70.0%	67.0%	66.0%	66.0%	
Timeliness of Adoption process A10 (426 days national target) Average days	809	652	565	852	651	607	not published	not published	not published	
% Care leavers in suitable accommodation (Age 19-21)	94.0%	94.0%	96.5%	96.0%	95.0%	97.0%	88.0%	91.0%	90.0%	
% Care leavers in Education , Employment or Training (EET) (Age 19-21)	54.0%	59.0%	56.5%	58.1%	59.0%	59.0%	54.0%	53.0%	52.0%	
Missing Episodes	1385	1281	1345	384	340	293	-	-	-	
CYPMHS average waiting time - referral to assess in weeks (previously CAMHs)	New metric		11	8	7	3	-	-	-	

Supporting narrative










Dental checks - The percentage of dental checks completed is improving. This is a cumulative figure so is expected to rise by the end of quarter 4.







Health assessments have increased due to ongoing work to improve timeliness there are still some delays with out of borough reviews being completed, work to improve this is being undertaken with colleagues from Health.





Adoption - The numbers of children adopted has risen slightly and is inline with National comparators. We anticipate at least 18 children being adopted by the end of quarter 4. Timeliness of the adoption processes continues to improve ensuring that children are living with their adoptive families permanently at the earliest opportunity.

Missing episodes are reducing which recognises the work being completed to ensure that our children are being kept safe whilst in our care.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

	Year-end			2024/25			Current National	Current North West	Current Stat neighbours	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3				
% Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20 week timescale (Excluding Exceptions)	24%	36.60%	33.54%	16.80%	16.20%	15.30%	50.30%	56.70%	60.59%	
% of requests that went to tribunal	9.65%	5.67%	10.90%	6.36%	6.87%	7.40%	-	-	-	
% of Children Looked After with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	9.26%	19.90%	22.90%	23.20%	23.60%	23.30%	30.80%	28.80%	29.19%	
% of Children In Need with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	16.45%	20.80%	19.0%	18.7%	20.1%	19.6%	-	-	-	
% of Child Protection with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	6.45%	8.80%	10.70%	11.50%	13.00%	13.40%	-	-	-	
% of Early Help Episodes with (SEND) Special Educational needs and disabilities	26.44%	30.40%	31.60%	31.90%	34.90%	37.50%	-	-	-	
% of Children Looked After with (SEN) Special Educational Need support	19.29%	16.10%	17.10%	17.20%	18.80%	17.80%	27.30%	27.10%	26.69%	
% of Children In Need with (SEN) Special Educational Need support	16.20%	14.30%	12.90%	14.10%	13.40%	11.60%	-	-	-	
% of Child Protection with (SEN) Special Educational Need support	21.51%	21.20%	20.90%	19.20%	21.80%	21.90%	-	-	-	

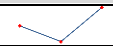
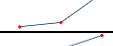
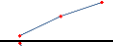

	Year-end				2024/25 Autumn Term	Current National	Trend
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24			
(EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan- Overall School Attendance %	90.60%	88.90%	87.30%	86.90%	86.90%	86.70%	
(EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan Overall Persistent absence %	25.60%	37.10%	27.20%	26.00%	22.76%	37.60%	
Number of pupils with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan who are electively home educated	18	12	20	14	11	-	
(SEN) Special Educational Need support - Overall School Attendance %	93.40%	91%	89%	88.0%	89.9%	89.10%	
(SEN) Special Educational Need support - Overall Persistent absence %	19.30%	28.60%	23.80%	26.30%	26.63%	29.80%	
Number of pupils with (SEN) Special Educational Need support who are electively home educated	39	54	59	71	15	-	






	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current National	Current North West	Current Stat neighbours	Trend
Key Stage 2 (RWM) Reading, Writing, Maths EHCP - % at Expected Level	2.50%	5%	10%	8%	8%	8.30%	
Key Stage 4 Overall Progress 8 Score - (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	-1.33	-1.02	-0.99	-1.12	-1.28	-1.27	
Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing, Maths (SEN) Special Educational Need support - % at Expected Level	20.70%	25%	25%	24%	23%	24.50%	
Key Stage 4 Overall Progress 8 Score - (SEN) Special Educational Need support	-0.46	-0.44	-0.54	-0.45	-0.59	-0.59	

Supporting narrative

An update on the SEND Improvement Programme will be provided by the Assistant Director of SEND and Inclusion as a separate agenda item.

Schools

	Year-end			2024/25			Current National	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3		
% Exclusions - suspensions	1.67	3.83	6.30%	1.54%	0.90%	2.28%	4.13%	
% Exclusions - permanent	0.070	0.13	0.09%	0.01%	0.01%	0.03%	0.05%	
Number of children known to be electively home educated	262	306	408	391	445	483	-	
Number of Pupils who are not in receipt of full-time education and subject of an agreed part time timetable (Indicator once named - Pupils who are missing more than 25hrs of education a week (CME25))	79	106	432	416	23	245	-	

	Year-end			2024/25		Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 Autumn Term	Current National	
% of school age pupils eligible for (FSM) Free school meal	27.59%	28.90%	29.91%	28.36%	24.60%	
Overall School Attendance %	91.20%	91.70%	91.50%	92.70%	93.80%	
Overall Unauthorised Absence %	2.10%	2.50%	2.80%	2.50%	2.10%	
Overall Persistent Absence %	27.30%	24.80%	24.60%	19.70%	20.70%	
Overall School Attendance Open to Social Care %	86.4	84.90%	82.10%	83.40%	-	


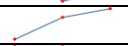
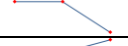
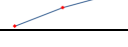
Supporting narrative

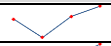
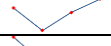
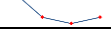
The number of Part-time timetables rose in the quarter due to schools placing young people on them as the term progressed following the summer holidays.

