



**DARLINGTON**

Borough Council

# Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Agenda

9.30 am

Monday, 19 December 2022

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington. DL1 5QT

**Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.**

1. Introductions/ Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 31 October 2022 (Pages 3 - 8)
4. Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2021/22 – Report of the Group Director of People (Pages 9 - 44)
5. Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Services (ILACS) – Report of the Assistant Director of Children’s Services (Pages 45 - 60)
6. Performance Indicators Quarter 2 2022/2023 – Report of the Group Director of People (Pages 61 - 90)
7. The Refreshed Children and Young Peoples Plan 2023-2028 – Report of the Assistant Director Commissioning Performance and Transformation. (Pages 91 - 102)

8. Work Programme –  
Report of the Group Director of Operations  
(Pages 103 - 118)
9. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this Committee are  
of an urgent nature and can be discussed at this meeting
10. Questions



**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Friday, 9 December 2022**

**Town Hall**  
**Darlington.**

**Membership**

Councillors Ali, Bell, Crudass, C L B Hughes, L Hughes, Johnson, Lucas, Preston, Snedker,  
Sowerby and Willis

**Statutory Co-optees**

Carly Stonier

**Non Statutory Co-optees**

Maura Regan, Tim Fisher, Janet Woodcock, John Armitage and Sally Hudson

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this agenda please contact Allison Hill, Democratic Officer, Operations Group, during normal  
office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays  
email: [allison.hill@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:allison.hill@darlington.gov.uk) or telephone 01325 405997

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 31 October 2022

**PRESENT** – Councillors Crudass (Chair), Ali, C L B Hughes, L Hughes, Johnson, Lucas, Snedker and Willis

**STATUTORY CO-OPTees** – None

**NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTees** – John Armitage and Sally Hudson

**APOLOGIES** –Carly Stonier,

**ABSENT** – Councillors Bell, Preston and Sowerby; Malcolm Frank, Maura Regan, Tim Fisher and Janet Woodcock

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Vicky Davidson-Boyd (Adoption Tees Valley)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Chris Bell (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Tony Murphy (Assistant Director Education and Inclusion) and Paul Richardson (Head of Skills and Employability) and Allison Hill (Democratic Officer)

### CYP15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at this meeting.

### CYP16 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2022

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September 2022.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September 2022 be approved as a correct record.

### CYP17 ADOPTION TEES VALLEY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Vicky Davidson-Boyd, Service Manager, Adoption Tees Valley presented the Adoption Tees Valley (ATV) Annual Report for 2021/22 and outlined the work that had been undertaken across the Tees Valley during the period 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

Adoption Tees Valley is the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) for the five local authorities Councils of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton.

The Service Manager advised Members that there had been slightly lower levels of adoption activity overall within this year, with numbers of children being placed with adoptive parents reducing from 82 in the previous year to 78 in this year; and the regional picture was reflected nationally, with fewer children with an adoption plan and Placement Order during this year.

It was also reported that there had been a significant improvement in the timeliness of moving in with adoptive parents in 2021/22 and ATV had improved on its own timeliness since last year and also the timeliness of finding a family and matching with adoptive parents had also improved with ATV reducing the average timescale by 64 days to 174 days.

The submitted report outlined the governance arrangements of the Board which comprised of the Directors for Children's Services of the five Local Authorities within the partnership; highlighted the Somerset Ruling, a significant legal ruling in relation to adoption cases which took place in November 2021, having a significant impact on adoption activity nationally and locally; and outlined the National Adoption Strategy 2021 which set out an overarching strategic vision for adoption aimed at a consistent England wide offer to children and families.

The submitted report also set out adoption activities carried out which included marketing campaigns to promote need; data in relation to recruitment and assessment of adopters; delivery of the Preparation to Adopt Training courses.

Statistical data on children referred, referrals by Local Authority and Agency Decisions that Adoption is the child's plan and Placement Orders, Children Matched and Placed, Early Permanence, Adoption Orders granted, characteristics of children adopted, children waiting for placement, timescales for adoption and disruptions was also contained within the submitted report.

It was reported that the Adoption Panel had appointed a new Panel Manager and Advisor and the report of the Adoption Panel Chair was detailed in the Annual Report; detailed adoption support as a key strategic priority; highlighted that in February 2022 the ATV had been invited to be a pilot Regional Adoption Agency for a new Adoption Support Audit; and gave details of therapeutic and educational support .

The submitted report also provided details of Non-Agency Adoptions; staffing; quality assurance; finance and funding information; and outlined the future development plans for the ATV.

Members questions related to how the service support and work with birth families when a child is taken into care; timeliness of Placement Orders and in particular those relating to complex cases; sought reassurance that governance arrangements were working well and there was full representation at Board meetings by representatives of this authority; asked for clarification on the definition of Disruptive Placements; questioned the relationship between officers of this council and the ATV and were assured that there was a good working relationship; requested information on funding opportunities for the ATV; and discussed future plans for the recruitment of prospective adopters, the impact of the pandemic and cost of living increases on the service; and recruitment plans for a more diverse Adoption Panel membership.

**RESOLVED** – That the Adoption Tees Valley Annual Report for 2021/22 be noted.

## **CYP18 LEARNING AND SKILLS ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

The Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an annual update on the performance of the Learning and Skills Service for the academic year 2021/22; and to allow Scrutiny members an opportunity to challenge the performance of this externally funded service.

The submitted report provided details of the Learning and Skills Service; learner numbers; funding information; performance data; learner progression data; learner and employer satisfaction rates; observation of learning, teaching and assessment; the impact of covid on the service; the Ofsted inspection outcome; and the challenges ahead.

It was highlighted that the pandemic had impacted on the Learning and Skills service and delivery and still continued to do so by impacting both learner numbers and subsequent income although staff had responded magnificently and continued to deliver a successful transition to online teaching and learning when needed.

It was also reported that the service's aim was to grow provision whilst continuing to respond to employer and community need; and the service was inspected by Ofsted in June 2022 retaining its assessment of 'Good' overall.

Members discussed in particular the work being undertaken by the Tees Valley Combined Authority skills strategy 'Inspiring our Future' to examine skills need and flexibility around funding to develop skills; the skills shortages in certain areas of business including catering and retail; the reluctance from young people to take up apprenticeships and the impact of removal of the Level 2 qualification; the effect of larger businesses in the town on the overall recruitment issues; encouraging young people to engage; the Tees Valley initiative to encourage businesses to plan and invest in training for their existing employees, including contingency planning; the Government White Paper 'Skills for jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth' published in January 2021 aimed at reviewing further education funding systems; and the Youth Friendly Darlington webpage and press release to reduce youth unemployment.

**RESOLVED** – That the annual report be noted.

## **CYP19 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 2022/23**

The Assistant Director of Children's Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an update on performance against key performance indicators.

The submitted report provided Quarter 1 (April 2022 to June 2022) performance information in line with an indicator set agreed by the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group and subsequently by each individual Scrutiny Committee.

The submitted report also highlighted where Children and Young People were performing well and where there was a need to improve. It was also outlined that where indicators are reported annually, quarterly updates will not be available.

It was highlighted that 79.6 per cent of referrals were screened and completed within one

day during Quarter 1 (Q1) 2022/23 and a continuing improvement when compared with previous quarters with a small number of referrals which took over three working days to be completed in Q1 (1.9 per cent) which was an improvement on 5.6 per cent for the same period last year and is within our threshold of 5 per cent; 16.1 per cent of the children referred during Q1 had been re-referred to Children's Social Care within 12 months of a previous referral, which was below the threshold of 18 per cent and an improvement on the same period last year; 100 per cent of children with a Child Protection (CP) plan, and 100 per cent of Children in Care (CiC) had an allocated social worker; 100 per cent of children with a Child Protection (CP) plan, and 98.8 per cent of Children in Care (CiC) had their reviews completed within timescale; there were 273 Children in our care at the end of June 2022, excluding the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (7) which was just above the number of Children in Care (CiC) in June 2021 (264) and below that in June 2020 (291) and work continues to safely reduce the number of children coming into care;

It was also highlighted that 25.0 per cent of the children ceasing to be in our care did so due to return home to their parents, 20.0 per cent had a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) / Child Arrangement Order (CAO) granted to a relative and 15.0 per cent were adopted; 89.1 per cent of statutory CiC visits were completed within timescale during Q1 which was in line with the target of 90 per cent; 10.4 per cent of our Children in Care, as at June 2022, have had three or more placements within the previous 12 months which was in line with the internal target of 10 per cent; 67.0 per cent of our Children in Care aged under 16 (who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years) have been in their current placement continuously for at least two years as at June 2022; 6.5 per cent of our Children in Care have needed to be placed 20 or more miles away from home as of June 2022 which was positive performance and below target of 10 per cent; 19.6 per cent of Care Leavers were not in employment, education, or training (NEET) which was positivity below target of 30 per cent and 98.2 per cent of care leavers were in suitable accommodation; and 60.7 per cent of our care leavers were in training or employment (30.4 per cent in full time, 30.3 per cent in part time) as of June 2022, and 19.7 per cent were engaging in education (5.4 per cent of which are in studies beyond A level).

Areas highlighted for improvement were in relation to 79.0 per cent of Children and Families assessments were completed within timescale in Quarter 1 (Q1) 2022/23 which was below Q1 2021/22 performance of 90.4 per cent in timescale, however, that was with 58.3 per cent less assessments needing to be completed as we continued to see a rise in assessments required; 75.0 per cent of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) were held within 15 working days from the strategy meeting / section 47 being initiated, excluding transfer-in conferences, during Q1 which showed a dip in Darlington's performance this quarter and it was reported that additional processes had been put in place to address this; at the end of June 2022, the percentage of children becoming subject to a Child Protection plan (CP) for a second or subsequent time within two years of the previous plan ending was 25.0 per cent, above the 6 per cent target, however, related to two families; at the end of June 2022, 8.3 per cent of children ceased to be subject to a CP plan in Q1 after being subject to the plan for two or more years and the plans had been confirmed as appropriately opened for this length of time; 73.2 per cent of children received a statutory CP visit within 10 working days during Q1 with a further 14.3 per cent of visits taking place one or two days outside this and below the target of 90 per cent; and 28.8 per cent of children due a health review during Q1 and 19.2 per cent due a dental check assessment had had one completed.

Members discussed in particular the recent negative OFSTED Inspections of two Children's Homes and the impact of these and how it was being managed; and the information in relation to the number of missing episodes in Q1.

The Assistant Director of Children's Services responded to Members on their concerns and in relation to Children's Homes advised Scrutiny that a full review was being undertaken and would be reported to Members at a future date.

**RESOLVED** – That the performance information reported for Quarter 1 2022/23 be noted.

#### **CYP20 SEND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION**

The Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Scrutiny Members with an update on the Ofsted/CQC Inspection carried out between January and 1 February 2022, on the provision of Special Educational Needs (SEND) support in Darlington and the subsequent development of a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) also previously circulated.

It was reported that the inspection was to see how well the area had put in place the changes across all services that the Children and Families Act 2014 requires for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families; and in particular it assessed how well Darlington Borough Council, Schools, Academy Trusts and all parts of the Health Service identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND, as well as the outcomes they achieve.

It was also reported that although the inspection was not graded a detailed letter was produced which identified a number of strengths in the local area, however also highlighted two areas of significant weakness identified across Darlington which were detailed in the report.

The Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion advised Members of the Scrutiny that since the inspection there had been a lot of work undertaken locally and will continue to update Members on the implementation and progress of the action plan.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and Written Statement of Action be noted.

#### **CYP21 CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY TASK AND FINISH REVIEW FINAL REPORT**

The Chair of the Childcare Sufficiency Task and Finish Review Group submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide an update on the findings and recommendation of the Review Group established by this Scrutiny Committee to gain a better understanding of childcare sufficiency with the borough and the barriers to the provision of childcare provision.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee approved the submitted report with an amendment to paragraph 8 and agreed that Cabinet be requested to approve assistance in communicating the availability of jobs in the childcare sector and to make local Members of Parliament aware of the concerns highlighted in the submitted report with regard to the provision of sufficient childcare to meet the needs of our families.

**RESOLVED** – That the Scrutiny Committee approve the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Review Group and agree that the report be submitted to Cabinet.

**CYP22 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Group Director of Operations submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included in the previously approved work programme.

**RESOLVED** – That the work programme be noted.



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
19 DECEMBER 2022**

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**DARLINGTON SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT – 2021/2022**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Children and Young People Scrutiny to receive and comment upon the Annual Report of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership (DSP) for the period 2021/22.

**Summary**

2. Local Safeguarding Partnerships are required to produce an Annual Report to account for the Partnerships achievements over the previous year and make an assessment of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements within the local area.
3. The Annual Report summarises and reflects on the work of the Partnership over the period 2021/22, drawing upon a range of data and information, to outline the progress made and to illustrate the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements across Darlington.
4. The Covid-19 Pandemic continued to pose a significant challenge throughout the year ensuring children, young people and vulnerable adults were safeguarded and the fact that anyone can be at risk of harm as it was recognised abuse and neglect can be increased by a whole range of factors such as mental health, poverty, domestic abuse as well as loneliness and isolation.
4. It is recommended that:
  - (a) The Children and Young People Scrutiny note and comment on the DSP Annual Report for 2021/22 which will be published on the DSP website.

**Reasons**

6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:
  - (a) Children and Young People Scrutiny have an understanding of the Partnership's work to date.

- (b) To challenge and scrutinise the work of the DSP and raise any challenges as appropriate with the Independent Chair.
- (c) To have assurance that the Safeguarding Partnership is effectively coordinating multi-agency safeguarding practice in Darlington and promoting the welfare of children and adults with needs for care and support.

**James Stroyan**  
**Group Director of People**

### **Background Papers**

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report – 2021/2022

S17 Crime and Disorder	All children at risk of crime and disorder are a priority within this report. DSP works alongside the Young People Engagement and Justice Service to help reduce crime and first time entrants into the criminal justice system.
Health and Well Being	The health and wellbeing of all children in Darlington are a priority within this report. DSP works alongside all organisations to promote the health and wellbeing of children and their families.
Carbon Impact	There are no implications arising from this report.
Diversity	DSP works to ensure that all groups are considered within their safeguarding agenda.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	N/A
Key Decision	N/A
Urgent Decision	N/A
Council Plan	The work of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership complements the priorities in the Council Plan
Efficiency	N/A
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has not impacted on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

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# Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

Protecting Children and Adults

## Annual Report

2021-2022



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# 1. Introduction

## Foreword by Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Welcome to our third annual report of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership which covers the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. The report summarises and reflects on the work of the Partnership throughout the year, illustrating the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding children and adult arrangements across Darlington.

Whilst the last two years have undoubtedly been dominated by Covid-19 and the challenges the Pandemic continued to pose, the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults has remained at the forefront of our collective approach. This year spanned the mid-point of the Pandemic and we recognised how agencies flexed and demonstrated professionalism despite having a much higher demand for services. Many services stepped up and yet were still able to address issues with a ‘business as usual’ attitude.

In common with many organisations, our meetings continued to be held exclusively on Teams which has allowed a greater number of colleagues to join when previously would not have been able to do so. This has enabled us to continue to have that collective oversight of safeguarding arrangements to help understand the challenges and pressures faced by organisations. Whilst these plans are likely to change in the coming months and years as organisations move to a hybrid model, it is anticipated Microsoft Teams will continue to have a place for many years to come.

The vision of Darlington Safeguarding Partnership is to ensure ‘Darlington is a place where children and adults can live their lives safely’. We recognise there will continue to be many challenges as we move forward including the threat to the emotional health and well-being of people in Darlington as a result of the profound changes in wider society and the adverse consequences of the Covid-19 Pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis. We also recognise the staffing pressures with so many agencies struggling to recruit and retain staff, such as the care home sector, social care and health organisations.

Working together across organisations will always be a challenge and we recognise there is always room for improvement and we strive to ensure that agencies continue to work together to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe in Darlington. Safeguarding is never ‘done’ and it is up to us all, to make a difference and to add value to a big issue no single agency can deal with on its own.

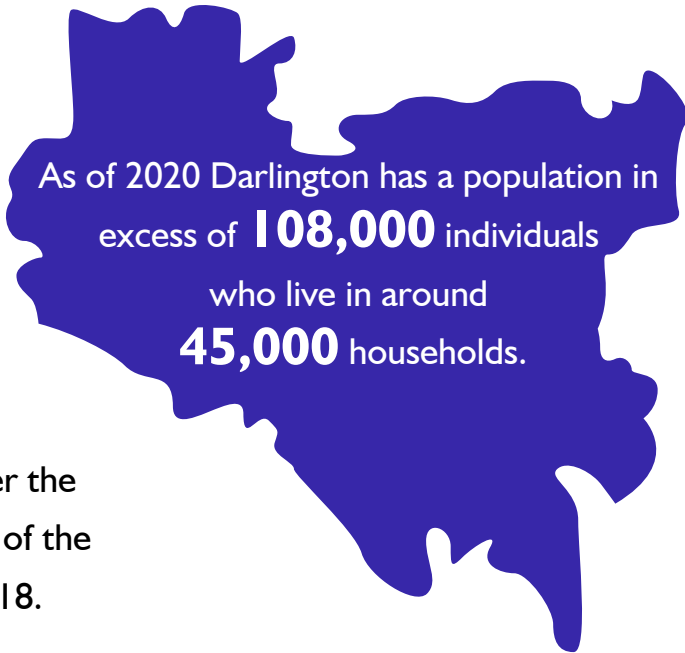
We would like to thank those dedicated professionals across all agencies who have continued to work so positively, keeping our children and adults safe and protected in Darlington, through yet another very challenging year. Working together has been a real strength of the partnership. The commitment to joint working and the incredible efforts made every day to keep services – and people – afloat, has been outstanding.

<p><b>Ann Baxter</b> Independent Scrutineer</p>	<p><b>James Stroyan</b> Group Director for People Darlington Borough Council</p>	<p><b>Adrian Green/ Dave Ashton</b> Detective Chief Superintendent Durham Constabulary</p>	<p><b>David Gallagher/Jean Golightly</b> Executive Director of Place Based Delivery/ Director of Nursing and Quality North East &amp; North Cumbria Integrated Care Board</p>
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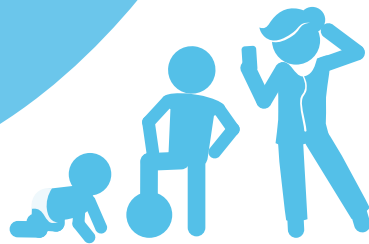


## 2. Local Picture

Darlington Borough Council is a Unitary Authority in the North East of England which covers 76.3 square miles. Darlington is part of the Tees Valley city region.



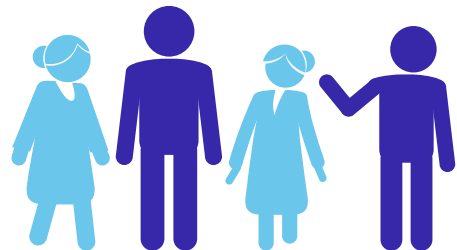
As of 2020 Darlington has a population in excess of **108,000** individuals who live in around **45,000** households.



Children and young people under the age of 25 years make up **28%** of the population, with 22% aged 0-18.

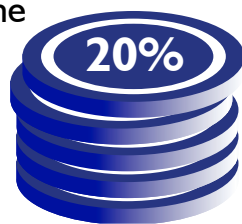


The number of people aged over 65 years old in Darlington is estimated at **21,700**



In terms of ethnicity, the 2011 Census reported 96.2% of Darlington's population as White and **3.8%** from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups.

The Health of People in Darlington is varied compared with the England average and **20%** of children live in low income families.



In County Durham and Darlington the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) community form the largest single ethnic minority group, the proportion of Darlington residents who identify themselves as GRT (2011 census) is **0.3%** which is three times higher than the national average.

Overall, comparing local indicators with England averages, life expectancy for both men and women is lower. The health of people in Darlington is varied, about 20% of children live in low income families.



# 3. How we have worked this year?

As is to be expected, the Covid-19 pandemic continued to pose a significant challenge throughout the year, ensuring children, young people and vulnerable adults were safeguarded. The Pandemic has tested us all and forced us to do things differently and adapt services to working remotely which has strengthened connectivity. It emphasised the fact that anyone can be at risk of harm and reminded us that abuse and neglect can be increased by a whole range of factors such as mental health, poverty, domestic abuse as well as loneliness and isolation—and it is not always easy to tell who might be at risk. Whilst measures were in place to oversee the most vulnerable with the Critical Safeguarding Partnership Groups having that ‘line of sight’ on the most vulnerable, work continued with partner agencies in understanding the impact and the numerous challenges they faced in safeguarding those people who were not being seen by any professional.

The year continued to be dominated by Covid-19 and its impact felt nationally and locally meaning the need to have a collective oversight on safeguarding was increasing. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners and Independent Scrutineer committed to meeting monthly to have that oversight on safeguarding arrangements and invited key leads from partner agencies to meetings to obtain an understanding of their current issues and challenges. They also facilitated a development session to reflect on the multi-agency partnership arrangements and experiences throughout the Pandemic.

What was evident was the need to have separate child and adult operational groups to have oversight on the most vulnerable and ensuring those mechanisms were in place on that line of sight but also having oversight of operational practice issues. This provided an opportunity to review and streamline the initial governance arrangements implemented when the Partnership was established back in July 2019.

The Critical Groups established at the start of the Pandemic evolved and developed into separate Child and Adult Operational Groups having a focus on practice issues and challenges relating to operational management. The Learning and Development and Quality Assurance and Performance Groups have a strategic and coordinated view to identify opportunities for learning, improve and embed the quality of multi-agency frontline practice and implement quality assurance processes, to help understand the strengths and weaknesses of safeguarding arrangements and having the ability to oversee a joined-up and think family approach to improve outcomes for children and adults.

The Child Exploitation Group and Child Death Overview Panel which are joint groups with representatives from Durham Safeguarding Children’s Partnership, continue to feed into the Partnership. Details of the revised partnership governance and structure is set out in section 4 of this report.

As we began to see agencies looking to the future and their road to recovery, we saw many adapting a blended way of working using a ‘hybrid’ model that mixed remote working and face to face, which will continue to develop over the coming months and year.

It was recognised there are real benefits in Darlington being so small and evidence of excellent working relationships, which is a real strength and partners are assured that organisations are working closely and effectively to ensure the most vulnerable are supported and safeguarded. However, it is recognised there is much more to do including the development of its scrutiny arrangements and will continue to explore how this can be taken forward.



## Priorities for 2021-22

The key priority and main focus throughout 2021-22 was to further develop the Partnership arrangements to ensure all agencies worked together in an effective manner to protect children, young people and adults from abuse and neglect.

### What we did:

- Invited safeguarding key leads from agencies into the Statutory Safeguarding Partners meetings to provide assurance that safeguarding activity continued to be effective but to also obtain an understanding of the current issues, challenges and pressures they faced.
- Facilitated a development session to reflect on the multi-agency partnership arrangements and experiences throughout the Pandemic.
- Revised the Partnerships Governance arrangements which were formally signed off in February 2022.
- Improved engagement with education sectors - Independent Scrutineer attending Education Forums to talk about what is working well and what needs to change relating to current safeguarding arrangements/issues
- Provision of easily accessible information, training, advice and practice guidance to support frontline practitioners, shared through a number of mediums



## Key highlights from sub group activity:

**The Children's MASH Operational Group** continued to have oversight on front door practice and a number key themes that were being seen through contacts included: impact parental mental health was having on children, domestic violence, harm outside the family home and harmful sexual behaviour. The group continues to discuss specific multi-agency practice issues raised by agencies to determine how they can be addressed collectively as well as addressing the key learning points from national reviews such as the myth of invisible men: safeguarding children under 1 year old from non-accidental injury.

**The Adult Operational Group** was formally established in February 2022. The group is split into two parts, part 1 to address practice issues and review and monitor adult safeguarding performance data to obtain an understanding of the changing landscape and oversight of safeguarding practice and service delivery. Part 2 to focus on significant provider concerns to share intelligence, discuss concerns and agree actions on providers where there were significant concerns. The group is in its infancy and will need time to embed.

**The Learning and Development Group** continued to receive referrals for learning requests for child and adult cases and developed a reflective tool for agencies to explore what they could have done differently. Key themes include; harm away from home, parental mental health impact on children; safeguarding complex young people at crisis point and adult self-neglect. Details of these learning requests are outlined in section 7 of this report. The group continued to develop and launch key policy, procedure and guidance and these are outlined in section 6 of this report along with the development of core training modules based on the learning.

**Quality Assurance and Performance Management Group** was instrumental in developing the revised governance arrangements for the Partnership which were approved in April 2022. It continued to have oversight of quarterly performance data ensuring exception reporting on highs and lows into the Statutory Safeguarding Partner meetings. It has recognised there is further work required to develop the performance framework and quality assurance processes.

**The Child Exploitation Group** continued to raise awareness of online harm, child exploitation, risks to missing children, county lines and modern slavery to support frontline practitioners. Exception reporting provided an overview of the local picture of exploitation using the Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker to gain an understanding of changing trends, needs and risk factors. Work continues in developing an understanding of the contextualised safeguarding model.

**Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)** oversees all deaths of children under 18, there have been 9 in the reporting period and all of these are subject to a Child Death Review. CDOP works closely with the Partnership to highlight any emerging themes and issues and learning from child death reviews that require further consideration. CDOP completes its own [Annual report](#) which provides a summary of activity carried over that period.

**Sub Group Chairs** work together in aligning key pieces of work to ensure effective learning and change across all groups and continue to review how they can align more closely to ensure the learning is embedded into practice.

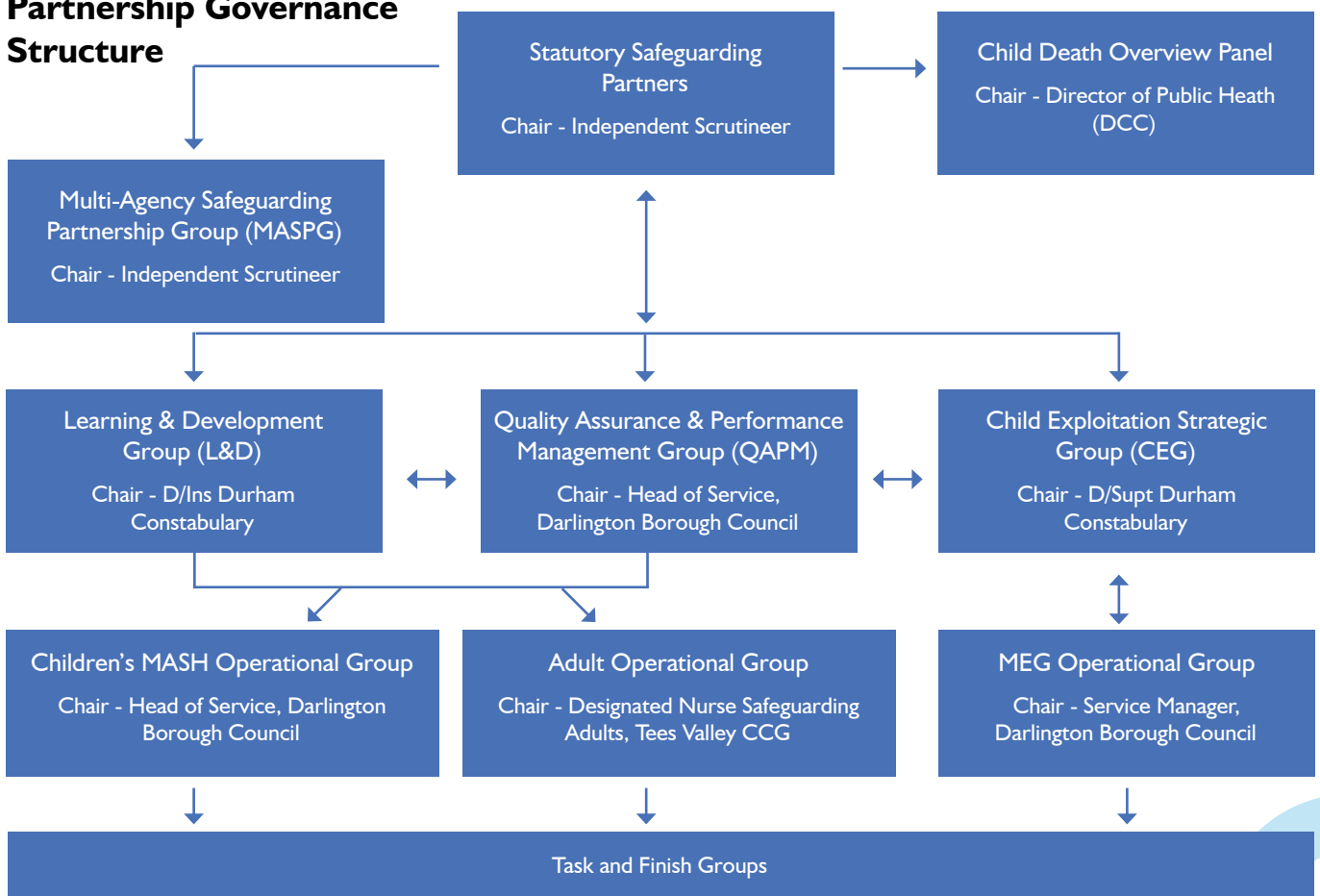
# 4. Partnership Governance and Structure

The Partnership revised its governance arrangements 2021/22 with new terms of reference and lines of accountability established. A wide range of organisations and are represented on the Partnership groups, including senior representatives and they are outlined in Appendix 2.

<p><b>Statutory Safeguarding Partners Group – Chaired by Independent Scrutineer</b></p>	<p>The Statutory Safeguarding Partners and Independent Scrutineer have a strong collective oversight of all safeguarding arrangements to ensure fulfilment of statutory obligations.</p>
<p><b>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Group – Chaired by Independent Scrutineer</b></p>	<p>Partners are looking to re-establish this group as it has not met since before the start of the Pandemic. It was recognised there are benefits in meeting as a wider partnership group having that open dialogue with all agencies involved in safeguarding matters. This will be progressed in the next reporting period.</p>
<p><b>Quality Assurance and Performance Group (QAPM) – Chaired by Head of Service, Darlington Borough Council</b></p>	<p>To scrutinise, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding work across partner agencies and commissioned organisations. Quarterly Performance reports provide information by exception on highs and lows and highlight the changing landscape. It will determine the steps required to implement quality assurance processes to help understand how learning has been embedded and to further understand what the Partnership needs to take forward.</p>
<p><b>Learning and Development Group (L&amp;D) – Chaired by Detective Inspector, Durham Constabulary</b></p>	<p>To identify opportunities for learning and improve and embed the quality of multi-agency frontline practice, for those practitioners working in child and adult safeguarding arenas to improve outcomes for children and adults. Responsibility for ensuring the learning from case reviews is communicated across partner agencies. It also ensures the effective development and review of multi-agency policy, procedure and practice guidance and learning opportunities to meet the needs of emerging issues and changes in practice.</p>
<p><b>Child Exploitation Group (CEG) – Chaired by Detective Chief Superintendent, Durham Constabulary</b></p>	<p>To oversee, monitor, evaluate and improve responses to tackling children missing from home, care and education and act as the strategic lead group for the reduction of Child Exploitation across Durham and Darlington. An operational group oversees individual cases of children at risk of exploitation in Darlington with a purpose to prevent, disrupt and deter them from being criminally or sexually exploited.</p>

<p><b>Adult Operational Group – Chaired by Designated Nurse for Safeguarding, Local Commissioning Group (Interim basis)</b></p>	<p>The group was formerly established in February 2022 to identify key themes or practice challenges and develop appropriate actions to respond to them along with the sharing of good practice. Ensuring agencies are able to fully contribute and fulfil their operational safeguarding roles and responsibilities and ensuring there is a line of sight on the most vulnerable. Responsibility for issues relating to provider concerns and those settings who are in the Executive Strategy Process and monitor responsiveness to any identified issues and actions.</p>
<p><b>Children’s MASH Operational Group – Chaired by Head of Service, Darlington Borough Council</b></p>	<p>To share good practice, identify any multi-agency practice challenges that may relevant to the operational management and functioning of the children’s front door. Promote effective communication between all partner agencies who contribute to decision making at the earliest opportunity and ensure all agencies are able to fully contribute and fulfil their Operational safeguarding roles and responsibilities.</p>
<p><b>Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) – Chaired by Director of Public Health</b></p>	<p>Child Death Overview Panel arrangements are undertaken cross border with Durham Safeguarding Partnership. The Panel continues to review all deaths of children as required in Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (2018) with an aim to identify learning to prevent future deaths.</p> <p>The National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) gathers information on all children who die in England and shares the learning so that improvements can be made to save children’s lives in the future.</p>

**Partnership Governance Structure**



# 5. Partnership Activities and Interventions

The Covid-19 Pandemic and the challenges it posed to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults were safeguarded was again a focus throughout the year and the Partnership has continued to monitor the impact on safeguarding arrangements through quarterly performance dashboards which continued to highlight the changing landscape.

Patterns of concern were very localised and fell significantly during the initial weeks of lockdown. Safeguarding issues within the community continued to unfold as lockdown measures were eased, resulting in significant peaks which appears to be a regional and national trend. Partner agencies adapted to the rapidly changing landscape, identifying alternative ways of safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk, and responding to the emerging risks and demands. Partners were assured there were no real exceptions or problems being highlighted and the key message throughout has been that safeguarding duties continued to apply and agencies continued to work together effectively to prevent and reduce the risk of harm.

It is recognised there is still work to do in developing the performance framework and quality assurance processes to help understand those continuing or emerging trends and to provide Statutory Partners with an overview of the whole safeguarding system. The development of the performance scorecards and data will be a key priority for both the Operational and Quality Assurance and Performance Management Groups over the next reporting period.

## Safeguarding Adults

Whilst there was a slight reduction in the total number of safeguarding adult concerns on the previous year, the partnership saw a rise in the complexity of safeguarding concerns. The most likely causes of abuse remained consistent with neglect and acts of omission, physical abuse, emotional and psychological being the main categories.

Both local and national data indicate cases of self-neglect have increased, Darlington saw a 25% increase in reported concerns for self neglect on the previous 12 month period, it was noted that those already vulnerable to self-neglect were likely to be at more acute risk with less professional contact from services as they were less likely to seek help and support. Whilst the reported concerns suggest there is an increased awareness of self-neglect it is not clear whether practitioners recognise when concerns meet the criteria for safeguarding intervention. It was highlighted there was a gap in provision of guidance to support practitioners who support adults who have care and support needs and are at risk of harm as a result of self-neglect and as a result developed new practice guidance and a self neglect briefing. This was reinforced as there were two learning request referrals into the Learning and Development group where self-neglect was a feature.

The location of abuse for adults changed markedly since the start of the Pandemic, with fewer enquires in care/nursing homes (most likely because of lack of access by family members and professionals) and increases in the community, including individual's own homes.

In relation to prevention, home care workers continue to be the highest to have caused harm and this continues to be monitored. There were three care settings in Executive Strategy Process, two care homes and a private hospital, the process is applied to address concerns and issues relating to unusual, organised or large scale abuse or neglect and holds providers to account. A significant Provider Forum has multi-agency oversight on the Care Home Sector and those settings in Executive Strategy Process and continues to monitor those settings as well as escalating emerging concerns/themes.

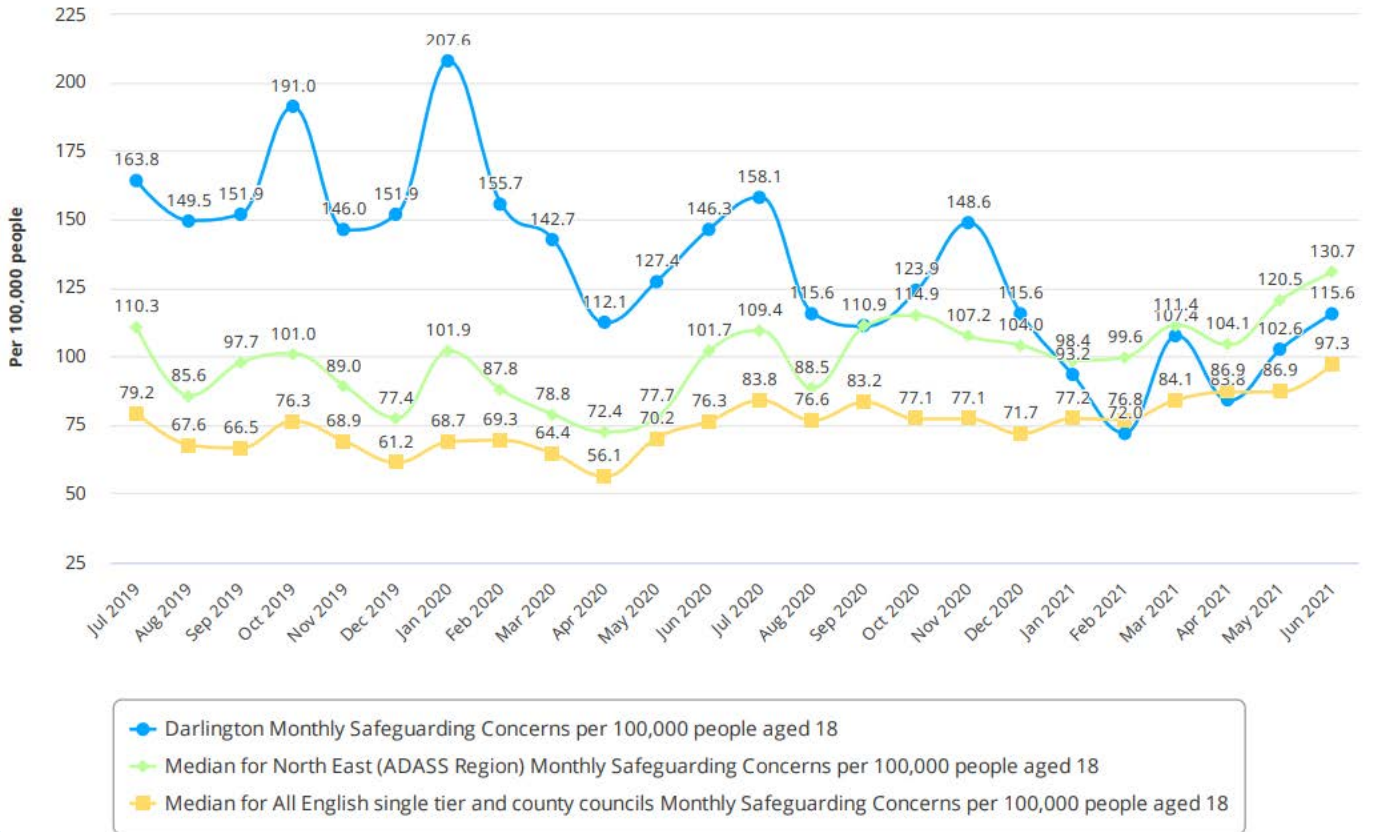


## Covid-19 Adult Safeguarding Insight Project

Darlington continued to provide data to support the COVID-19 Safeguarding Insight project which was developed to create a national picture regarding safeguarding adult activity during the Pandemic. The project required the collection of monthly data on safeguarding activity alongside a series of questions to elicit further insight and intelligence on local trends and changes. The data was analysed looking at the differences between activity from March 2019 up to June 2021 to provide a picture of how safeguarding adults activity was affected over this period.

Patterns of concern were very localised and fell significantly during the initial weeks of lockdown. There were significant peaks when lockdown was eased which appears to be a regional and national trend and demand fluctuated throughout this period. The trends and changes are demonstrated in the graph below:

**Monthly Safeguarding Concerns per 100,000 people, aged 18+**



## Safeguarding Children

In relation to children, the local authority saw a 27% increase in contacts in this year compared to the previous period, partly linked to the Pandemic but also was to be expected due to the implementation of the new children's front door process which encourages practitioners to telephone the Children's Initial Advice Team.

There continued to be a reduction in referrals with a 447.4 rate per 10,000 population, although this is an increase on the previous year, it is still below statistical neighbour and regional and national rates and again expected due to the new front door processes. The weekly review meetings continue to provide a high level of management oversight and challenge to decision making at the front door. Key themes are brought to the Children's MASH operational Group who have taken a number of areas forward as focused sessions which are outlined at the bottom of page 12.

Children missing from home and contextual safeguarding/harm away from home became a key area of focus throughout the year. There have been more children missing from home who are not known to services than before the Pandemic and unclear whether this is a result of the Pandemic. The total number of missing episodes in 2021/22 was 582 involving 174 children. This is an increase when comparing with previous years, both in regarding to the number of children and episodes. The increase has been a result of a small number of children in care and out of area children, placed in Darlington with regular missing episodes during this year, work continues to help them understand the balance between independence with acceptable curfew times and ensuring they are safe. Contextual Safeguarding/Harm away from home has become an area of focus throughout the year and will continue into the next reporting period.

## Significant injuries audit (children aged 3 and under)

As a result of Darlington Children's Services seeing an increase (also being seen nationally) in the number of very young children who needed to be safeguarded as a result of either themselves or a sibling they resided with, having a significant non-accidental injury or injuries. It was agreed an audit should be undertaken to determine if there are any particular patterns, themes or learning areas to be taken forward.

8 children were the focus of the audit, 5 of the 8 children in this cohort suffered a non-accidental injury or injuries directly with the remaining 3 children being siblings.

Findings were there was no particular pattern or theme identified, agencies had worked well together and all agencies were assured that had been no missed opportunities and all children had been safeguarded in a timely fashion. A small number of single and multi-agency actions were identified as a result of the findings.

## Children's MASH multi-agency focussed sessions/audit activity

The Children's MASH Operational Group focussed on a number of key themes being seen through the children's front door tackling a number of key issues including parental mental health impact on children and young people, domestic abuse and harmful sexual behaviour. Multi-agency focussed sessions/audits were held to help understand if there were any key learning points to take forward. Key findings highlighted a number of missed opportunities relating to information sharing; step up and down to social care processes and use of language; consider those wider agencies who may be providing support and include in multi-agency meetings. Development of new multi-agency Harmful Sexual Behaviour Practice Guidance and protocol to provide professionals with the information necessary to approach and respond to this area of safeguarding confidently.





# 6. Snapshot of effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Darlington

## Child Safeguarding

The multi-agency Child Protection Procedures and guidance provide a framework for all organisations to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Darlington.

A summary of how agencies worked together along with safeguarding concerns and the outcomes achieved is provided below;

## Early Help – Building Stronger Families

Darlington Borough Council rebranded the Early Help Service to Building Stronger Families (BSF) during this period to offer coordinated help for children and families with a range of needs through an early help assessment or targeted programs. During 2021-22 there were 839 Early Help Assessments (EHA) started, which is an increase on the 623 completed in 2020/21. The percentage of EHAs completed by external agencies has seen a decline from 20.4% to 19.2% which is below the 30% target, the majority being undertaken by Education.

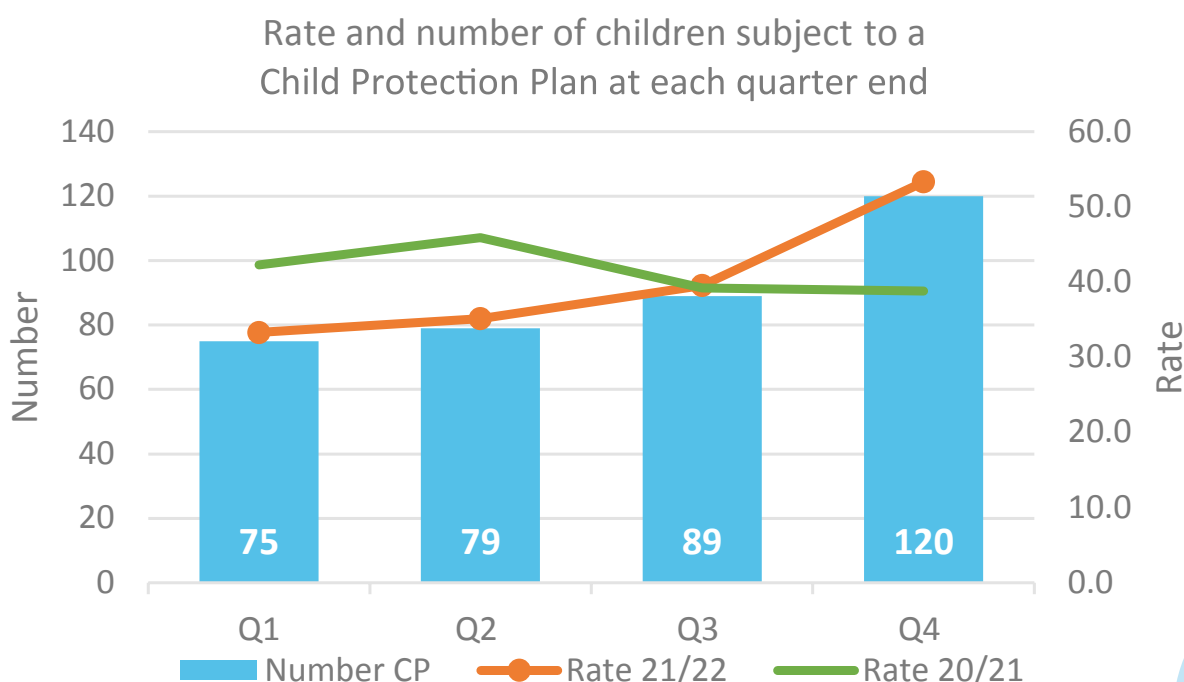
## Children in Need (CiN)

**March 2021** 328 children identified as CiN

**March 2022** 326 children identified as CiN

## Child Protection Plans (CPP)

At the end of March 2022, 120 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan in Darlington (a rate of 53.3 per 10,000). This is an increase of 38% compared with March 2021. Whilst Darlington's rate per 10,000 population has increased, this is still lower than: regional average (67.2); statistical neighbour (55.8) and the national average (42.8) benchmarks. This is potentially a knock-on effect from the increase in referrals, it is steady but managed.



Risk Factors associated with Child Protection were due to:			
Neglect	Emotional Abuse	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse
50%	24%	17%	9%

## Edge of Care Model

The Edge of Care Model supports young people to remain with their family as well as a reunification programme for children in care who have the potential, with multi-agency support, to be returned to the care of their family.