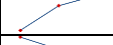
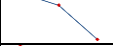
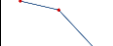
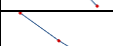




Our numbers of Electively Home Educated young people continues to rise as it does across the country. Over the quarter we also saw 36 young people return to schools.

Our overall attendance during the autumn term has mirrored the national picture although the drop across the term for Wirral schools was less than the drop nationally.

Education

	Year-end			2024/25			Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3	
% of under 5's who are engaged with the Early Years Service	51.11%	43.64%	45%	46%	46%	46%	
% of under 5's who have sustained engagement the Early Years Service (3 of more)	60.50%	47.94%	47%	47%	49%	49%	
% of 2 year olds benefitting from funded early education	83%	77.89%	94%	97%	97%	83%	
% of 3 year olds benefitting from funded early education	91%	90.96%	85%	82%	86%	89%	

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current National	Trend
% of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	83%	81.60%	83.20%	84%	89.7%	
% of early years settings good or better	98%	97%	97.80%	98.40%	98%	
% of young people aged 16 and 17 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or Not Known	5.00%	4.60%	4.50%	4.60%	5.20%	


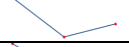

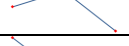
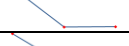






	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current NCER National	Trend
Foundation Stage - % achieving a good level of development	62.9%	65.2%	66.2%	67.7%	
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development	48.10%	42.9%	28.60%	41%	
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers achieving good level of development in early years foundation stage profile	20.2	19.5	16.3	18.4	
% Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	21.5%	20.2%	19.10%	21%	
% achieving expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	52%	55.6%	53.70%	61%	
% Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the 'expected standard' in English, reading, English writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2	24.1%	27.2%	24.60%	22%	
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at Key Stage 4	0.92	0.44	0.86	0.6	
Progress 8 Score for Wirral	-0.03	-0.11	-0.16	-0.02	

Supporting narrative

% of 2 year olds benefitting from funded early education - Two year disadvantage funding has seen a dip as parents who are eligible for both two year disadvantage funding and working families funding are preferring to go with the latter. Providers are also not checking if families are eligible for both types of funding. The team are encouraging providers to check eligibility for both funding streams and the team are exploring other options to ensure families receive the correct funding stream.

% of 3 year olds benefitting from funded early education - Autumn term always see's a slight drop in take up, the team actively promote the take up of funding throughout the year. This should increase in spring term.

Educational attainment will be discussed as a separate agenda item, with the detailed Standards reports being presented by the Assistant Director of Education.

Workforce										
	Year-end			2024/25			National	North West	Statistical Neighbours	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	Q3				
Vacancy rate – number of posts currently vacant / total no of posts Social Workers	30%	26%	23%	24%	25%	24%	-	-	-	
Agency rate – positions filled by agency staff Social Workers	22%	21%	22%	23%	22%	23%	-	-	-	
New starters - Social Workers	20	33	4	6	3	2	-	-	-	
Retention of staff – number of leavers - Social Workers	33	36	4	5	7	2	-	-	-	
Average FTE days lost to sickness absence - Social Workers	16.46	14.82	13.6	4.9	3.78	3.79		-	-	
Average caseload for social worker	15.5	14.96	15.32	15.2	14	13	16.3	17.9	17	
Vacancy rate – number of posts currently vacant / total no of posts Children's Services Directorate	20%	15%	17%	20%	22%	30%	-	-	-	
Agency rate – positions filled by agency staff Children's Services Directorate	6.29%	6.10%	6.10%	5.60%	5.40%	5.40%	-	-	-	
New starters - Children's Services Directorate	98	93	31	22	47	33	-	-	-	
Retention of staff – number of leavers - Children's Services Directorate	102	86	21	25	35	26	-	-	-	
Average FTE days lost to sickness absence Children's Services Directorate	12.55	12.06	3.4	4.1	2.9	3.8	-	-	-	

Supporting narrative

Quarter 3 Children's Social Care - The vacancy rate has gone down slightly, however the agency rate has gone up slightly. New starters have slowed from the previous two quarters, however the leavers have also reduced over that time frame too.

Quarter 3 Children, Families & Education Directorate as a whole - The vacancy rate has sharply increased from the last quarter however that is based on two reasons.....the Directorate have injected a number of posts into the SEND establishment to ensure the structure was fit for purpose moving forward; and recruitment from an organisational perspective has been scrutinised recently due to overall budget challenges, therefore there have been less approvals to fill posts; this is also shown in a decrease in new starts figure.

Acronym	Description
CIN	Child in need
CP	Child protection
CPP	Child protection plan
CLA	Child looked after
DA	Domestic Abuse
ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference
MACE	Multi-Agency Child Exploitation
SDQ	Strength & Difficulties Questionnaire
EET	Education, Employment & Training
NEET	Not in Education, Employment & Training
CAMHs	Child & adolescent mental health service
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan
GLD	Good Level of Development
FSM	Free School Meals
EHE	Electively Home Educated
DfE	Department for Education
CYP	Children & Young People
PA	Persistent Absence
FTE	Full Time Equivalent