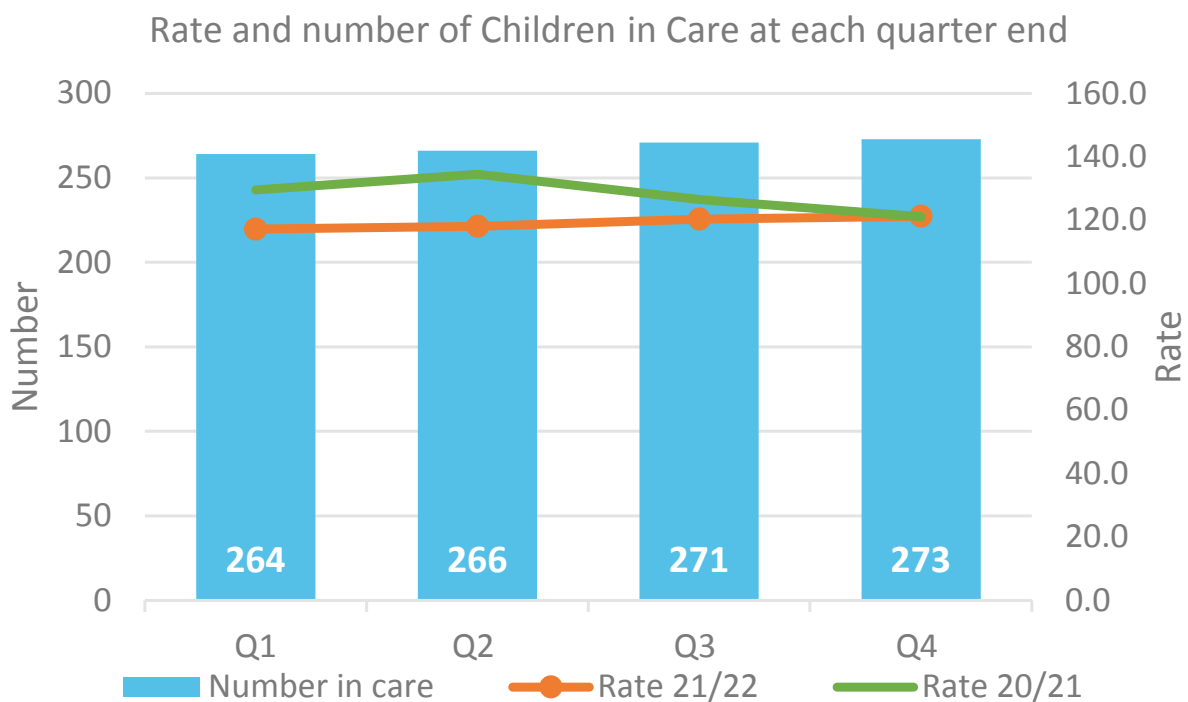
## Keeping Families Together

At the end of March 2022, there were 8 families open to the Keeping Families Together (KFT) team involving 16 individual children. This is a reduction compared to the 11 families with 20 children open to KFT at the end of March 2021, although when looking at the number of episodes started in the year this has increased from 44 families (75 children) in 2020/21 to 52 families (97 children) in 2021/22.

57 families with 102 children were closed to the Keeping Families Together team (KFT) in 2021/22, equating to 2,535 days of support. Of these, 70.2% (40 / 57) of the families had completed all their identified work with the team, 12 families (21.1%) withdrew their consent, 3 family closed due to coming into care (5.3%) and 2 families (3.5%) closed due to other personal reasons.

## Children Looked After

Children looked after and care leavers are recognised nationally as one of the most vulnerable groups. The number of Looked After Children (LAC) by the local authority at the end of March 2022 was 273 (121.1 per 10,000), 3 of these were unaccompanied asylum seekers. The rate per 10,000 population is similar to that of previous year and is higher than our statistical neighbours (105.4), regional (108.0) and national average (67.0).



These placements were made up of:							
In house Fostering	Connected Carers	Private Fostering	Residential Care	Placed for adoption	Independent Living	Placed with parent	Other
62	44	84	27	12	7	36	1

## Care Leavers

The Local Authority has a 'Staying Put' policy and there are currently 11 young people accommodated under this arrangement.

98% care leavers in Darlington were in suitable accommodation by the end of 2021-22 and the percentage of care leavers (aged 19-21) who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) was 20%, which is below the target of 30%, these were either due to disability or illness, pregnancy or parenting or other circumstances.

## Young People Engagement and Justice Service (formerly Youth Offending Service) (YPEJS)

The number of young people identified as First Time Entrants (FTE) being referred to the YPEJS continues to be low. FTE's showing 19 young people (14 Males and 5 Females) at March 2022, which is just slightly higher than the same period last year which was 17.

The YPEJS had 39 young people (28 Males and 11 Females) referred to the service for diversionary disposals: Pre-Caution Disposals (37) and Restorative Disposals (2). There has been a 97% success rate in terms of young people not reoffending, 1 young person received a Youth Caution for Criminal Damage offences.

## Transition to Adulthood

When a young person reaches the age of 18 they are legally an adult under SEND and Leaving Care statutory guidance, however children's services continue to retain responsibility to ensure the right package of care is provided through transition. There is a difference between the thresholds for support and models of care between adults and children's services and therefore a child and young person who has qualified for care and support under the SEND agenda for Children's legislation will be reassessed as to their eligibility to receive and support from Adult Social Care.

## Education attendance

Following the pandemic, it was business as usual across all education sectors and schools were able to request legal intervention around poor school attendance however, the release of the DfE's white paper means schools should only be considering legal intervention as a last resort with families being offered support where possible to address poor school attendance. Spring data indicated there was a 7.2% overall absence across all education settings, compared with 7.3% nationally.

There is a lot of work ongoing and advice being offered to schools to ensure that they offer support in a relational way for those young people who are suffering with anxiety, have been a victim of bullying, have special educational needs or have other complicating factors which affect their attendance.



## Elective Home Education (EHE)

There are effective measures in place for the monitoring children who are Elective Home Education in Darlington with a EHE procedure and process in place, in line with DfE guidance. There is a full time EHE Advisor who is responsible for maintaining the EHE database, supporting parents and ensuring evidence of suitable education is being provided. All cases are RAG rated against the statutory guidance

The number of children EHE remains fluid. The EHE advisor works closely with schools when children don't return to school at the start of the new academic term and meets with parents who are considering EHE to ensure that parents fully understand the guidance and expectations before making decision to EHE their child.

Home visits continue to take place and since the beginning of April 2021 (up to end of March 2022) 156 unannounced visits were conducted. Those children who are identified as not receiving appropriate education receive a visit every 3 months to ensure appropriate education is in place. Darlington Borough Council implements the school attendance order process when there is no suitable education in place or evidence provided.

As at 31 March 2022 there were 194 children registered on the EHE database, of these 194, 88 were from GRT community, Darlington has a higher than average GRT population, the EHE advisor works closely with the GRT Education Service.

There continues to be a focus on the safety and wellbeing of children who are EHE and partners continue to receive assurance reports throughout the year which provided assurance of the measures in place.

## Children Missing from Home, Care and Education

The total number of children who went missing from home or care during 2021-22 was 246 with 90.7% of these children being offered a return home interview (RHI), 51.2% of children engaged in their RHI. Of these young people who went missing Children in Care (CiC) continue to dominate the number of missing episodes, 21.9% were CiC. Return Home interviews suggests children were not returning home at the time they should have due to pressures and strain of the lockdown and feeling isolated with added pressure in family home.

The total number of children missing from education (CME) for 2021/22 were 71 and all children referred had been traced.

## Exploitation of children and young people

Multi-agency work around child exploitation continues to be coordinated through the Strategic Child Exploitation Group (CEG). The partnership continues to obtain an understanding of the risks posed to young people as they grow and become influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside the family home such as school/college, their community, peer groups or online.

A multi-agency Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker (CEVT) was launched in November 2019 and continues to be used across Darlington and County Durham to identify those children at risk of exploitation. Children are scored based on the level of risk and continues to be monitored by the CEG. The average score was 72.9%, with a range of 44 to 109, across Durham and Darlington. Of those children on the tracker in May 2022, (numbers are fluid), 21 children were a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation and 4 Child Criminal Exploitation.



## Adult Safeguarding

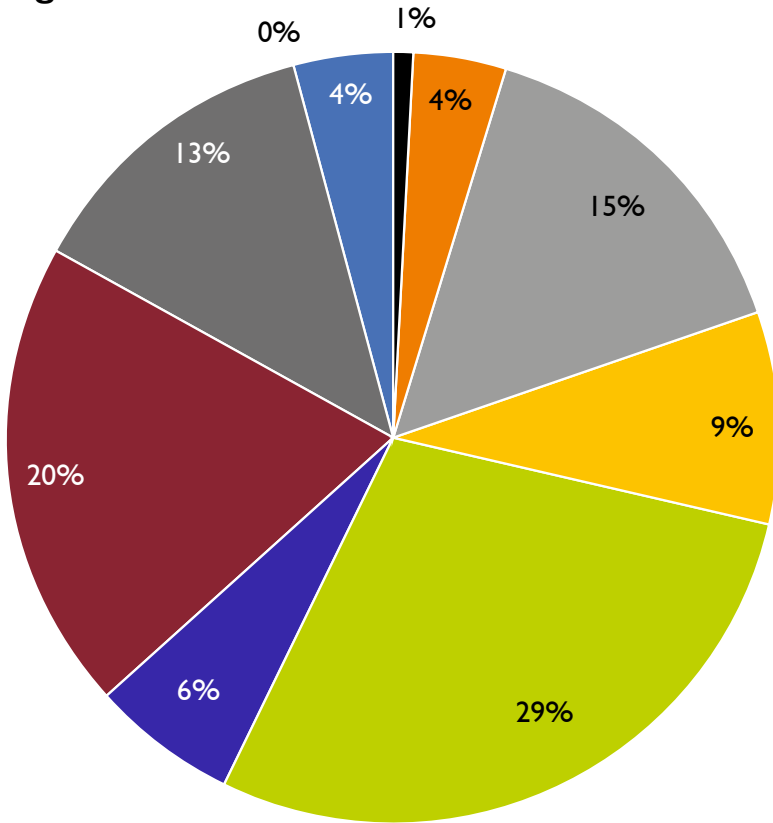
The multi-agency safeguarding adult procedures and guidance provide a framework for all organisations to work together and with the person at risk, to support them to be safe from abuse, neglect or self-neglect and this is underpinned by six Care Act Principles.

A summary of safeguarding concerns and the outcomes achieved is provided below:

The number of reported concerns for abuse and neglect received by the Adult Contact Team in 2021/22 was 888 with 40% progressing to S42 safeguarding enquiry. Safeguarding enquiries can take different forms and of the concluded S42 enquiries, in 95% of cases the outcome was that the risk was either reduced or removed, it is recognised that sometimes people may choose to live with risk and remain with strategies in place, and so it is necessary to look at individual cases to understand why a risk may remain.

The most common category of abuse in Darlington continues to be Neglect and Acts of Omission which represented 27.5%, followed by Physical Abuse (22%).

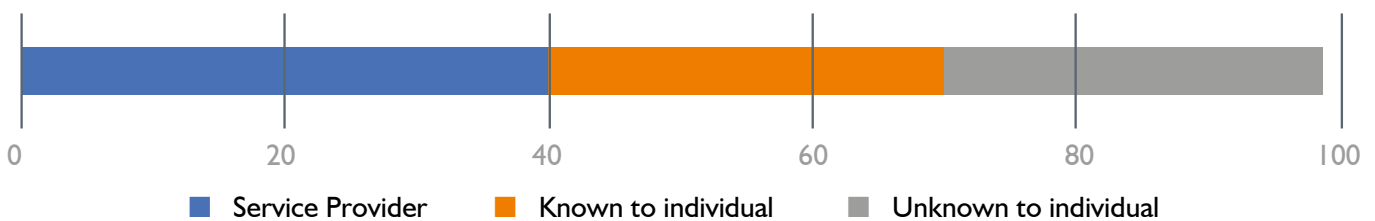
**Categories of abuse:**



Discriminatory	1%
Domestic Abuse	4%
Emotional Psychological	15%
Financial & Material	9%
Modern Slavery	0%
Neglect & Acts of Omission	29%
Organisational	6%
Physical	20%
Self Neglect	13%
Sexual Exploitation	0%
Sexual	4%

Location of abuse:								
Own home	In the Community	Supported accommodation	Care Home Nursing	Care Home residential	Hospital Acute	Hospital Mental Health	Hospital Community	Public Place
32.4%	0.8%	2.5%	4.09%	32%	7%	11.1%	0.82%	1.6%

**Person or organisation alleged to have caused harm**



**Adults Voice**

In 86% of reported concerns the individual/family representative or advocate had been involved in discussions, with 56% being individuals providing their own view. Work is ongoing to capture in more detail views on their experiences and use to consider improvements.

**Executive Strategy Process**

Executive Strategy processes are held to address all concerns and issues relating to suspected organised or institutional abuse or neglect of adults. In 2021-22 period, there were three settings in the Executive Strategy Process, two of these settings were removed from executive strategy process during this period as assurance was provided that they had made improvements and had safe practices in place and all regulatory action had been completed. The other setting remains in Executive Strategy Process and continues to be monitored by the Significant Provider Forum.

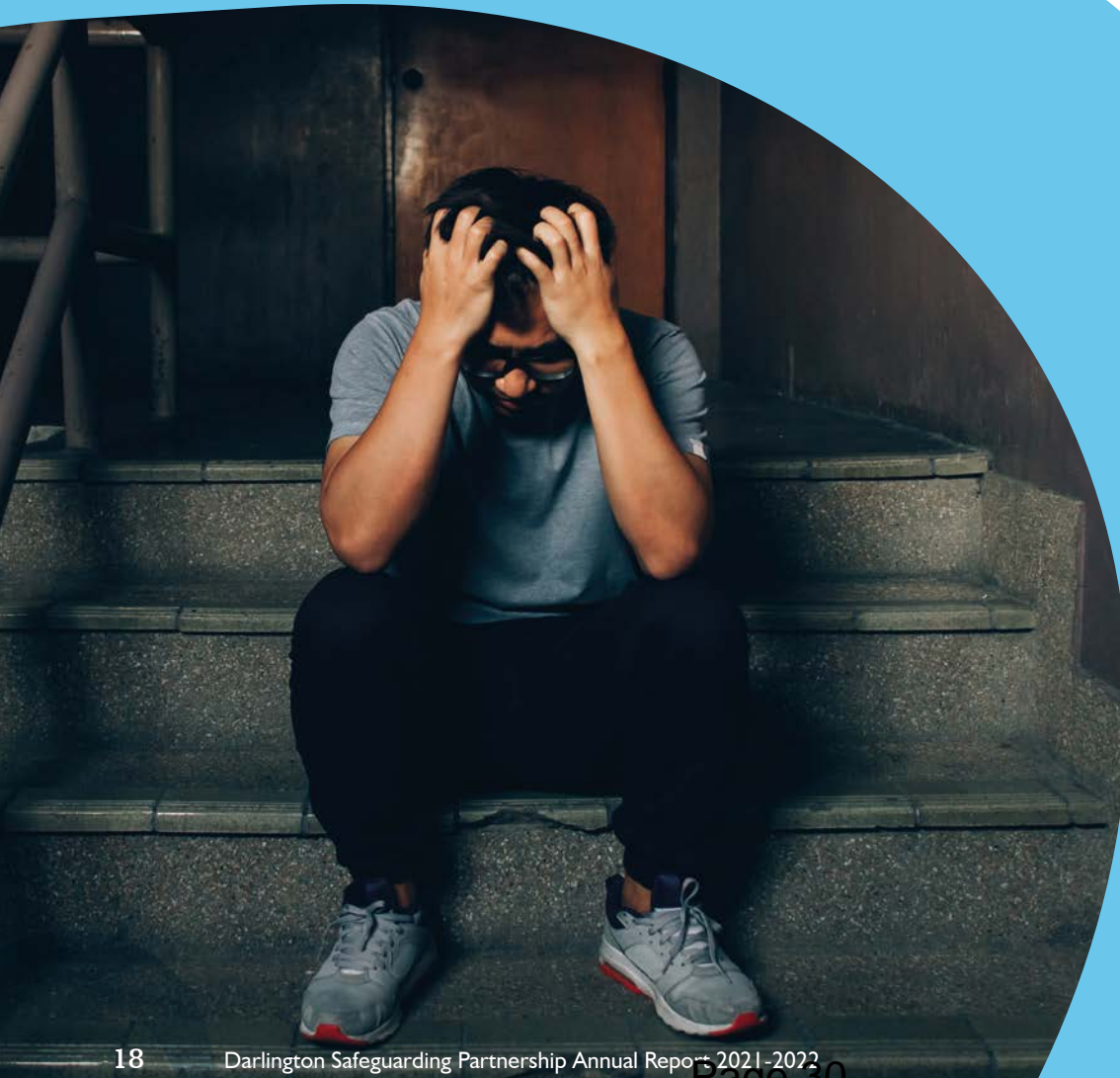
## Domestic Abuse

Whilst it is the vision of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for all agencies to work together to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, the safeguarding partnership is committed to supporting this. Domestic abuse remains a key training module to raise awareness and to ensure frontline practitioners are aware of the impact domestic abuse can have on victims, children and vulnerable adults. It also includes an emphasis on coercion and control. The Partnership developed a domestic abuse briefing and You Tube video aimed at frontline practitioners setting out the new protections under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The Partnership has oversight of Operation Encompass Protocol which addresses shortcomings in the early sharing of information with schools to enable them to provide proactive support to children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse within the family home. During the period April 2021 to March 2022 there were 436 incidents which involved 493 children, all notified to schools.

The partnership also has oversight of the 4Kids project, launched in response to a concerning rise in numbers of children becoming looked after and research into those cases indicating that the main causal factor was a background of parental domestic abuse. Since commencement in January 2021, there have been over 424 alerts through safeguarding reports, which have been reviewed by the 4KIDs and Front Door teams culminating in 357 reports being further investigated.

90 families have been worked with directly by the team, with 204 children involved, these families would not ordinarily be picked up as they fall outside the usual thresholds and criteria of statutory involvement and often have refused other voluntary offers of support.





## Violence Against Women and Girls

The Partnership is very aware of the measures in place to address violence against women and girls agenda. Darlington was successful in obtaining funding to support this agenda to make public spaces safer for all through projects to help women and girls feel safer on the streets in Darlington. Work continues to increase the safety of public spaces and projects in local communities and schools to help raise awareness. Partners were assured there is an impressive menu of investment and every risk faced by women and girls has been considered and Darlington should see a significant impact in months to come.

## Housing and Homelessness

2021/22 continued to be a challenging and busy year for Darlington Borough Council housing teams and partner agencies. The local authority now has a duty to house people and as a consequence there continues to be an increase in the numbers of people in emergency accommodation compared to pre Covid-19 levels. The council continued to carry out the monthly and annual rough sleeper counts with colleagues across the region to ascertain how many individuals were sleeping rough through the North East on a specific night. In 2021-22 there were 37 rough sleepers and there were 64 reported clients 'sofa surfing'.

In 2021/22 there were 1745 individuals who contacted Housing Options for advice regarding homelessness, a 23% increase from the previous year, which was as a result of services opening up after the lockdown.

There has been an increase in victims of domestic abuse and people with mental health needs requesting housing along with people who have multiple complex needs and dual diagnosis, but who are nevertheless deemed to have capacity and as a consequence two new practitioners have been appointed within the housing options team.



# Continuous improvement and raising awareness of safeguarding across all communities and partner organisations through:

## Communication and Engagement

The voice of children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and their families is at the heart of all partnership activity. The Partnership structure includes the provision for actively seeking the voice of children and adults ensuring their voices are threaded throughout the structure. This is a constant challenge and we recognise more can be achieved. Where possible the partnership will involve families in learning reviews and information from such engagement will be used to inform and develop practice.

The Communication and Engagement strategy sets out the different ways that the DSP will raise awareness and promote key messages about how to safeguard children and adults as well as how to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect and what to do if you suspect or know abuse or harm has occurred.

## Healthy Lifestyle Surveys

A healthy Lifestyle survey is conducted annually in participating schools. A summary of the results of the 2021-22 surveys from both [Primary](#) and [Secondary](#) outline children and young people reporting an understanding of what positive relationships and friendships should look like and the effects of negative behaviours on others such as bullying. The influence of social media is significant and children are largely reporting unrestricted and unsupervised access to the internet, social media and gaming platforms.

## Regional Adult Safeguarding Radio Campaign

The North East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services launched a safeguarding radio campaign for the region which went live at the end of March 2021, the purpose was to reinforce awareness of safeguarding issues amongst the general public and to empower them to feel confident in reporting a concern and to reassure vulnerable adults, their relatives and carers that social services continue to concentrate on reported concerns for abuse.



## Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is applicable to all agencies and aims to develop a person centred and outcomes focus to adult safeguarding. In Darlington MSP and the involvement of service users or their representative in safeguarding enquiries is measured from the outset and is evaluated as part of the safeguarding process. In 2021/2022, 86% of cases consistently involved the individual (or their representative or advocate) in the safeguarding enquiry. The partnership continues to seek assurances that the principles of MSP are embedded within partner agencies and continues to develop customer engagement processes to help inform the Partnerships work.



## Children's front door arrangements

Darlington Borough Council implemented its new strengthening families programme in March 2020. A critical part of the implementation was to encourage practitioners from all partner agencies to telephone the Children's Initial Advice Team and discuss their safeguarding concerns directly with a social worker. The Statutory Partners were provided an overview of the evaluation of the 52-week review by Professor Thorpe and colleagues from Lancaster University. Partners were assured to see practice is changing, data demonstrates agencies have taken the new processes on board which demonstrates there is a cultural shift in Darlington which can only improve outcomes for children and families.

## Independent Chair Engagement

During the year the Independent Chair held multi-agency meetings with relevant agencies of the Partnership and attended other forums such as primary and secondary education forums and child and adult scrutiny committees to talk about current issues, what is working well and what needs to change relating to current safeguarding arrangements. Feedback has been positive, Head Teachers specifically reporting good support and felt current safeguarding arrangements are working well.

### Are you concerned about a child?

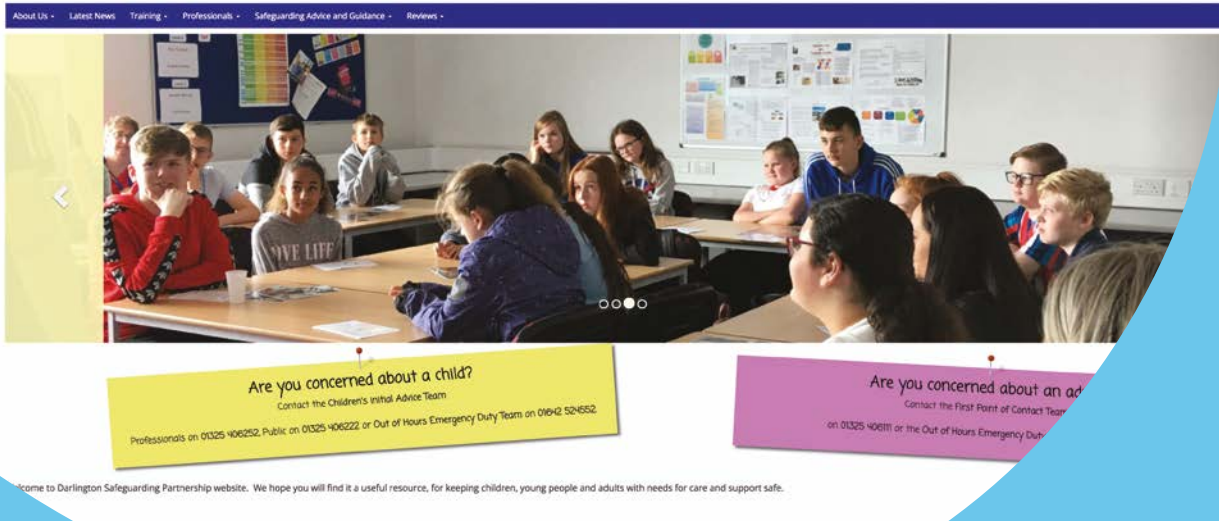
Contact the  
**Children's Initial Advice Team**

Professionals on  
**01325 406252**

Public on  
**01325 406222**

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team  
**01642 524552**





Information for partners  
 Safeguarding Training  
 Virtual Teams Training sessions are currently available for more information.  
 Safeguarding and K...  
 9-10 October



## DSP website, briefings and newsletters

The DSP continues to use a variety of communication methods to share information to a wide range of different audiences.

The Partnership website continues to be a key forum to provide key safeguarding messages to practitioners and to the wider public as well as useful information and resources to support those working with children and adults.

Link to Partnership website - [www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk](http://www.darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk)

The partnerships quarterly newsletter continues to communicate and raise awareness of safeguarding and to keep in touch with all our agencies to provide information, signposting and guidance to those working across child and adult services.

## Social Media

Whilst the Partnership does not have its own social media platforms it regularly requests partner agencies promote key safeguarding campaigns throughout the year on their own social media platforms.

## Awareness of key safeguarding campaigns

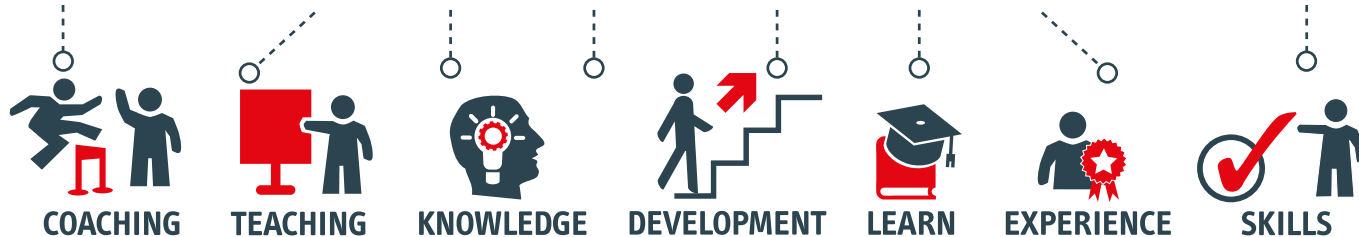
The partnership continues to raise awareness of safeguarding issues by sharing details of key national safeguarding campaigns including, Safeguarding Adult Week in November, Safer Internet Day in February and National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day in March and asking all organisation to raise awareness of the important issues.

# National Safeguarding Adults Week 2021

15 - 21 November 2021

#SafeguardingAdultsWeek

# TRAINING



## Learning and Development

Whilst the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to impact the ability to provide face to face training, the Partnership continues to provide multi-agency safeguarding training and has developed a variety of E-Learning and workbook options to compliment the virtual training offer. The sessions have been restricted to ensure group sizes remained small enough for questions and discussion to take place.

The Learning and development group continues to monitor and ensure there is quality and consistency of single and multi-agency training through initiatives such as training needs analysis (TNA), peer evaluation, quality assurance and the pre and post course evaluation process. The programme is updated to ensure the lessons from learning reviews are reflected as well as identifying the local needs of the multi-agency workforce.

### Examples of development during 2021-2022 include:

- The local authority is licensed to use the NSPCC Graded Care Profile support tool for child neglect. The multi-agency trainer delivers the training, and the course is now embedded into the multi-agency training programme. The training has been converted to a virtual course and continues to be delivered.
- Development and delivery to support the updates Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Development of a training module in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Podcasts developed to focus on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Professional Challenge, and information sharing.

### What did we achieve?

- Core courses for Safeguarding Adults and Children at Levels 1 (awareness) and 2 (Managing concerns) which are in line with the Care Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.
- Level 3 specialist courses to reflect national and local priorities
- 106 Virtual courses were delivered.
- 84% increase in attendance on previous year
- 2,054 attendances for training.
- 466 people completed E-Learning workbooks



## Evaluation and Assessment

It is recognised that assessment of learning is necessary to measure both the quality of training and to evidence the impact on practice and how the training is contributing to improving the knowledge and skills of the workforce. The trainer continues to request delegate feedback on the quality of training. Feedback has been positive although a few delegates have highlighted that virtual training is not as effective as face to face training.

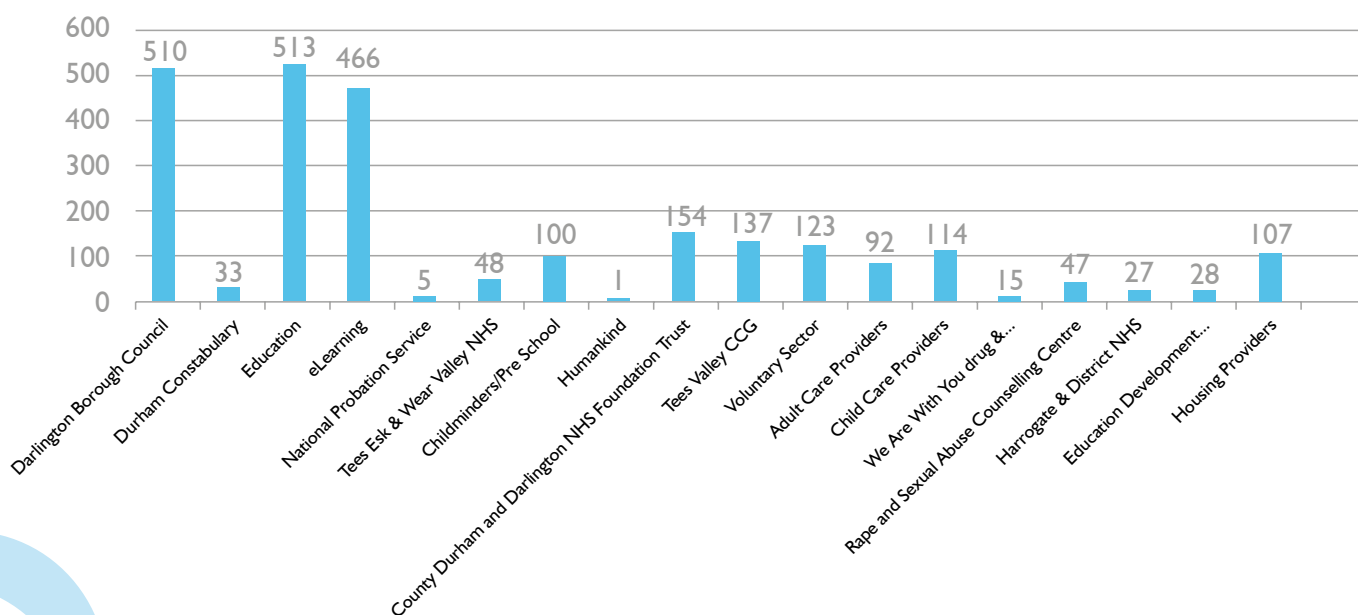
**I just wanted to thank you for your time for both training sessions for the team here at PHD. It was really useful and has highlighted a few things we need to consider. I can now put a process in place for the team to follow. (Primary Healthcare Darlington)**

**Thank you so much Joanna and Chris.....no matter how many times I do this stuff it NEVER gets old or boring and is always comprehensive!!! (Education)**

**I would just like to thank you again. One of the best training sessions I have attended in a long while. I thought discussion was good and I certainly took a load from it! (Children's Home)**

The chart below outlines the attendance by partner agencies during the period April 2021 – March 2022.

### Learners by agency



## Development of Policy and Procedure

Enabling continual improvement and learning for partners and practitioners is important to the Partnership. The ongoing review of policies, procedures and guidance documents is important to support front line practitioners with both prevention, early intervention and awareness raising. There is a clear timeline for the revision of policy and procedure which is monitored through a policy revision schedule.

The Learning and Development Group continues to provide a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to safeguarding practice through the development, review and updating of policies and procedures for use by professionals across the partnership. All revisions are undertaken in consultation with partner agencies and partner agencies are expected to disseminate and implement within their own agency. All documents are published on the DSP website.

During 2021/22 the following were developed, reviewed and revised by the Partnership:

- Revision to Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Serious Child Safeguarding Incident Procedures
- Revision to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Practice Guidance and Referral Pathways
- Safeguarding the Unborn – Procedure and Practice Guidance
- Self Neglect and Hoarding Practice Guidance
- Childhood Obesity Policy and Practice Guidance
- Domestic Abuse Briefing and video podcast
- Revision to Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Referral Form and Protocol



# 7. Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews

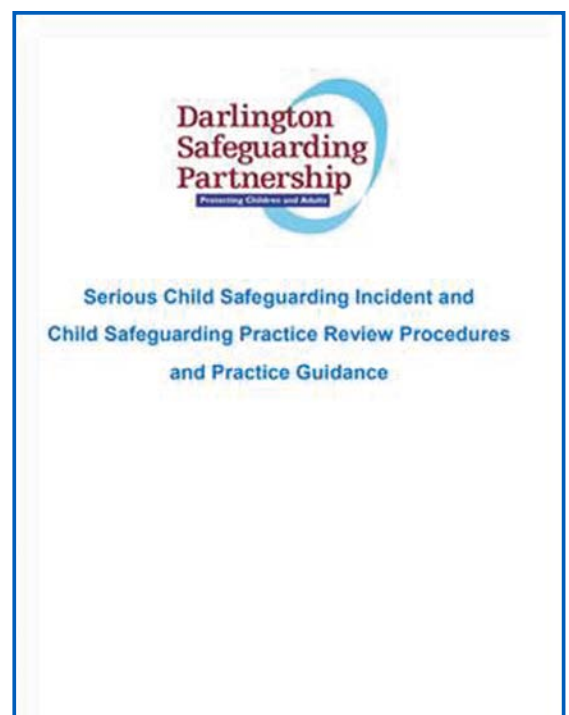
During 2021/22 period, the Partnership did not undertake any Formal Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) or Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs). Whilst it has been acknowledged the number of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews or Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) in Darlington remain low, it was recognised there was a need to improve processes and guidance to clearly set out organisational responsibilities for dealing and responding to serious incidents. As a consequence, both the CSPR and SAR Procedures were revised to enable agencies to not only submit a referral if the criteria for a CSPR or SAR were met but also to refer Learning Requests, when they felt there was specific learning to be explored in how agencies had worked together but did not meet the criteria for CSPR/SAR.

The Statutory Safeguarding Partners met with Mark Gurrey, Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel member in June as the Panel had established a number of variances in application of thresholds that trigger Serious Incident Notifications (SiN's) across the Country, Darlington being highlighted as an outlier with no CSPR's being submitted in recent years and wanted to explore reasons why. Partners assured the Panel that current processes and systems ensure SiNs are embedded within safeguarding policy and procedure and there are robust process in place to determine if criteria for notification is met. Partners also highlighted the additional academic oversight throughout the year with the work undertaken by Professor Thorpe and Lancaster University Colleagues on the children's front door safeguarding processes and weekly review processes which did not highlight any specific cases.

## Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Serious Child Safeguarding Incident Procedure and Safeguarding Adult Review Protocol

Whilst there were no specific CSPRs or SAR's undertaken in this reporting period, there were a number of cases (child and adult) which were referred into the Partnership, which were deemed did not meet the criteria for a CSPR or SAR, however the Learning and Development Group, agreed there was multi-agency learning to explore and were taken forward as multi-agency learning events. Themes include parental mental health impact on children, criminal exploitation and adult cases where self-neglect was a factor.

Key learning points were identified and a number of single and multi-agency actions and recommendations for learning were identified and will be addressed by the Learning and Development Group. Learning from good practice has also been embedded in the review process.



## What did we learn:

### Child exploitation/harm away from home

Continue to raise awareness to understand how young people get involved in exploitation

Look outside the traditional core group of partners to strengthen partnership working

Involve parents in discussions at earliest opportunity

Implement regular check in meetings to respond to current issues/concerns

Voice of child – acknowledge children may also be victims as well as alleged perpetrators and should be assessed to understand any impact on their safety and welfare

### Self Neglect

Professional curiosity – when consistent non engagement – obtain a better understanding of person's journey

Ensure multi-disciplinary meetings are held at earliest opportunity

Capacity – despite a number of assessments is person making a capacitated choice to live a particular way- should be further explored and challenged

Self neglect understanding – do agencies consider safeguarding concerns when evidence of self-neglect

### Parental Mental Health impact on children

Recognition of impact parental mental health has on child – encourage professional curiosity

Ensure whole family approach is applied

Information sharing and communication is key between child and adult services

Voice of the child – what is life like for this young person living with a parent with mental health

As a result of the learning the following guidance and tools were developed:

- Revision of Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Serious Incident Notification procedure to strengthen process and ensuring effective governance has taken place before submission
- Revision of the SAR referral form to support Statutory Safeguarding Partners and the Learning and Development Group to make informed decision on type of review to be taken forward
- Inclusion of the SAR escalation protocol within the SAR Protocol for issues which may require a national response
- Information sharing video podcast
- Child Criminal Exploitation/Contextual Safeguarding briefing
- Harm away from Home/contextualised safeguarding conference
- Self Neglect guidance and briefing

The Learning and Development and Quality Assurance group will continue to work closely to ensure effective learning and change is embedded into frontline practice.

# 8. Looking Ahead

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact and influence the services provided by partners agencies throughout the year and recovery continued to be a priority for all agencies, this will continue into the next reporting period.

Learning through the Pandemic has identified a number of key areas of focus which will be taken forward in 2022-23:

- Applying learning from local and national Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews to practice
- Strengthening quality assurance processes and develop performance frameworks
- Further develop scrutiny arrangements
- Focus on key priorities identified in this period - child exploitation/harm away from home and adult self-neglect
- Transitional safeguarding from childhood to adulthood
- Further explore how to obtain the lived experience of children and vulnerable adults





# Appendix 1

## Staffing and Budget

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership is supported by the following staff within the Business Unit:

- Business Manager
- Development Officer/Designated Officer
- Multi-Agency Trainer
- Business Support Officer
- Part-time Analyst (seconded from Durham Constabulary)
- Part-time Information Officer

Contributions from Partner Agencies for 2021-22 period	
Darlington Borough Council	£108,002
Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group	£41,310
Durham Constabulary	£34,404
Schools Forum	£10,000
Darlington College	£1,600
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust	£16,973
Queen Elizabeth 6th Form College	£1,515
Probation Service North East	£770
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust	£2,000
Training Income	£5,750
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>£222,324</b>

# Appendix 2

## Relevant agencies over and above Statutory Safeguarding Partner Organisations

- Darlington Local Authority - Housing, Public Health, Young Peoples' Engagement and Justice Service
- Health agencies – County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT), Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT), North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS)
- Children and Families Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (DDFRS)
- Early Years Settings
- Education (Primary, Secondary, Further Education, SEND)
- Support organisations for issues such as Substance Misuse / Domestic Abuse / Sexual Exploitation / Sexual Abuse (SARC)
- Family Justice Board (FJB)
- Probation Service North East
- Voluntary and third sector organisations (including Healthwatch)
- Darlington Primary Care General Practices
- Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS England (pharmacy, dentist and optometrists)
- Independent providers including private hospitals, children's homes, nursing and care homes, domiciliary providers
- Youth groups – e.g. sport, scouts, brownies
- Faith settings
- Minority Communities
- British Transport Police (BTP)
- Chairs of other key local boards
- Representatives of other National Partners
- Darlington Partnership – which includes business and community organisations
- Coroner

This list is not exhaustive



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council





## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY 19 DECEMBER 2022

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### OFSTED INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY SERVICES (ILACS)

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#### SUMMARY REPORT

##### Purpose of the Report

1. To update scrutiny committee on the Ofsted Inspection Of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in Darlington.

##### Background

2. Between 10 October and 21 October 2022, a full inspection of Children's Services in Darlington was completed by Ofsted. This full Inspection, known as an ILACS, leads to an overall judgement rating and is the first Inspection of this kind since 2018. At the conclusion of the last Inspection in 2018 services were found to Require Improvement overall, following the previous Inspection finding in 2015 that the Service was Inadequate.
3. The Inspection looked at all aspects of Children's Social Care Services, through a methodology of reviewing performance data, case management information, policies and procedures and through Inspectors interviewing and speaking to practitioners and service users directly.
4. The Inspection leads to an overall grading for the service, as well as specific gradings for Help and Protection, Services to Children in Care and Care Leavers and for Leadership and Management. Each grading is either Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate.
5. The ratings were as follows:
  - (a) The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families = **Good**
  - (b) The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection = **Good**
  - (c) The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers = **Outstanding**
  - (d) Overall effectiveness = **Good**
6. A highlight from the report includes that "workers are rightly proud of their work and the effective relationships with children and families they have harnessed. They genuinely want to make a difference for children. Workers in Darlington are extremely committed to the local authority and feel valued by senior leaders. Social workers we spoke to describe an environment where they feel confident and supported by their managers to make decisions. They feel cared about and supported by them."

7. It was also pleasing to read that “Care leavers told inspectors that ‘they feel that they belong to a family’. For some young people, their personal adviser is their first point of call for support.”
8. An area to improve was identified in relation to support for 16 and 17 year olds who present as homeless and these changes and improvements were made during the time of the Inspection. Further improvements can be made in terms of the process for assessments and section 47 Investigations, which were already recognised in the service Self-Assessment. This will be a key focus on the next stage of our journey as we strive for continual improvement and development.

### **Recommendations**

9. It is recommended that Scrutiny note the contents of the ILACS report and the observations of the OFSTED Inspectors.

**Chris Bell**

**Assistant Director, Childrens Services**

## Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Tony Murphy : Extension 5637

S17 Crime and Disorder	The service supports the Council's crime and disorder responsibilities, young people engaged in learning are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour
Health and Wellbeing	The service actively promotes health and wellbeing
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	The service promotes sustainability
Diversity	The service actively supports the diversity agenda
Wards Affected	All wards will be affected
Groups Affected	All families of learners with special education needs
Budget and Policy Framework	Services for SEND are supported through the Dedicated Schools Grant
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Council Plan	This work will support the aim to provide excellent services for children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) - implement a new SEND strategy, increase the number of SEND places in schools and work to raise SEND funding levels from central government
Efficiency	The work will support efficient use of resources to support SEND
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This work will have a positive impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Darlington Action Plan

10. The immediate action taken in response to the inspection outcome was that the SEND Assurance Executive and SEND Implementation Group coordinated a response by education, health and social care to the Ofsted/CQC inspection.
11. The WSoA has been created by the local area partnership and has involved a number of co-production approaches. We have surveyed across the partnership receiving 74 responses from Parent/Carers, Children and Young People, Health, Education and Social Care professionals. We also hosted a co-production event with good participation from Parent/Carers. Health, Education and Social Care professionals.
12. All actions have clear dates and a named lead in the WSoA to ensure that delivery can be clearly monitored through the described governance arrangements with monthly, quarterly and annual check points. The governance will monitor not only actions but the detailed outcome measurements so that as a local area we are clearly aware of the impact of the actions taken.
13. The SEND Assurance Executive will have strategic overview of the WSoA and the implementation of the agreed actions to improve the outcomes for children with SEND in Darlington. The overarching aim is to ensure a joint responsibility for addressing the significant weaknesses highlighted by Ofsted/CQC. The executive will also ensure there is pace to the implementation of improvements and sustainable impact for children and young people with SEND.

### Monitoring

14. The WSoA was approved as being fit for purpose by Ofsted on 9 September 2022. The delivery of the WSoA will be subject to quarterly monitoring by DfE/NHS England and a full re-inspection will be undertaken by Ofsted/CQC around 18 months after the WSoA has been approved.



# Inspection of Darlington local authority children's services

**Inspection dates:** 10 October to 21 October 2022

**Lead inspector:** Vicky Metheringham, His Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness	Good

Children in need of help and protection in Darlington Borough Council receive a good service. The quality of the support and care provided to children in care and care leavers is outstanding, and this is reflected in the extent to which they are cared about, feel listened to and are taken seriously and valued.

Children's experiences of social care have significantly improved since the last inspection, in 2018, where children's services were judged to require improvement. The group director of people and his leadership team have made steady and sustained progress to build a child-focused service which is providing effective help, protection and care to children and their families across all the levels of need, vulnerability and risk. Strong political support, challenge and accountability can be seen at every level, as well as how the local authority fulfils its functions as a corporate parent.

Senior leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of practice and of the needs of children through an enhanced quality assurance and performance system. They use this to inform service delivery and make continuous improvements. This progress and the development of creative relational approaches to practice are modelled to staff through each layer of management. This is cultivating a culture of learning and an environment where good social work is thriving. Professionally curious and caring social workers undertake detailed assessments of children's

needs. However, burdensome workflow systems do not support the completion of timely assessments for all children.

### **What needs to improve?**

- The timeliness of children and family assessments, to ensure that children receive the right intervention at the right time, needs to improve.
- The quality, recording and frequency of supervision provided for social workers needs to improve.
- Consistency of management oversight and decisions to be accurately recorded on children's records.

### **The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: good**

1. Children and their families benefit from a well-designed early help offer. There is a consistent understanding and application of thresholds, and a shared focus on the child's needs and experiences between early help and statutory services. This is ensuring that children get the right level of help, at the right time.
2. Children benefit from a wide range of interventions from the 'Building Stronger Families' early help service. Workers build effective relationships with children and families and have a wide range of experience and skills. Detailed early help assessments contain all relevant information to inform appropriate and tailored multi-agency interventions. When children's circumstances change, well-embedded and responsive arrangements for step up and step down to children's social care enable a seamless transition of service provision for families. This is ensuring that children's experiences are considered, and that they receive the right level of support.
3. When children are referred into the Children's Initial Advice Team, they receive a timely and effective response which is proportionate to their level of risk and need. Partner agencies make appropriate contacts and referrals which demonstrate a sound understanding of the threshold for access to children's social care. They are clear and detailed, containing the necessary information to inform decision-making. Parental consent is consistently sought when relevant. Social workers engage in conversations with parents at the earliest opportunity, and they work with them to understand their worries and concerns. They also hold robust discussions with partner agencies so that families are directed to the right service at the right time. Social workers consider the family history, together with the presenting concerns. Confident and knowledgeable managers understand risk and provide consistent clarity and direction for social workers to enable them to make the right decisions.
4. Emergency duty staff are appropriate in their response to children's and families' needs out of hours. Referrals are passed promptly to daytime services, who ensure that follow-up action is taken when necessary.

5. When children need protection, strategy meetings take place swiftly and these are well attended by partner agencies. Information-sharing is detailed, and decision-making is appropriate, although some strategy minutes are overly long, which makes it difficult for the reader to understand the pertinent issues of concern. Leaders are aware of this and are working with managers to better record discussions and the subsequent outcomes for children. Resultant child protection enquiries are thorough, with a clear assessment of risk, followed by appropriate actions to safeguard children.
6. When child protection concerns are less obvious, current workflows require social workers to undertake lengthy assessments of need before a strategy meeting is triggered. While inspectors did not identify any child who was unsafe, or not receiving a protective service, for some children this delays the wider multi-agency discussion and information-sharing. In some cases, a strategy meeting is held during the assessment, which then triggers a further assessment of need. This practice is building in unnecessary delay for some families in the completion of their assessment and is creating additional and repeated work for social workers.
7. A relationship-based model of assessment and care planning is being developed and is embedding in social work practice. A strong emphasis is placed on workers building trusting relationships with children, their families and support networks. This is evident in some very effective early help interventions, child in need and child protection services. Workers maximise the use of local strengths and resources, including parents, extended family, family friends and community networks. Relationship-building is at the core of the current service design and is developing in service delivery. For a small number of children, social work practice is too adult-focused, and it does not allow for a full consideration of the impact on children of their parents' behaviour. This results in a small number of children experiencing multiple referrals for the same issue.
8. Assessments provide evidence of how historical factors about children and their families are taken into account and how they are fully analysed to understand families' strengths and risks. Social workers seek to understand the context in which children are living, the strengths of the family and their protective factors, as well as the risks children might be facing. When appropriate, the voice of the child is clear, and it informs assessments. The early and appropriate identification of the needs of unborn babies has been enhanced by increased management oversight and through well-embedded tracking and monitoring mechanisms. While assessments are completed within the local authority required timescales, most children's assessments take up to the limit of the maximum time allowed, many of which should be completed earlier for the child. Managers do not currently set timescales for assessment completion according to the child's level of need.
9. Children benefit from well-reviewed multi-agency plans that are specific to their needs. Plans are overseen by confident and knowledgeable managers who understand the quality and impact of practice. Children's plans provide detailed and realistic actions for parents so that they understand what is required of them and the support they will receive. Children's plans do not always contain

contingencies, but because of the relational approach, social workers are well able to articulate alternative planning should risks escalate.

10. Children and families benefit from effective family network meetings, together with family group conferences. Committed edge of care and family support workers provide intensive support and interventions to families. There are a wide variety of support services to better help and protect children. These include input from domestic abuse services, parental mental health and substance and alcohol services. Group work and individual specialised interventions are also provided for children to support their needs.
11. Visits to children are undertaken regularly in accordance with their plan and flex appropriately when needs change. Persistent visiting to harder-to-reach families creates trusting relationships that better support children. Skilled workers complete creative, direct work with children and families to ensure that their views influence their plan.
12. Initial child protection conferences are timely and are well attended by partner agencies. Families are meaningfully engaged through the relational practice model, and their views inform the decision-making where appropriate. Independent advocacy services are not consistently offered to all children who are subject to child protection processes. Core group meetings are held at regular intervals during which child protection plans are reviewed and updated. When concerns are escalated, there is swift consideration of the Public Law Outline.
13. There is rigorous management oversight of pre-proceedings under the Public Law Outline through a range of senior management panels. This means that when risk to children escalates, children's plans do not drift. Letters to parents before proceedings are swiftly completed and set out in detail what is expected of them. However, letters use language that does not reflect the local authority's relational approach. Well-informed and timely viability assessments of family members are completed, which inform children's long-term living arrangements. This means that children benefit from living with their own family and with their siblings when this is in their best interests.
14. Social workers complete good-quality assessments with disabled children and their families. This informs appropriate service and support delivery, including good-quality short-break provision and access to direct payments. Children are visited frequently, and their wishes are heard, acted on and understood by social workers who have well-established relationships with them and their families.
15. When children are identified as requiring private fostering arrangements, assessments are completed. Children are visited to ensure that they are safeguarded. For a small number of children approaching 16, their assessments lack detail about their post-16 care arrangements, and there is a lack of consultation with parents about this. This means that not all children's long-term needs are considered well enough.
16. When allegations are made in respect of professionals and staff who work with children, the local authority designated officer responds swiftly and appropriately.

17. For a small number of children who present as homeless, they do not have their rights or housing options adequately explained to them. Responsive and non-defensive leaders took swift action during the inspection to provide an immediate and much-improved response.
18. Children at risk of exploitation are judiciously identified and well supported. They benefit from robust risk assessments, which are reviewed through multi-agency meetings. These are enhanced by 'place' assessments, which are completed with children and use community intelligence in order to identify and respond to risk effectively. Children who go missing from home or care are provided with individualised tailored support through direct work by the dedicated missing coordinator. The coordinator immediately engages children to offer a return home interview. These are prompt and thorough and are completed with children to inform safety planning. They build effective relationships with children and use a range of approaches to engage children, which reduces their risk.
19. Leaders have developed robust arrangements for children who are missing education. Workers closely track children who are missing education, and they use resources effectively to identify where these children are, and then quickly gain a school place for them. Workers engage effectively with members of the community, such as with the travelling community, to support the readmission of children. As a result, numbers of children missing education are very low.
20. School leaders and local authority staff work jointly to inform parents of what is involved in electing to educate their child at home. Workers take swift action where there is not a suitable education for the child. They closely monitor children who are electively home educated and support them to access education in schools or colleges to help meet their aspirations.

## **The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers: outstanding**

21. Senior leaders, managers and staff place children at the centre of their thinking. Children in care and care leavers are well supported and encouraged by staff to bring their experience to influence service development and practice improvement. Services are structured in a variety of ways to identify and work effectively with children and their families by using a relational approach before they enter care. These services also support very successful reunifications after a child experiences a period in care, where it is safe to do so. Social workers remain involved until their intervention is no longer required.
22. Effective edge of care assessments identify that each child has their own specific set of needs. Child-focused support for families and timely decision-making are responsive to emerging risk and long-term need. An organisational culture of family involvement and participation is strongly promoted in order to support children and families and prevent harm prior to issuing care proceedings. Social workers give robust consideration to whether children can live within their extended families, and, as a result, children are being supported to live within their wider family network when it is deemed safe and appropriate.

23. Placement planning is well considered by social workers and managers. All available options have been considered within the plans and they are responsive to children's needs and wishes where appropriate. Social workers strive to build meaningful relationships with children and involve children wherever possible in their plans. Social workers and managers make very well considered permanence decisions for children, considering how children's relationships, identity and sense of belonging will be secured. Children's need for contact with significant family members is safely assessed and well planned. Children are supported to maintain contact and they understand the reasons for their separation from their birth family.
24. Child-focused care plans are reviewed by a consistent independent reviewing officer (IRO). When required, IROs challenge professionals effectively on behalf of children to ensure that they receive the right support. Children are actively encouraged to access advocacy services. Time and care are taken to support children to attend their review meetings. This ensures that they have some say in their care and support, wherever possible.
25. Early permanence planning is well considered by social workers, and management oversight of permanence decisions is robust. Timely and good-quality viability assessments of connected carers ensure that arrangements for children are safe and appropriate. However, the timing of the decision to ratify connected carers' initial fostering approval is not always clear on children's case records.
26. When care proceedings are initiated, a range of panels provide effective senior management oversight of social work practice so that children's plans progress at pace, and within their timescales. These arrangements provide robust scrutiny and ensure a strong focus to support effective and timely permanence planning. Knowledgeable social workers complete detailed assessments and good-quality court reports. This assists the court in making well-informed permanence decisions for children. Care proceedings progress in a timely way. The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) and the judiciary support these findings.
27. Most children live in stable placements with foster carers in the local area. Placements meet their needs well and children are making very good progress. When carers require additional support, the fostering service is highly responsive, and this is leading to increased stability and a reduction in placement disruption. Foster carers feel well supported by social workers. They access high-quality support and training, which equips them well to meet the needs of individual children in their care. For some children, not all permanent matching decisions are formally ratified when children are in long-term and stable placements which have later become their permanent home.
28. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are very well supported and cared for. Social workers and foster carers go to great lengths to meet their unique needs and individual interests.
29. A strong emphasis is placed on securing legal permanence for children through the making of special guardianship orders. Special guardianship is seen as an

immensely important permanence option for children. The preparation, advice and support which are provided for special guardians is matched to the preparation, advice and support which are available to foster carers and adopters.

30. Adoption is considered for those children unable to live with their birth parents. Timely decisions are informed by comprehensive social work assessments to match adopters to children effectively. Detailed child permanence reports provide information to support children in understanding the reason for their plan. Adopters report that they receive effective training and support to prepare them to adopt their child. Life-story work, including later life letters for children, are sensitively completed to a very high standard by social workers who use creative tools with children to inform their life-story work. This assists children in understanding why decisions have been reached, and what the plans are for their permanent care.
31. There is a wide range of opportunities and recreational activities for children to enjoy. Social workers actively engage children in care and care leavers in clubs and participate in many activities with them. Children in care and care leavers feel valued and listened to. There is an enthusiastic looked after children and care leavers' forum who call themselves the 'Darlo Crew'. They regularly participate in corporate parenting panel meetings and value being involved in activities which inform service development and improvement.
32. When children in care and care leavers are at risk of exploitation or go missing from care, effective plans are swiftly put into place. Risk assessments are rigorously reviewed and updated, and children are supported by highly effective multi-agency interventions to reduce risk.
33. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting children's health and well-being. Their physical, emotional and mental health needs are well addressed. Children experience timely health assessments. The timeliness of dental checks for children is improving because of creative approaches explored by senior leaders to secure a dedicated local dentist. Therapeutic practitioners provide agile support to children and social workers in order to support children's emotional well-being and placement stability.
34. Children in care make effective progress in their education. Workers in the virtual school check that pupils are on track to achieve their ambitious outcomes. They actively monitor children's targets through effective review of their personal education plans. Virtual school staff challenge designated teachers in school about instances where these personal education plans are not precise enough. This is helping the quality of support for these children to further improve and is aided by regular involvement from virtual school staff. Children in care are supported to plan for future education, employment or training. When children leave care, many of them are then successful in finding education or employment that is aligned with their wishes.
35. Young people in care are introduced to their personal adviser at the age of 16. This gives young people time to build meaningful relationships with their worker and enables a successful transition into the aftercare service. Support continues

for young people over the age of 21 and beyond and includes those who may be more reluctant to seek help but clearly benefit from ongoing support. This includes more vulnerable young people, those in custody, with additional needs and those who are parents or expecting children.

36. Care leavers told inspectors that 'they feel that they belong to a family'. For some young people, their personal adviser is their first point of call for support. Many care leavers met with inspectors during the inspection. They are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive and the benefits to them of their involvement in the wide range of available and frequent opportunities and activities. They feel valued, cared for, and extremely well supported.
37. Ambitious pathway plans are well-crafted and timely documents, drafted in consultation with care leavers. These help care leavers to plan for their future and identify their support needs. Care leavers are actively supported to access the important documents they will need in later life. They benefit from having their own dedicated building in the centre of the town, where they can access practical support, and staff ensure that they are not left without food or suitable clothing. This arrangement greatly enhances the support provided for care leavers, as they are provided with consistent emotional support from their trusted workers.
38. Care leavers' physical and emotional health needs are addressed very effectively. Personal advisers support them to attend their health appointments. Care leavers receive a personal health passport when they are 18, which supports them to understand their health histories. The emotional needs of care leavers are well supported by therapeutic practitioners and receive support from other services in Darlington.
39. Care leavers actively engage with the dynamic portfolio member and have secured a strong and established relationship with them. The portfolio member is described by staff as 'working miracles' in their support for them and for young people. Care leavers benefit from developing partnerships with statutory partners and the wider community sectors through access to a range of recreational and enjoyable activities. This has culminated in the Darlington-owned care leavers' covenant, which provides very generous opportunities to promote care leavers to succeed. This ensures that local businesses, the wider council and other private companies in the local area have a shared commitment to supporting Darlington care leavers to access excellent opportunities in their local town.
40. Care leavers have access to a wide range of options to move into education, employment or training and a number are attending university. The members of the leaving care team facilitate a weekly job club in order to support and prepare care leavers in filling in application forms and learning interview techniques. They are given guaranteed interviews for council jobs if they meet the essential criteria. This is contributing to the very successful outcome for care leavers in Darlington, with four in five of them in education, employment or training.
41. Care leavers have access to a plethora of suitable accommodation arrangements. Young people are supported to develop their independence skills. Personal advisers facilitate a weekly, very well attended gardening club, job club and



cookery course. Successful independent living is supported through taster flats and supported accommodation prior to care leavers living in their own independent accommodation. They are provided with high levels of floating support, and when difficulties emerge, the level is enhanced, which is helping to prevent tenancy breakdowns. 'Staying put' is actively promoted and care leavers often remain in touch with their previous foster carers, benefiting from their ongoing support into adulthood.

42. The members of the active and determined children in care and care leavers forum are extremely influential in Darlington, and their commitment is greatly appreciated by senior leaders. Those involved feel that their views and ideas are listened to and valued. Care leavers told inspectors of their personal benefits, such as the development of new skills in areas such as interviewing techniques and in communication skills, and being more able to socialise. As a result of being in care, care leavers told inspectors that they have been provided with so many more opportunities and that they will 'carry the skills they have learned, through their entire life'.

### **The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: good**

43. Children's social care is led by a director of people who is determined to create a relational approach to children's social care services and to improve children's outcomes. The director is surrounded by a strong team of visible senior leaders who have a solid understanding of the vision of the local authority, the quality of practice and children's experiences. They appropriately identify areas for improvement, which are mostly reflected in their self-evaluation. The inspection identified some practice areas which are better than described. However, some strategic plans need updating, and there are some practice areas which need a stronger improvement focus.
44. The significant challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have not deterred leaders' commitment and ambition to improve services. Senior leaders have developed and are beginning to embed the local authority's chosen practice model, and to role model the relational approach to staff. This has created an environment where good social work is thriving and is helping to achieve sustained change for many families, where most children receive good-quality support.
45. A well-coordinated approach to data collection and analysis ensures that senior leaders recognise and prioritise the needs of children, and are well informed about the quality of practice. Senior leaders are in touch with the frontline and know their staff by name, and the details of the complex families they are working with. Quality assurance and performance management information has greatly improved since the last inspection. Routine performance clinics have developed a shared understanding of performance and identify areas for improvement. Practice review meetings provide a detailed insight into the quality of social work practice and have informed senior leaders' understanding about the quality of service and they help in identifying the challenges to the service.

Leaders undertake regular case file audits to ensure that they are focused on the quality of social work practice. However, the audit tool is not used consistently to best effect and leaders know there is still more to do in this area.

46. Well-developed senior manager-led panel arrangements are providing effective oversight of children's plans. This provides direction and guidance to managers and social workers in their work with children and families and is helping to reduce drift and delay. While most social workers report that they find supervision helpful and an opportunity for reflection and task-setting, written supervision records do not always reflect the richness of discussions and often contain actions that are process-driven. For some workers, supervision does not take place as frequently as it should. This makes it difficult to ensure that social workers are working through plans, and that all key decisions for children are clearly recorded. Supervision of personal advisers in the leaving care team is of an exceptional standard.
47. Strategic partnerships are highly effective. Strong collaborative relationships within the council departments share a commitment to improving the lives and experiences of children in Darlington. Partnerships with schools are well embedded in the early help offer to children and families, where school staff embrace their role as lead professional. Strong multi-agency responses are being delivered to children through well-established and effective relationships with key partners in the police, health, Cafcass and the judiciary. These relationships allow senior leaders to understand the local and regional challenges, enabling them to respond swiftly to changing demand. The remodelling of the 'front door' is a strong example of strong partnership service delivery. In addition, the weekly multi-agency audit meeting, which reviews the response to referrals, is informing multi-agency practice and learning.
48. Corporate support for children's social workers is overseen by knowledgeable leaders and members. Rigorous scrutiny by elected members provides appropriate challenge to senior leaders about the quality of services for children. The chief executive has an accurate understanding of children's social work. This is exemplified in the strong political support and financial investment in the recruitment of social work staff, the development of a very effective early help service and the continued funding of the relational practice model.
49. The local authority are active, strong and committed corporate parents. There is an unstinting focus on making sure that the needs and rights of children in care and care leavers are met to a high standard. The corporate parenting panel meets frequently, which children and young people regularly attend, and their contributions are highly valued. The panel receives detailed performance reports and holds the leadership team to account. Children's achievements are celebrated and rewarded. Senior leaders are genuinely interested to hear from children and young people, and this ensures that their views are being used to develop services and strategies.
50. The workforce development strategy has recently been updated. Senior leaders understand their recruitment needs well. While the challenges facing local authorities in recruiting and retaining a skilled and competent workforce are well

known, leaders are working hard to find ways of overcoming this. They have developed a variety of strategies to recruit and retain social workers which include a social work academy, complemented by their 'grow your own' approach. Staff are attracted to working in Darlington because of the benefits of the relational practice model and the positive workforce culture. During the inspection, there were many examples seen where children are benefiting from the support of consistent workers and have developed meaningful relationships with them.

51. There is a strong focus on ensuring that workers have access to a range of good-quality and up-to-date training and development opportunities. Training has informed and enhanced the quality of relational social work practice. For some workers, caseloads are higher than senior leaders want them to be. Senior leaders are very aware of this issue and their self-assessment reported this. They have taken a range of steps to support social work practitioners and have ensured that children are visited. Despite high caseloads, social workers have secured very positive relationships with families.
52. Social workers are rightly proud of their work and the effective relationships with children and families they have harnessed. They genuinely want to make a difference for children. Workers in Darlington are extremely committed to the local authority and feel valued by senior leaders. Social workers whom the inspectors spoke to describe an environment where they feel confident and supported by their managers to make decisions. They feel cared about and supported by them.

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## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 19 December 2022

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### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 2 2022/23

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#### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with an update on performance against key performance indicators.

#### Summary

2. This report provides performance information (July 2022 – September 2022) in line with an indicator set agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 2 July 2018, and subsequently by Scrutiny Committee Chairs.
3. It is suggested monitoring focuses on issues and exceptions, and relevant Assistant Directors will attend the meeting to respond to queries raised by the committee regarding the performance information contained within this report.
4. Where indicators are reported annually, quarterly updates will not be available.

#### Where are we performing well?

5. 84.4% of referrals were screened and completed within 1 day during Q2 2022/23. Although below the target of 90%, this is a continuing improvement when compared with previous quarters. A small number of referrals took over 3 working days to be completed in Q3 2022/23 (0.3%) which is positively below our target of 5%.
6. 15.3% of the children referred during Q2 2022/23 have been re-referred to Children's Social Care within 12 months of a previous referral, which is below the threshold of 18% and an improvement on the same period last year.
7. 100% of children with a Child Protection (CP) plan, and 100% of Children in Care (CiC) have an allocated social worker.
8. 100% of children with a Child Protection (CP) plan, and 98.9% of Children in Care (CiC) had their reviews completed within timescale.
9. No child ceased to be subject to a CP plan during Q2 2022/23 who had been subject to the plan for 2 or more years, positively reducing our cumulative performance measure to below target (5%) to 4.7%. As of September 2022, no child open to CP has been on their plan for more than 18 months.

10. o child became subject to a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within 2 years of the previous plan ending during Q2 2022/23, positivity reducing our cumulative performance measure lower to 8.1%.
11. 286 Children were in our care at the end of September 2022, 13 of which were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. For comparison, 273 children, excluding UASC, were in our care at the end of September 2022, an increase from 266 at the end of September 2021 but a decrease from 302 at the end of September 2020. Work continues to safely reduce the number of children coming into care.
12. 24.2% of the children ceasing to be in our care did so due to being adopted, 42.3% had a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) / Child Arrangement Order (CAO) granted to a relative and 12.1% returned home to their parent.
13. 72.4% of children due a review health assessment by September 2022 have had one completed. 40.7% of Children in Care, that were due a dental check assessment by September 2022 have had one completed. The percentage of children who have refused their medical checks has positively decreased throughout the year, with 5.7% refusing their health review and 1.9% refusing their dental review. Although they are refusing, they are continually reminded of the benefits of having a check-up and encouraged to take part.
14. 19.6% of our care Leavers, aged 19-21 and 19.6% of our care leavers, aged 22-25, years were not in employment, education, or training (NEET) which is positivity below target of 30%. 98.2% of care leavers aged 19-21 and 96.1% aged 22-25, were in suitable accommodation.
15. 58.9% of our care leavers, aged 19-21 and 68.6% of our care leavers, aged 22-25 were in training or employment as of September 2022, and 21.4% of those aged 19-21 were engaging in education, 10.7% in studies beyond A level with 11.8% of those aged 22-25 years also engaging in education, 7.8% are in studies beyond A level.

#### Where do we need to improve?

16. 68.1% of our C&F assessments were completed within timescale in Q2 2022/23. We have seen a reduction in the timeliness of the written aspect of the assessments, however it is of note that we are seeing an increase in the number of assessments required compared to previous quarters (310 assessment completed in Q2 2022/23, 158 in Q2 2020/21, 189 in Q2 2021/22 and 222 in Q2 2019/20).
17. 87.2% of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) were held within 15 working days from the strategy meeting / section 47 being initiated, excluding transfer-in conferences, during Q2 2022/23. Although we are below the internal target of 95%, this is an improvement on the timeliness seen in Q1 2022/23 (75.0%) and Q2 2021/22 (78.8%) both of which saw less conferences being held during the quarter.
18. 62.2% of children received a statutory CP visit within 10 working days during Q2 2022/23. This is negatively below the internal target of 90%.

19. 85.2% of statutory CiC visits were completed within timescale during Q2 2022/23. This is negatively below our internal target of 90%.
20. 11.9% of our Children in Care, as of September 2022, have had 3 or more placements within the previous 12 months, which is negatively above our internal target (10%).
21. 63.3% of our Children in Care aged under 16 (who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years) have been in their current placement continuously for at least 2 years as of September 2022, which is negatively below our internal target (68%).
22. 11.1% of our Children in Care have needed to be placed 20 or more miles away from home as of September 2022. This is negatively above target of 10% but all placements have been confirmed by team managers to be appropriate for the child enabling them to have the best support either with family links or specialised care.

### **Recommendation**

23. It is recommended:

- a) That performance information provided in this report is reviewed and noted, and relevant queries raised with the appropriate Assistant Director.

**James Stroyan**  
**Group Director of People**

### **Background papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Sharon Raine Head of Performance and Transformation: Extension 6091

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Council's Crime and Disorder responsibilities
Health and Well Being	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents
Sustainability	This report supports the Council's sustainability responsibilities
Diversity	This report supports the promotion of diversity
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes
Efficiency	Scrutiny of performance is integral to optimising outcomes.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report may have an impact on their emotional and physical health, social development, education and future employment.





**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

# Children's Social Care Performance & Practice Report

**Quarter 2 (July - September 2022)**

**Scrutiny**

# Scrutiny

## Q2 2022-23 Performance Summary

**Referrals:** 84.4% of referrals received during Q2 2022/23 were completed within 1 working day and 0.3% took over 3 working days to complete. Extensive work regarding referral enquiries has been required for some cases requiring further information from third parties and further contacts with the family. This has resulted in completion taking longer than the statutory timescale. However, the additional work has been to the benefit of the child.

**Re-Referrals:** 15.3% of the children referred during Q2 2022/23 have been re-referred to Children's Social Care within 12 months of a previous referral. This is outperforming the internal target of 18%.

**Early Help:** 355 Early Help Assessments were started during Q2 2022/23, 10.1% of which were started by an external agency.

**Missing:** Of the children and young people who were reported missing from home, 80.2% have been offered a return home interview within the 72-hour timescale. Where the co-ordinator cannot engage the child or young person, discussions take place with parents, carers, teachers or social workers to offer insight around reducing the missing episodes. Of those who went missing, 26.9% were a Child in Care accounting for 55.9% of the missing episodes.

**Children & Families Assessments:** 310 children had a single assessment carried out during Q2 2022/23. Social workers completed 68.1% of the C&F assessments within timescale during Q2 2022/23. This is significantly below our internal target of 90%.

**Section 47 Enquiries:** 96 section 47 enquiries were started during Q2 2022/23 involving 173 children, 10 of which were subject to a Child Protection plan (CP) at the time of the enquiry.

**Child Protection Conference timeliness:** 87.2% of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) were held within 15 working days from the strategy meeting / section 47 being initiated, excluding children who were transferred-in conference, during Q2 2022/23.

**Child Protection Plans:** 118 children were supported by a Child Protection plan (CP) as at the end of September 2022. This is an increase compared to the 103 children who were supported by a CP plan at the end of September 2021. Darlington currently has a rate of 52.1 per 10,000 population for children on a CP plan.

100.0% of CP cases were allocated to a social worker and all of the CP reviews were carried out in timescale. No child ceased to be subject to a CP plan in Q2 2022/23 after being subject to the plan for 2 or more years, meeting our cumulative performance measure target of (5%) with 4.7%. As of September 2022, no child open to CP has been on their plan for more than 18 months. At the end of September 2022, the percentage of children becoming subject to a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within 2 years of the previous plan ending was 8.1%, above the 6% target and relates to 3 families.

**Child Protection Statutory visits:** 62.2% of Child Protection statutory visits were completed within 10 working days in Q2 2022/23 and 87.0% of the visits were completed within 15 working days.

**Children in Care:** 286 children were in care as of September 2022, 13 of which are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. During Q2 2022/23 a total of 39 children came into the care of DBC, 6 of which were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and a total of 33 children ceased to be in care.

**Children in Care Reviews:** 100.0% of Children in Care (CiC) were allocated to a qualified social worker. 98.9% of the reviews have been completed within required timescales during Q2 2022/21.

**Children in Care Statutory visits:** 85.2% of statutory visits for Children in Care (CiC) were completed in timescale during Q2 2022/23.

**Children in Care Placements:** 11.9% of Children in Care (CiC), as of September 2022, have had 3 or more placements within the previous 12 months. 63.3% of our Children in Care aged under 16 (who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years) have been in their current placement continuously for at least 2 years. 11.1% of our Children in Care have been placed 20 or more miles away from home as of September 2022. This relates to young people who have been placed in residential care due to their disability / placed with family / or placed for adoption, and this provision is not available within 20 miles.

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**Initial Health Assessments:** We are awaiting the official data from CDDFT to confirm the percentage of the children, that came into our care during Q2 2022/23, had a health appointment within 20 days.

**Health and Dental Reviews:** 72.4% of children due a review health assessment by September 2022 have had one completed. 40.7% of Children in Care, that were due a dental check assessment by September 2022 have had one completed.

The percentage of children who have refused their medical checks has positively decreased throughout the year, with 5.7% refusing their health review and 1.9% refusing their dental review. Although they are refusing, they are continually reminded of the benefits of having a check-up and encouraged to take part.

**Care Leavers:** 98.2% of care leavers (aged 19-21) were in suitable accommodation at the end of September 2022 with 1 young person in custody. The percentage of care leavers who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) continues to be positively below the target of 30% with 19.6% at the end of September 2022. 21.4% of our care leavers (aged 19-21) were engaging in education (10.7% of which are in studies beyond A level) and 58.9% young people were in training or employment (28.6% in full time, 30.3% in part time).

## REFERRALS: TIMELINESS

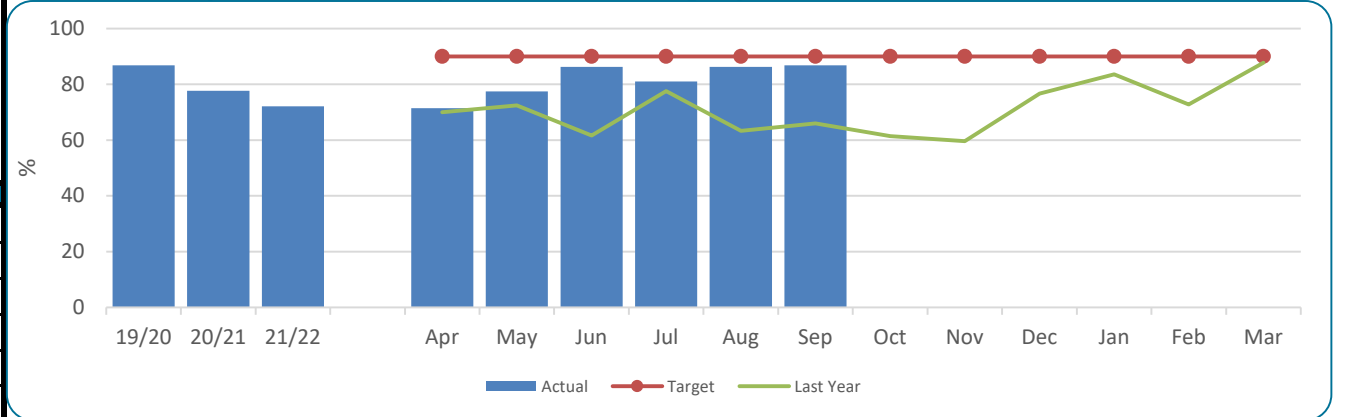
**DEFINITION** Percentage of referrals completed within 1 working day and over 3 working days. Referrals completed within 1 working day indicates that decisions regarding the services required are made in a timely manner to minimise drift and delay and to ensure that children are safe.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** In Q2 2022/23, 84.4% of the children had their referral completed within 1 working day. This is a positive increase when compared with 79.6% in Q1 2022/23, however, this is still below our 90% target. 0.3% of the referrals took over 3 working days to be completed in Q2 2022/23 which is positively below our target of 5%.

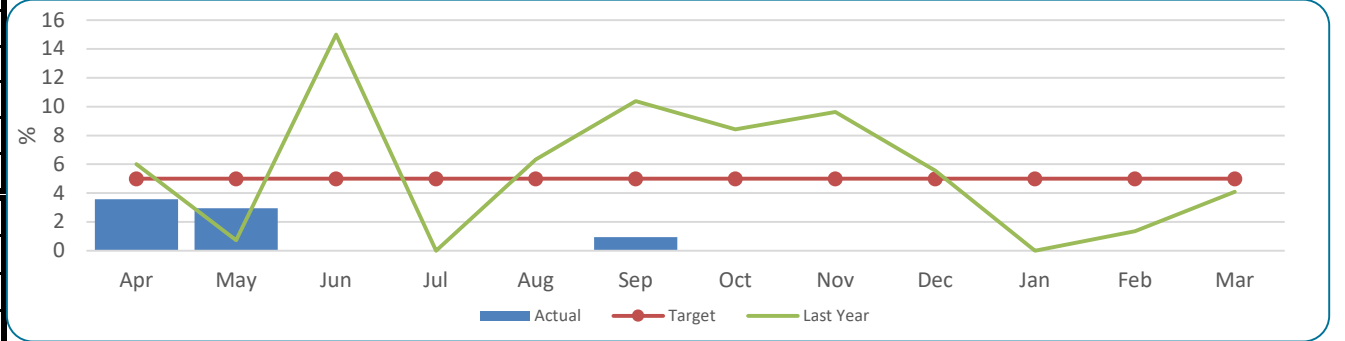
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		CSC 022	CSC 026
		Monthly % of referrals completed within 1 working day.	Monthly % of referrals completed in over 3 working days.
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>5%</b>
	Apr-22	71.4	3.6
	May-22	77.5	2.9
	Jun-22	86.2	0.0
	Jul-22	81.1	0.0
	Aug-22	86.3	0.0
	Sep-22	86.8	0.9
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	86.8	1.6
	2020/21	77.7	4.7
	2021/22	72.1	5.6
	2022/23	82.2%	1.0%

CSC 022: Monthly % of referrals completed within 1 working day.



CSC 026: Monthly % of referrals completed in over 3 working days.



## REFERRALS: RE-REFERRALS

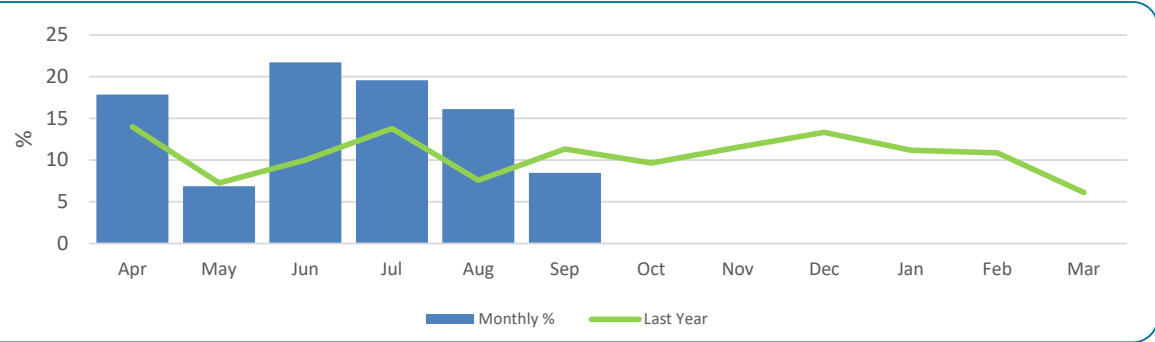
**DEFINITION** Percentage of re-referrals that are received within 12 months of a previous referral (based on referral start dates and in line with DfE definition). A re-referral to Children's Social Care could be an indication that the previous referral was inappropriately closed down without addressing the initial concerns or issues.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** During Q2 2022/23, 58 children from 32 families have had a new referral within 12 months of their last referral starting. This is an increase in re-referrals compared to Q2 2021/22 with 26 children but comparable to Q2 2020/21 (56 children) and Q2 2019/20 (54 children).  
Cumulatively we are still outperforming our 18% target with 15.5% of the referrals being repeated within 12 months of a previous referral starting.

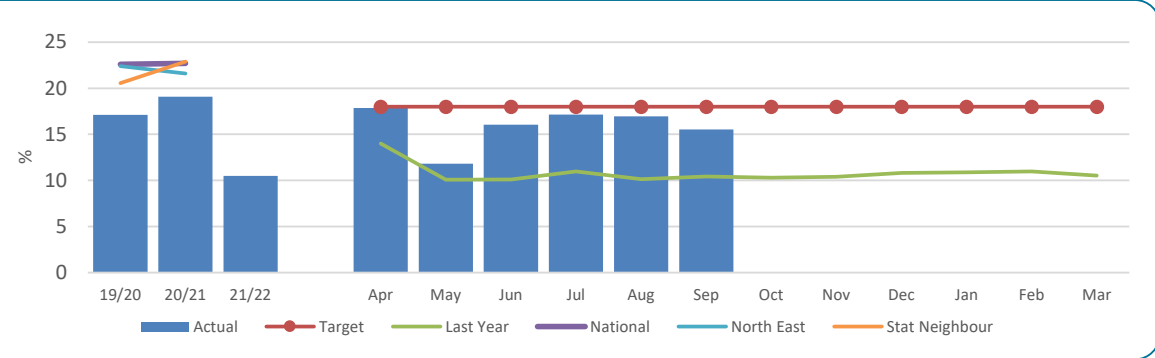
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		CSC 034	CSC 032	
		Monthly number of re-referrals that are repeat within 12 months	% re-referrals that are repeat within 12 months (cumulative)	% of referrals that are re-referrals (monthly)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>		<b>18%</b>	
	Apr-22	15	17.9	17.9
	May-22	7	11.8	6.9
	Jun-22	30	16.1	21.7
	Jul-22	29	17.2	19.6
	Aug-22	20	17.0	16.1
	Sep-22	9	15.5	8.5
	Oct-22			
	Nov-22			
	Dec-22			
	Jan-23			
	Feb-23			
	Mar-23			
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	171	17.1	
	2020/21	143	19.1	
	2021/22	106	10.5	
	2022/23	110	15.5	

% of referrals that are re-referrals (monthly)



CSC 032: % re-referrals that are repeat within 12 months (cumulative)



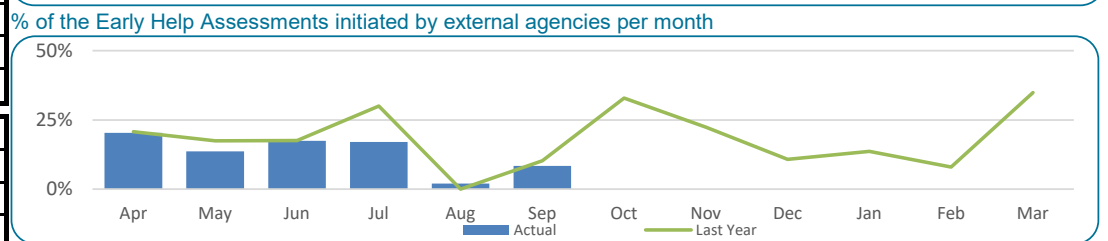
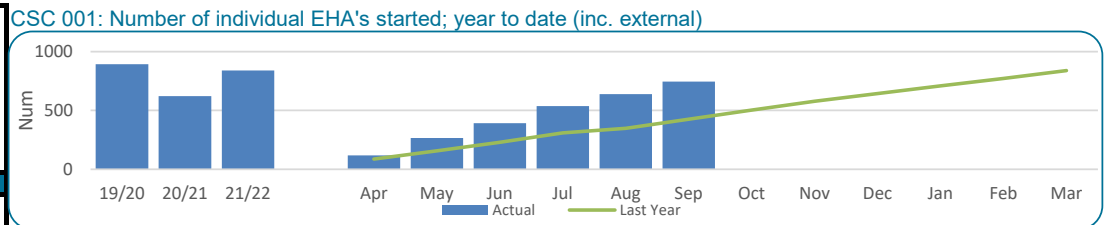
**EARLY HELP ASSESSMENTS: STARTED**

**DEFINITION** The number of individual Early Help Assessments (EHA) started in month and year to date, including those initiated by external agencies. The start date of the EHA is taken from the form created date in Liquid Logic and the start date of the external EHA is taken from the contact date when the agency informed us of the EHA.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 355 Early Help Assessments (EHA) were started in Q2 2022/23, 10.1% of which were initiated by external agencies. This is an increase on Q2 2021/22 (197 EHA's) but with a decrease on the proportion of externally started EHA's (16.2%).

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		CSC 002			CSC 001
		Total number of individual EHA's started in month (inc. external)	Number and percentage of the EHA's initiated by external agencies per month	TBC	Number of individual EHA's started; year to date (inc. external)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>				
	Apr-22	118	24	20.3%	118
	May-22	147	20	13.6%	265
	Jun-22	126	22	17.5%	391
	Jul-22	147	25	17.0%	538
	Aug-22	101	2	2.0%	639
	Sep-22	107	9	8.4%	746
	Oct-22				
	Nov-22				
	Dec-22				
	Jan-23				
	Feb-23				
	Mar-23				
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	893	265	29.7%	893
	2020/21	623	127	20.4%	623
	2021/22	839	161	19.2%	839
	2022/23	746	102	13.7%	746



**MISSING: EPISODES**

**DEFINITION** The number of episodes of children going missing in Darlington, including Children in Care.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** The total number of missing episodes in Q2 2022/23 was 245 involving 67 individual children. Excluding children open to another LA, this equates to 186 missing episodes involving 56 children. 55 (82.1%) children in Q2 2022/23 had 3 or less missing episodes, 48 of which only had 1 missing episode. 6 (9.0%) young people had 10 or more; 4 of which were a Child in Care and 2 were a Child in Care of another LA. Our CiC young people continue to dominate the number of missing episodes and with 18 of the 67 children (26.9%), accounting for over half (55.9%) of all the missing episodes (137 / 245).

	CSC 215		CSC 246				
	Total number of missing episodes and children involved in month		Missing - Children in Care with DBC		Of which are in a placement more than 20 miles from home		
	Episode	Child	Episode	Child	Episode	Child	
<b>In Month Performance</b>	Apr-22	57	27	33	6		
	May-22	62	31	29	9		
	Jun-22	86	38	45	10	1	1
	Jul-22	80	32	47	12		
	Aug-22	96	29	53	11		
	Sep-22	69	27	37	6		
	Oct-22						
	Nov-22						
	Dec-22						
	Jan-23						
	Feb-23						
	Mar-23						
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	351	136	129	24	32	10
	2020/21	370	152	107	30	15	4
	2021/22	582	174	253	31	22	4
	2022/23	450	112	244	22	1	1

## ASSESSMENTS

**DEFINITION** Monthly and cumulative number of Children & Families (C&F) assessments completed.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 310 children had a C&F assessment completed in Q2 2022/23. This continues to be a large increase on previous years, with 158 in Q2 2020/21, 189 in Q2 2021/22 and 222 in Q2 2019/20.

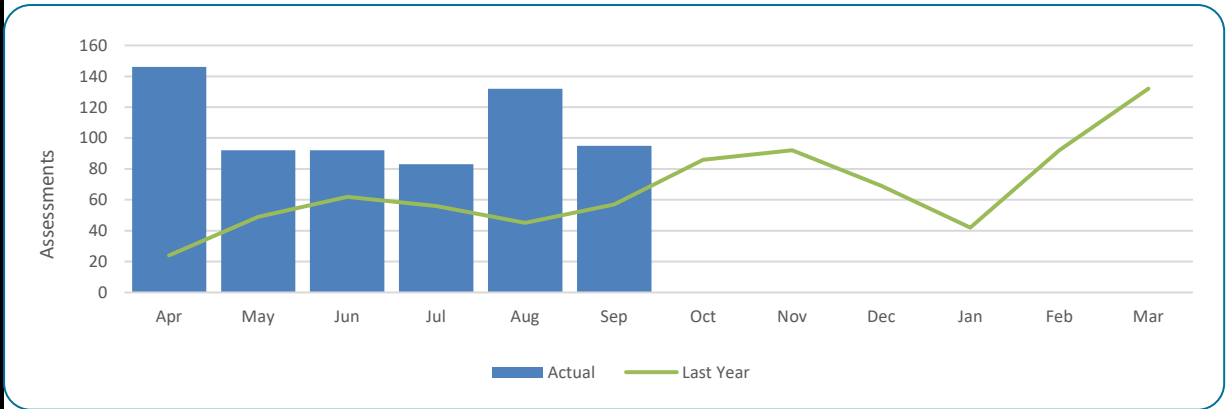
The percentage breakdowns of the C&F outcomes are comparable to Q1 2022/23.

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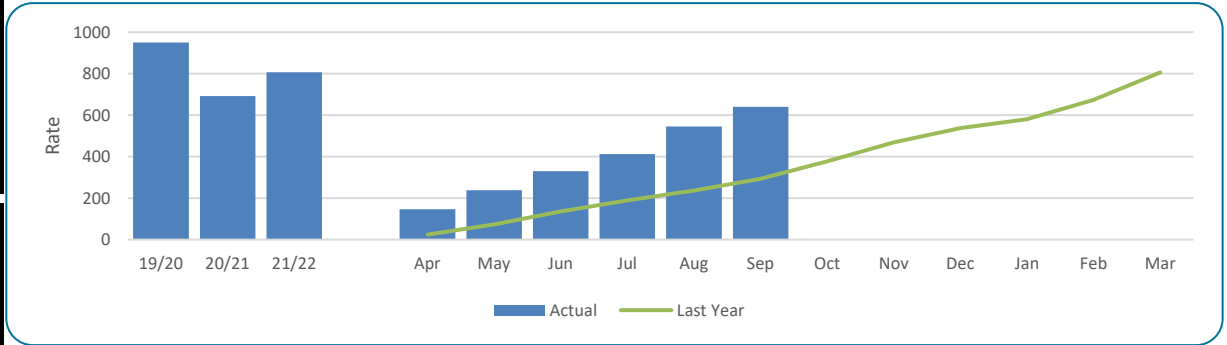
CSC 036      CSC 035

		CSC 036 Number of C&F assessments completed year to date	CSC 035 Rate of C&F assessments completed per 10,000 of the 0-17 population.
<b>In Month Performance</b>	Apr-22	146	64.5
	May-22	238	102.5
	Jun-22	330	145.8
	Jul-22	413	182.5
	Aug-22	545	240.8
	Sep-22	640	282.8
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
	<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	950
2020/21		692	308.2
2021/22		806	357.8
2022/23		640	282.8

CSC 037: Monthly number of C&F assessments completed



CSC 035: Rate of C&F assessments completed per 10,000 of the 0-17 population.





## ASSESSMENTS: TIMELINESS

**DEFINITION** Of those assessments completed in a period, the percentage completed within 45 working days.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 68.1% of our C&F assessments were completed within timescale in Q2 2022/23. This is below the performance of Q2 2021/22 (88.4%) and Q2 2020/21 (80.4%) and that of last quarter (Q1 2022/23, 79.1%).

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CSC 038

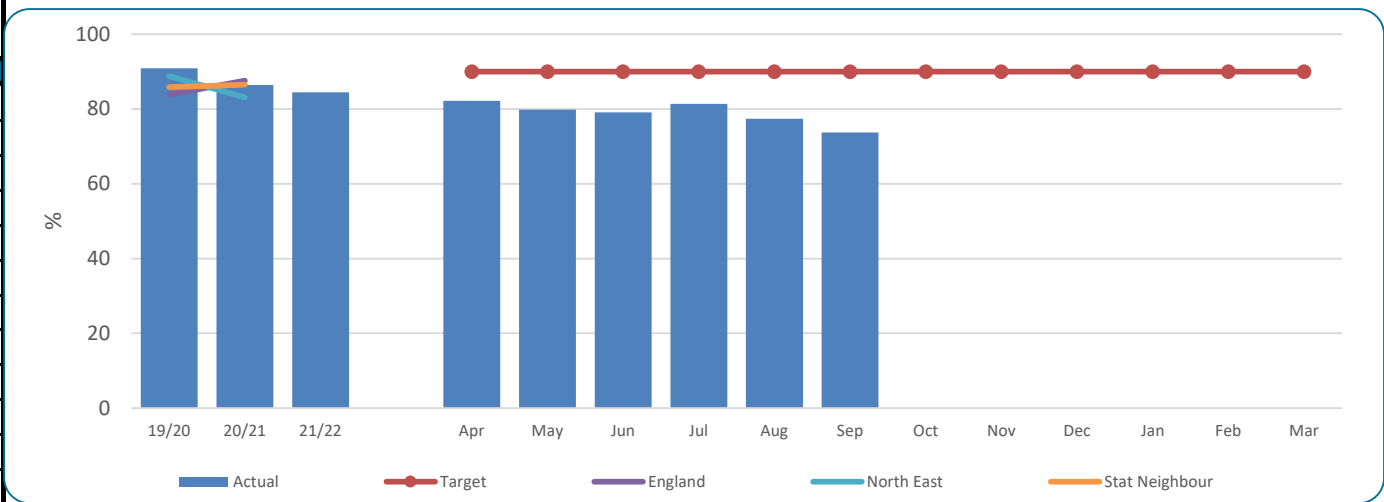
% C&F Assessments completed within 45 working days (year to date)

In Month Performance	Target	90%
	Apr-22	82.2
	May-22	79.8
	Jun-22	79.1
	Jul-22	81.4
	Aug-22	77.4
	Sep-22	73.8
	Oct-22	
	Nov-22	
	Dec-22	
	Jan-23	
	Feb-23	
	Mar-23	

Annual Trend		
2019/20		90.9
2020/21		86.4
2021/22		84.5
2022/23		73.8

% C&F Assessments completed within 45 working days (year to date)



**SECTION 47 ENQUIRES: STARTED**

**DEFINITION** Number of children who have had a section 47 enquiries started monthly and year to date and the actual number of enquires started.

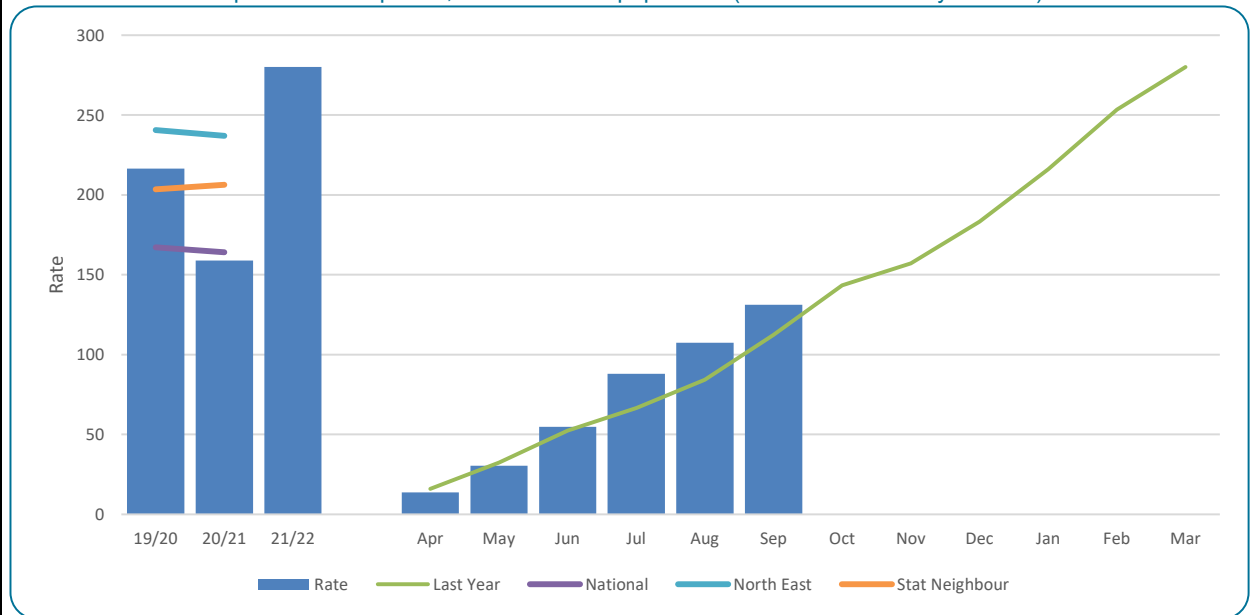
**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 96 section 47 enquires were started in Q2 2022/23, involving 173 children.

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CSC 166 CSC 164

		Number of children who had a section 47 enquiry	Rate of section 47 enquiries started per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (Cumulative)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	Apr-22	31	13.7
	May-22	38	30.5
	Jun-22	55	54.8
	Jul-22	75	87.9
	Aug-22	44	107.4
	Sep-22	54	131.2
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
	<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	486
2020/21		358	158.9
2021/22		633	280.1
2022/23		297	131.2

Rate of section 47 enquiries started per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inc. children already on CPP)



## INITIAL CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES: TIMELINESS

**DEFINITION** Of those Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) held within the period (excluding transfer ins), the percentage recorded in the Safeguarding Unit workbook where Child Protection strategy meeting / section 47 enquiry to ICPC are within 15 days (CPP). This provides an indication of how quickly the safety of the child is considered by a multi-agency meeting.

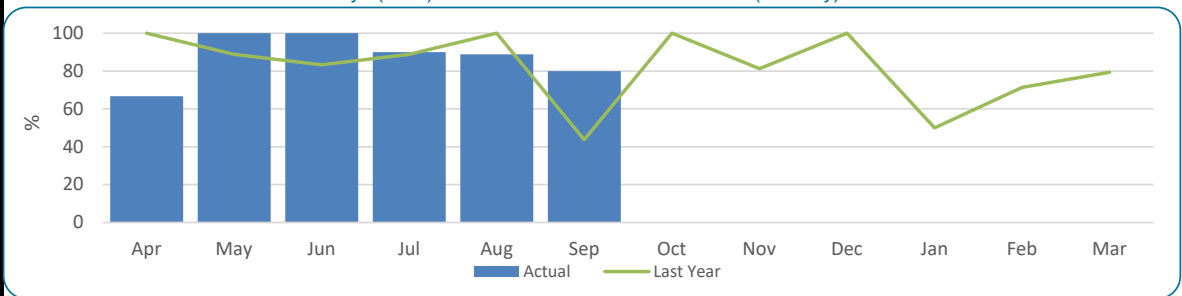
**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** Of the 47 children (who were not transferred in), 41 had their Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) within timescale (87.2%) in Q2 2022/23. 6 children from 4 families did not have their ICPC within timescale in due to late conference notification and the family requesting a date change.

Although we are below the internal target of 95%, this is an improvement on the timeliness seen in Q1 2022/23 (75.0%) and Q2 2021/22 (78.8%) both of which saw less conferences being held during the quarter.

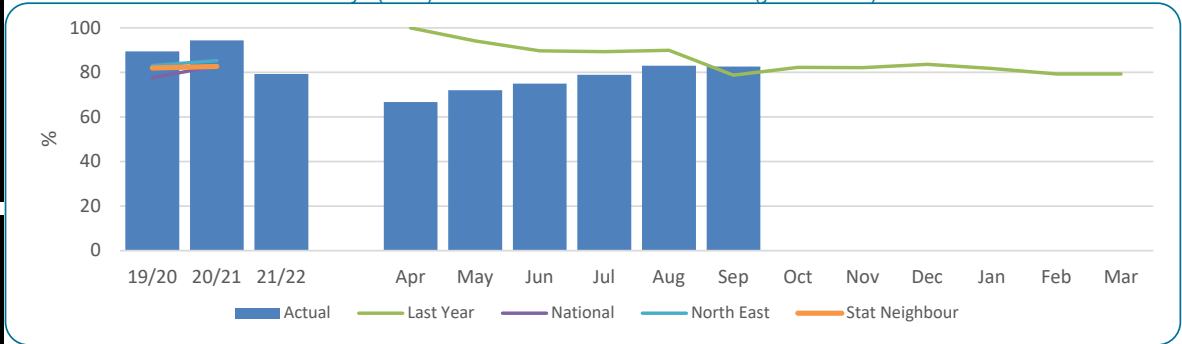
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		CSC 178		CSC 176	
		% ICPC's held within 15 days (CPP). Excludes transfer-in conferences (monthly).		% ICPC's held within 15 days (CPP). Excludes transfer-in conferences (year to date).	
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>				<b>95%</b>
	Apr-22	14 / 21	66.7	14 / 21	66.7
	May-22	4 / 4	100.0	18 / 25	72.0
	Jun-22	3 / 3	100.0	21 / 28	75.0
	Jul-22	9 / 10	90.0	30 / 38	79.0
	Aug-22	24 / 27	88.9	54 / 65	83.1
	Sep-22	8 / 10	80.0	62 / 75	82.7
	Oct-22				
	Nov-22				
	Dec-22				
	Jan-23				
	Feb-23				
	Mar-23				
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	153 / 171	87.7	153 / 171	89.5
	2020/21	119 / 126	94.4	119 / 126	94.4
	2021/22	138 / 174	79.3	138 / 174	79.3
	2022/23	62 / 75	82.7	62 / 75	82.7

CSC 178: % ICPC's held within 15 days (CPP). Excludes transfer-in conferences (monthly).



CSC 176: % ICPC's held within 15 days (CPP). Excludes transfer-in conferences (year to date).



## CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

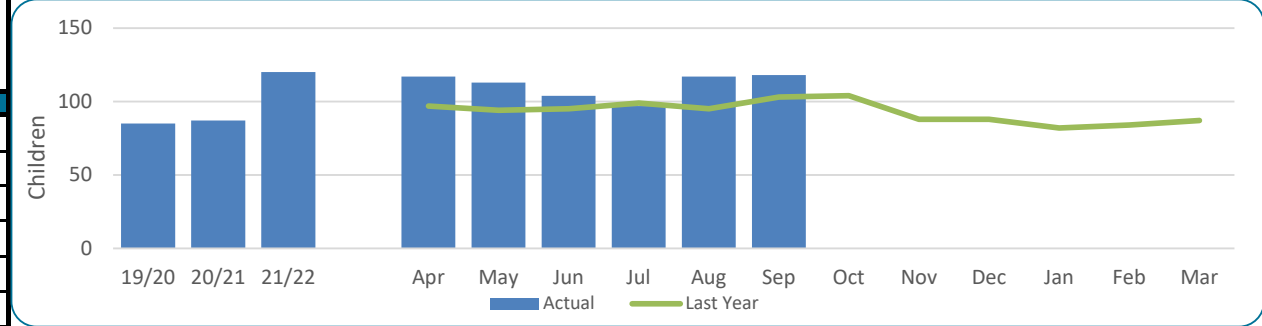
DEFINITION	Number of children subject to a Child Protection plan at the end of the month.
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PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS	118 children were subject to a Child Protection plan (CP) as at the end of September 2022 with 42 children starting a CP plan during Q2 2022/23.
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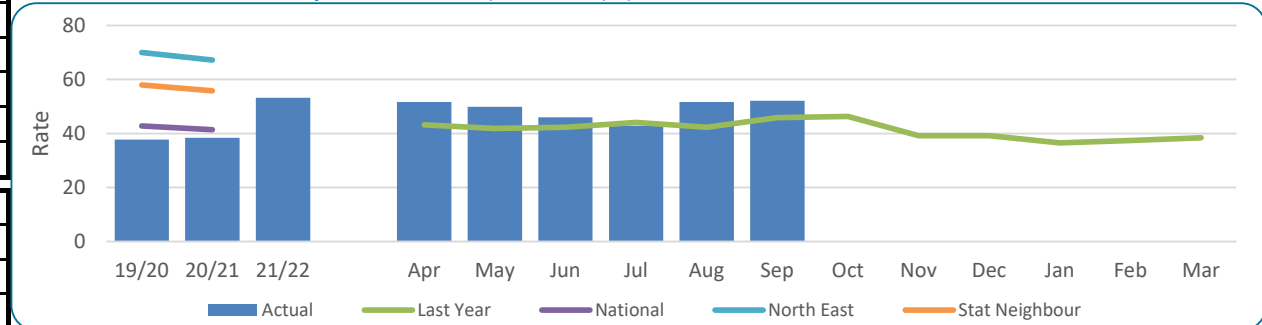
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		CSC 182	CSC 181
		Number of children subject to a CP plan	Rate of children subject to a CP Plan per 10,000 population
In Month Performance	Apr-22	117	51.7
	May-22	113	49.9
	Jun-22	104	46.0
	Jul-22	97	42.9
	Aug-22	117	51.7
	Sep-22	118	52.1
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
	Annual Trend	2019/20	85
2020/21		87	38.4
2021/22		120	53.3
2022/23		118	52.1

CSC 182: Number of children subject to a CP plan



CSC 181: Rate of children subject to a CP Plan per 10,000 population



## CHILD PROTECTION PLANS: ALLOCATION & REVIEWS

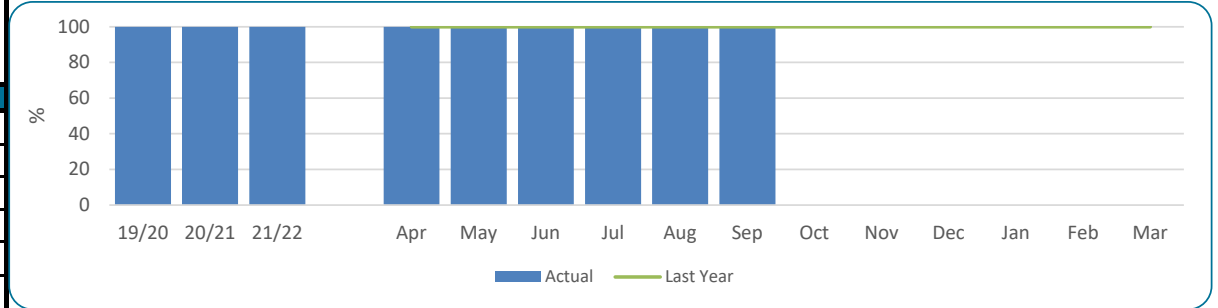
<b>DEFINITION</b>	<p>The percentage of children subject to a Child Protection (CP) plan at the end of the month and who at that date had had a plan continuously for at least the previous 3 months, whose case was reviewed within the required timescales.</p> <p>Reviews are a key element in delivering CP Plans and effective reviews should ensure the provision of good quality interventions. This indicator is a proxy for the measurement of effectiveness of the interventions provided to children subject to a CP plan. "Working Together to Safeguard Children" guidance requires that the first review should be within 3 months of their ICPC and thereafter at intervals of no more than 6 months.</p>
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<b>PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS</b>	<p>100% of Child Protection Cases were allocated to a qualified social worker.</p> <p>100% of Child Protection reviews have been completed within the required timescales.</p>
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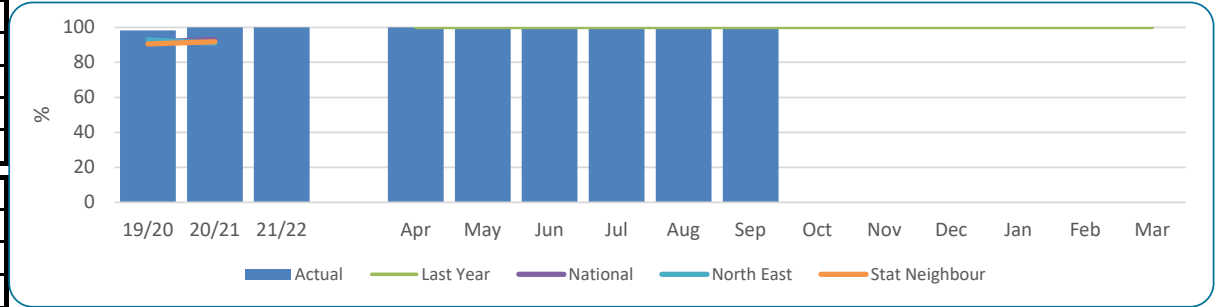
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		CSC 183	CSC 191
		% of children with a CP plan allocated to a qualified social worker	% of children whose CP plan was reviewed within the timescales.
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
	Apr-22	100.0	100.0
	May-22	100.0	100.0
	Jun-22	100.0	100.0
	Jul-22	100.0	100.0
	Aug-22	100.0	100.0
	Sep-22	100.0	100.0
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	100.0	98.2
	2020/21	100.0	100.0
	2021/22	100.0	100.0
	2022/23	100.0	100.0

CSC 183: % of children with a CP plan allocated to a qualified social worker



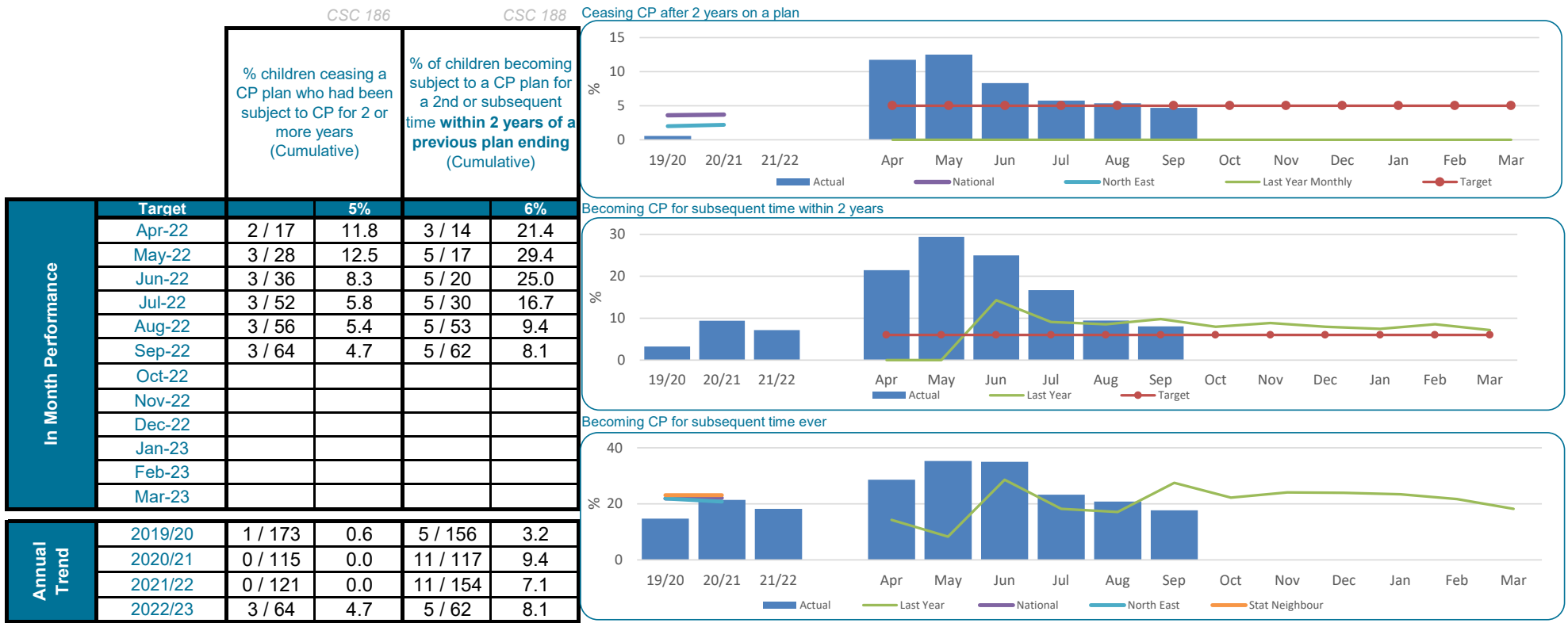
CSC 191: % of children whose CP plan was reviewed within the timescales.



**CHILD PROTECTION PLAN: TIME PERIODS**

**DEFINITION**  
 Percentage of children ceasing to be subject to a Child Protection Plan who had been subject to a Plan for 2 or more years, and percentage of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for the 2nd or subsequent time within 2 years of a previous plan, These indicators reflect the underlying principle that professionals should be working towards specified outcomes which, if implemented effectively, should lead to all children not needing to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan within a maximum of two years, or becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**  
 No child ceased to be subject to a CP plan during Q2 2022/23 who had been subject to the plan for 2 or more years, meeting our cumulative performance measure target (5%) with 4.7%. As of September 2022, no child open to CP has been on their plan for more than 18 months.  
 No child became subject to a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within 2 years of the previous plan ending during Q2 2022/23, reducing our cumulative performance measure to 8.1% bringing us closer to the target of 6%.



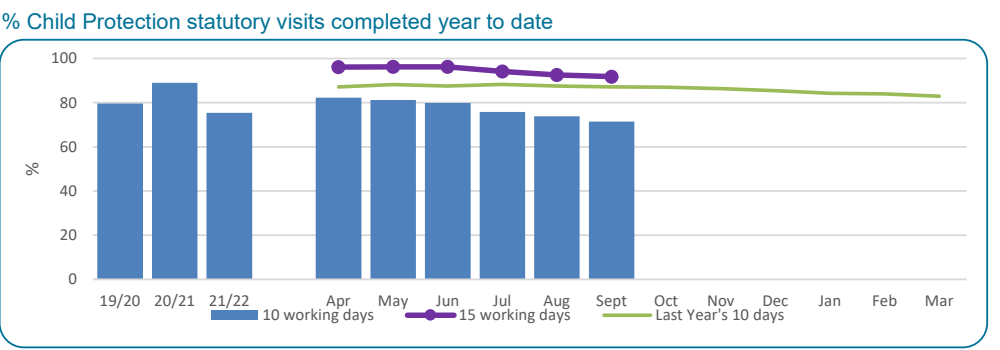
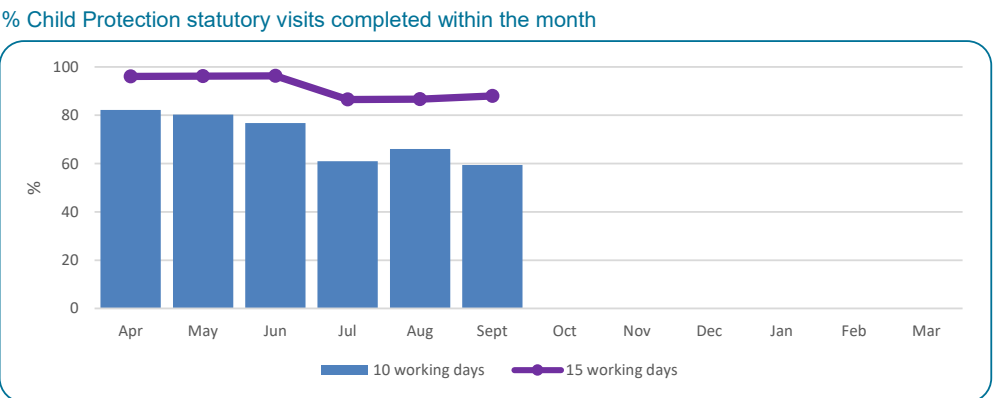
## CHILD PROTECTION: STATUTORY VISITS

**DEFINITION** Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection (CP) plan who had all statutory visits carried out within timescales and percentage of Child Protection statutory visits completed within timescale monthly and year to date.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 62.2% of Child Protection statutory visits were completed within 10 working days in Q2 2022/23 and 87.0% of the visits were completed within 15 working days.

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		CSC 252a		CSC 252b	
		% CP visits completed within 10 working days within the month	% CP visits completed within 15 working days within the month	% CP visits completed within 10 working days year to date (cumulative)	% CP visits completed within 15 working days year to date (cumulative)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>
	Apr-22	82.2	96.1	82.2	96.1
	May-22	80.2	96.2	81.2	96.2
	Jun-22	76.7	96.3	79.9	96.2
	Jul-22	61.0	86.5	75.9	94.1
	Aug-22	66.0	86.6	73.9	92.6
	Sep-22	59.3	88.0	71.4	91.8
	Oct-22				
	Nov-22				
	Dec-22				
	Jan-23				
	Feb-23				
Mar-23					
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	79.6	92.0	79.6	93.8
	2020/21	89.0	98.4	89.0	98.4
	2021/22	75.4	95.0	82.9	96.8
	2022/23	59.3	88.0	71.4	91.8



## CHILDREN IN CARE

**DEFINITION** Number of Children in Care (CiC) at the end of each month and of which are Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC).

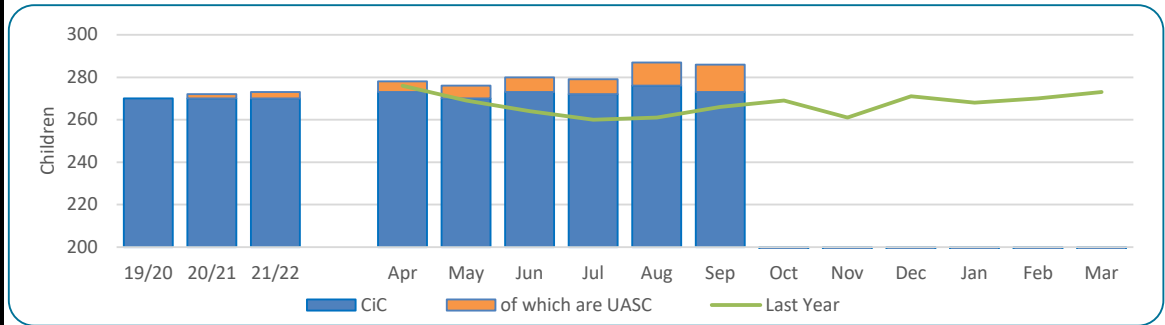
**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 286 children were in care at the end of September 2022, 13 (4.5%) of which are unaccompanied asylum-seeking.

For comparison, 273 children, excluding UASC, were in our care at the end of September 2022, an increase from 266 at the end of September 2021 but a decrease from 302 at the end of September 2020.

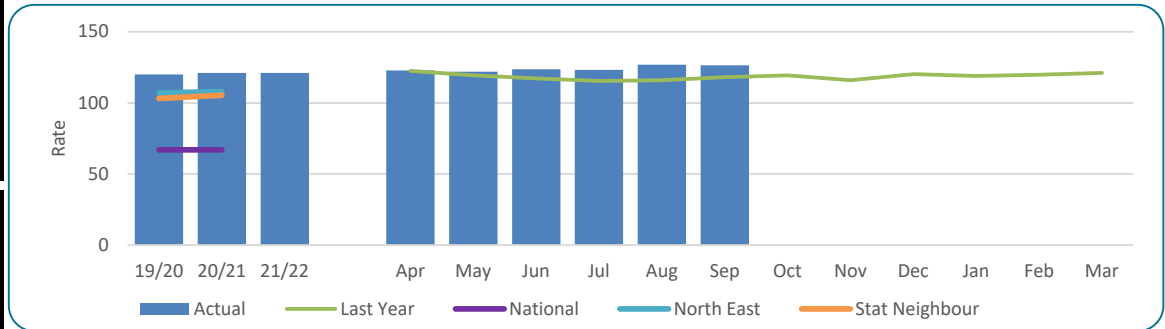
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		CSC 201	CSC 200	
		Total number of Children in Care	Of which are identified as a UASC	Rate of CiC per 10,000 population
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>			<b>95</b>
	Apr-22	278	5	122.8
	May-22	276	6	122.0
	Jun-22	280	7	123.7
	Jul-22	279	7	123.3
	Aug-22	287	11	126.8
	Sep-22	286	13	126.4
	Oct-22			
	Nov-22			
	Dec-22			
	Jan-23			
	Feb-23			
	Mar-23			
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	270		120.0
	2020/21	272	2	121.1
	2021/22	273	3	121.2
	2022/23	286	13	126.4

CSC 201: Total number of Children in Care



CSC 200: Rate of CiC per 10,000 population





## CHILDREN IN CARE: COMING INTO CARE

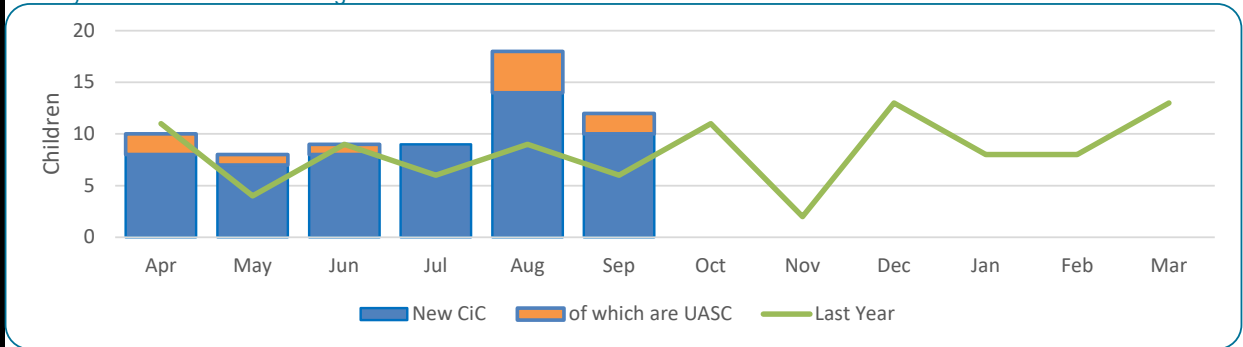
**DEFINITION** Number of children coming into the care of the local authority during the month and year to date and where they are an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC).

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 33 children from 25 families came into care in Q2 2022/23, a further 6 young people; 5 males and a female, came into care after being accepted by the Home Office as UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child).  
 This is an increase when compared with the 21 children who came into care in Q2 2021/22 and from Q2 2020/21 (23 children), but comparable with Q2 2019/20 (32 children).

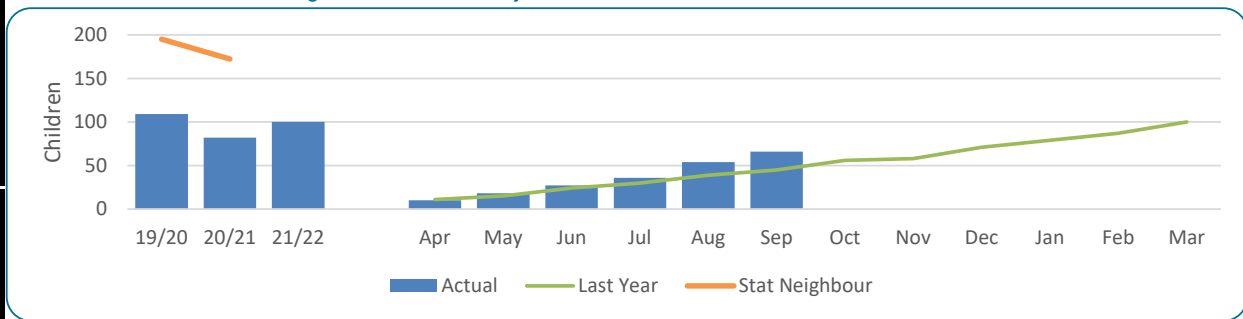
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		CSC 209	CSC 208	
		Monthly number of children coming into care	Cumulative number of children coming into care	of which are UASC
<b>In Month Performance</b>	Apr-22	10	10	2
	May-22	8	18	1
	Jun-22	9	27	1
	Jul-22	9	36	
	Aug-22	18	54	4
	Sep-22	12	66	2
	Oct-22			
	Nov-22			
	Dec-22			
	Jan-23			
	Feb-23			
	Mar-23			
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	109	109	
	2020/21	82	82	2
	2021/22	100	100	2
	2022/23	66	66	10

Monthly number of children coming into care



Total number of children coming into care within the year



## CHILDREN IN CARE: CEASING CARE

**DEFINITION** Number of children ceasing to be a Child in Care during each month and year to date. This could be due to returning home to parent or other person with no PR (planned and unplanned), having a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) / Child Arrangement Order (CAO) granted by the courts to a carer, adoption or turning 18 years old and becoming a care leaver and supported by a personal advisor. Other reasons why a child could cease care could be due to receiving a custodial sentence or moving out of the area and transferring to a different local authority.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

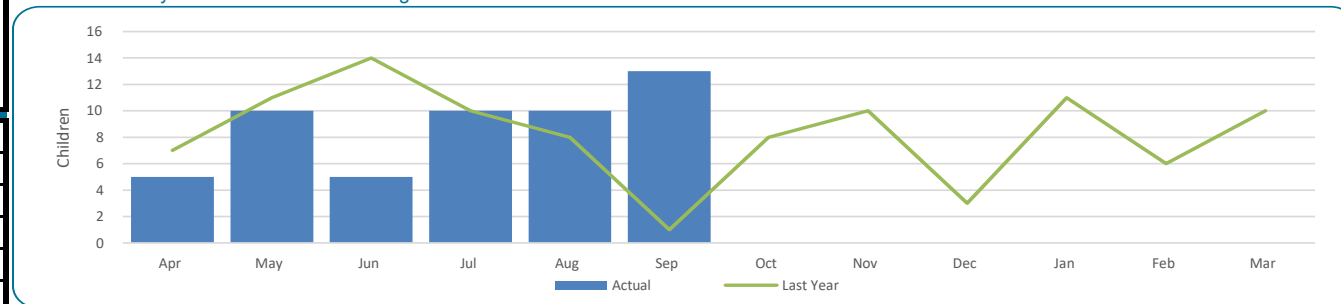
33 children and young people ceased to be in care in Q2 2022/23 from 15 families. This is the highest number of children ceasing care during a quarter period that we have seen. For comparison there were 19 children who ceased care in Q2 2021/22, 12 in Q2 2020/21 and 31 in Q2 2019/20.

Of the 33 children and young people who did cease CiC:

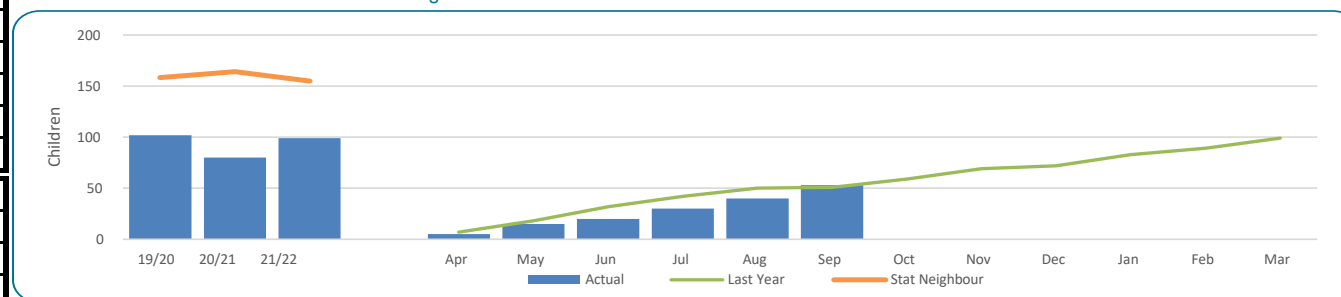
- 42.3% had a Special Guardianship Order / Child Arrangement Order granted to a relative
- 24.2% were adopted
- 12.1% turned 18 years and became care leavers
- 18.2% returned home to their parent(s)
- 3.0% refused to remain in care and now supported on a CiN plan.

	CSC 212	CSC 211	
	Monthly number of children ceasing care	Cumulative number of children ceasing care	
<b>In Month Performance</b>	Apr-22	5	5
	May-22	10	15
	Jun-22	5	20
	Jul-22	10	30
	Aug-22	10	40
	Sep-22	13	53
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	102	102
	2020/21	80	80
	2021/22	99	99
	2022/23	53	53

CSC 212: Monthly number of children ceasing care



CSC 211: Cumulative number of children ceasing care



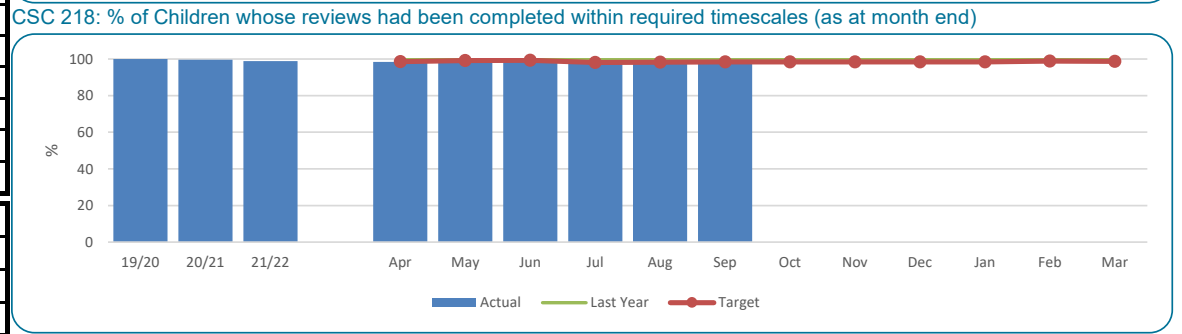
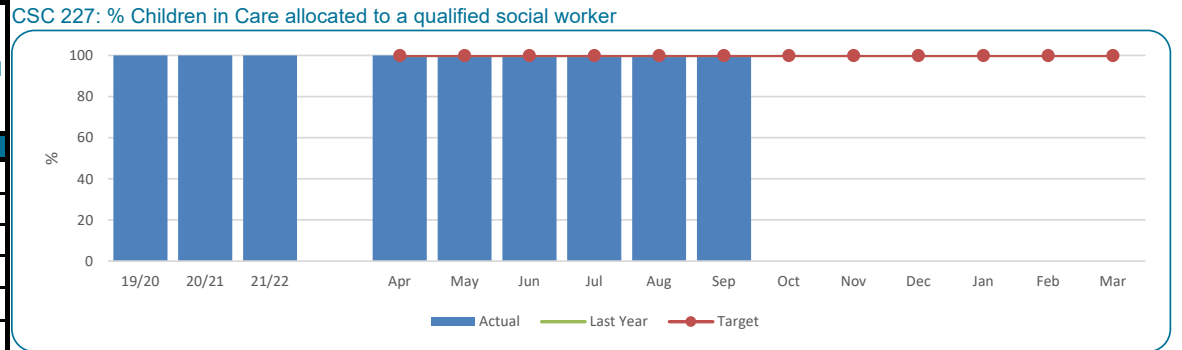
**CHILDREN IN CARE: ALLOCATION & REVIEWS**

**DEFINITION** The percentage of Children in Care (CiC) which should have been reviewed during the year ending 31 March that were reviewed on time and the percentage of Children in Care that were allocated to a qualified social worker at the end of the month. The purpose of the review is to consider the plan for the child's welfare, to monitor the progress of the plan and amend it as necessary in light of changed information and circumstances. The statutory intervals are within 20 working days of placement, then within 3 months and 6 monthly thereafter, but reviews may be rescheduled or held inside these intervals if there are significant changes to the child's care plan.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS** 100% of Children in Care (CiC) are allocated to a qualified social worker and 98.9% of the reviews have been completed within required timescales.

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		CSC 227	CSC 218
		% Children in Care allocated to a qualified social worker	% of Children whose reviews had been completed within required timescales (as at month end)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
	Apr-22	100.0	98.5
	May-22	100.0	99.1
	Jun-22	100.0	98.8
	Jul-22	100.0	99.0
	Aug-22	100.0	98.7
	Sep-22	100.0	98.9
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	100.0	100.0
	2020/21	100.0	99.6
	2021/22	100.0	98.8
	2022/23	100.0	98.9



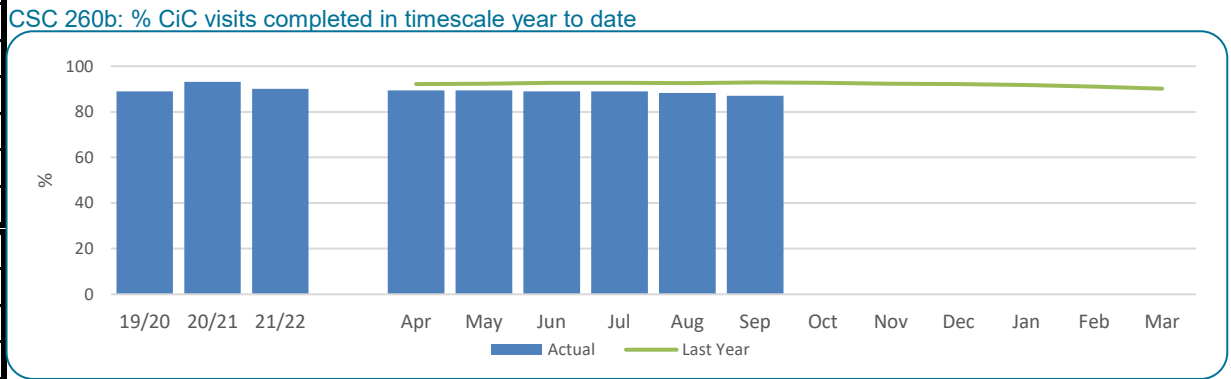
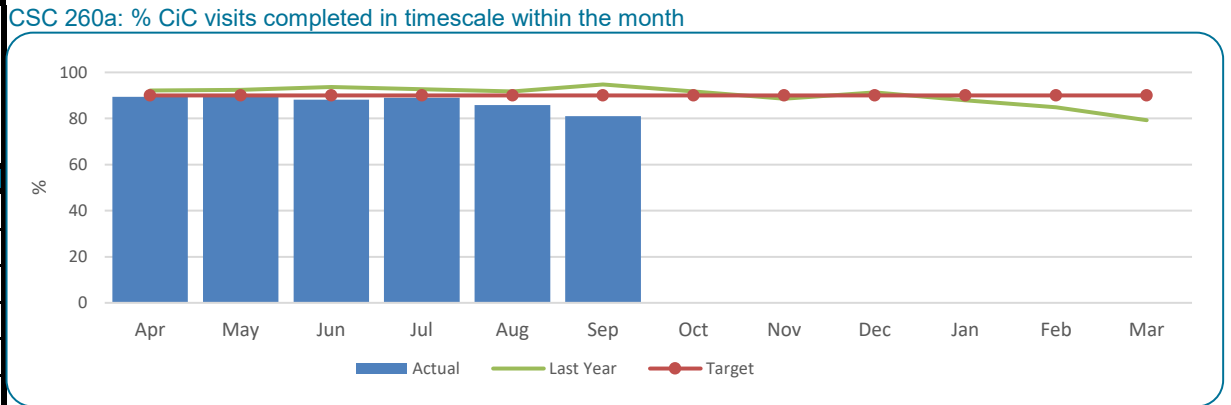
## CHILDREN IN CARE: STATUTORY VISITS

<b>DEFINITION</b>	Percentage of Children in Care (CiC) who had all statutory visits completed within required timescales each month and year to date.
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<b>PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS</b>	85.2% of statutory visits for Children in Care (CiC) were completed in timescale in Q2 2022/23. This is a decrease when compared with Q2 2021/22 (93.0%) and Q2 2020/21 (90.9%) and the year to date completed in timescale remains below target of 90%.
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		CSC 260a	CSC 260b
		% CiC visits completed in timescale within the month	% CiC visits completed in timescale year to date
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>
	Apr-22	89.4	89.4
	May-22	89.4	89.4
	Jun-22	88.1	89.0
	Jul-22	88.9	89.0
	Aug-22	85.8	88.2
	Sep-22	81.0	87.0
	Oct-22		
	Nov-22		
	Dec-22		
	Jan-23		
	Feb-23		
	Mar-23		
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	89.0	89.0
	2020/21	93.1	93.1
	2021/22	90.1	90.1
	2022/23	81.0	87.0



## CHILDREN IN CARE: PLACEMENTS

**DEFINITION** Of those Children in Care (CiC) at the point in time (excluding series of short-term placements), the percentage that had 3 or more separate placements in the previous 12 months; who (under the age of 16 years) had been in their current placement for 2 or more years. and who were placed more than 20 miles away from their home address. Proper assessment and an adequate choice of placements to meet the varied needs of different children are essential if appropriate stable placements are to be made. Inappropriate placements often break down and lead to frequent moves. Nevertheless, the circumstances of some individual children will require 3 or more separate placements during a year if they and others are to be kept safe.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

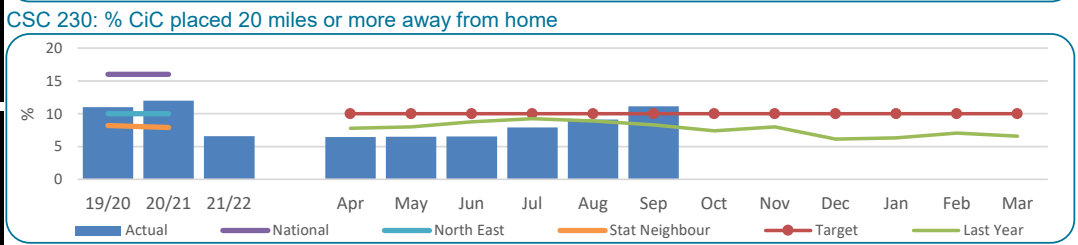
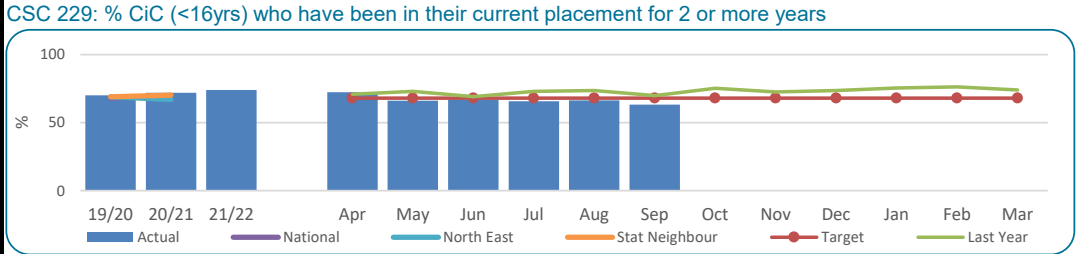
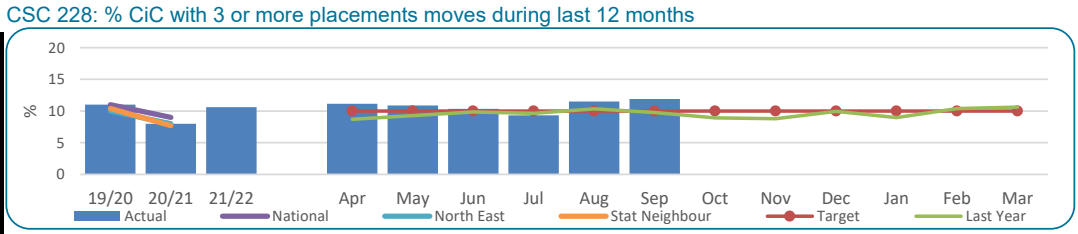
11.9% of our Children in Care, as at September 2022, have had 3 or more placements within the previous 12 months. This is negatively above internal target (10.0%), and above the 9.8% as at September 2021.

Currently, 63.3% of our Children in Care aged under 16 (who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years) have been in their current placement continuously for at least 2 years. This is negatively below our 68% internal target.

11.1% of our Children in Care have been placed 20 or more miles away from home as at September 2022. Although higher than target of 10% and higher than September 2021 (8.3%), all these placements have been confirmed by team managers to be appropriate for the child enabling them to have the best support either with family links or specialised care.

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		CSC 228	CSC 229	CSC 230
		% CiC with 3 or more placements moves during last 12 months	% CiC (<16yrs) who have been in their current placement for 2 or more years	% CiC placed 20 miles or more away from home
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>10%</b>
	Apr-22	11.2	72.3	6.4
	May-22	10.9	66.1	6.5
	Jun-22	10.4	67.0	6.5
	Jul-22	9.3	65.8	7.9
	Aug-22	11.5	66.4	9.1
	Sep-22	11.9	63.3	11.1
	Oct-22			
	Nov-22			
	Dec-22			
	Jan-23			
	Feb-23			
Mar-23				
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	11.0	70.0	11.0
	2020/21	8.0	72.0	12.0
	2021/22	10.6	74.0	6.6
	2022/23	11.9	63.3	11.1



## CHILDREN IN CARE: INITIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

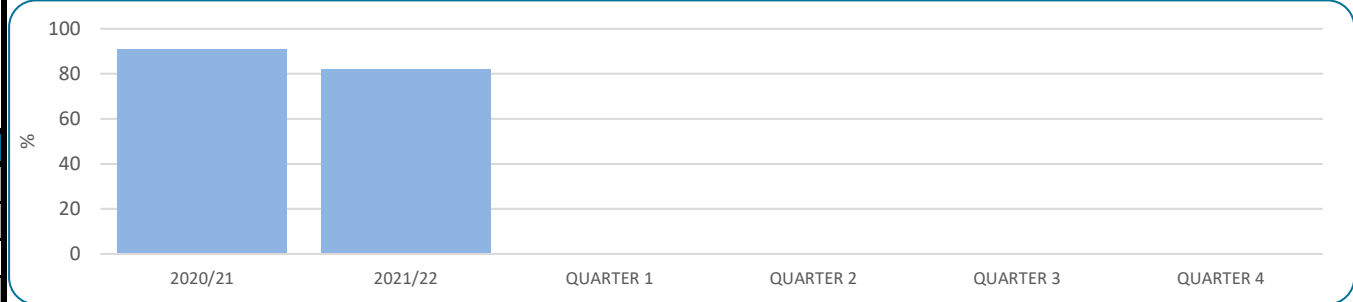
<b>DEFINITION</b>	Percentage of Initial Health Assessments completed within 20 working days of a child coming into our care year to date (data from Health), and percentage of IHA forms returned to Health within 7 working days. This excludes children / young people coming into care due to being remand or UASC.
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<b>PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS</b>	The quarterly reports from health have been requested to understand how many of the assessments have gone on to be completed within the 20 day timescale.
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		Completed IHA within 20 working days (by Health)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>95</b>
	Apr-22	
	May-22	
	Jun-22	TBC /
	Jul-22	
	Aug-22	
	Sep-22	TBC /
	Oct-22	
	Nov-22	
	Dec-22	
	Jan-23	
	Feb-23	
	Mar-23	
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	72.9
	2020/21	90.9
	2021/22	82.1
	2022/23	

Completed IHA within 20 working days (by Health)



## CHILDREN IN CARE: HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

### DEFINITION

Of the Children in Care (CiC) at 31 March who had been in care continuously for at least 12 months, the percentage who have had their Review Health Assessment (RHA) completed and the percentage who have an up to date Health Check (excludes any who will turn 18 before 31st March). Children in Care share many of the same health risks and problems as their peers, but often to a greater degree. These indicators track the participation of our Children in Care's health as a proxy for monitoring the general health and wellbeing of the children, as well as providing a check on the effectiveness of joint working with Health to secure good health outcomes for Children in Care.

### PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

72.4% of children due a review health assessment by September 2022 have had one completed.

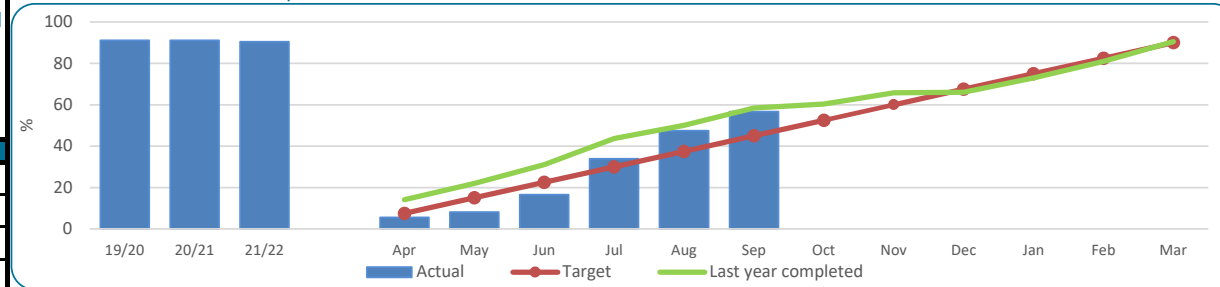
Of the children who have not had their health review, 5.7% of them are refusing to have one completed at this time. Although they are refusing, they are continually reminded of the benefits of having a check-up and encouraged to take part.

CSC 250

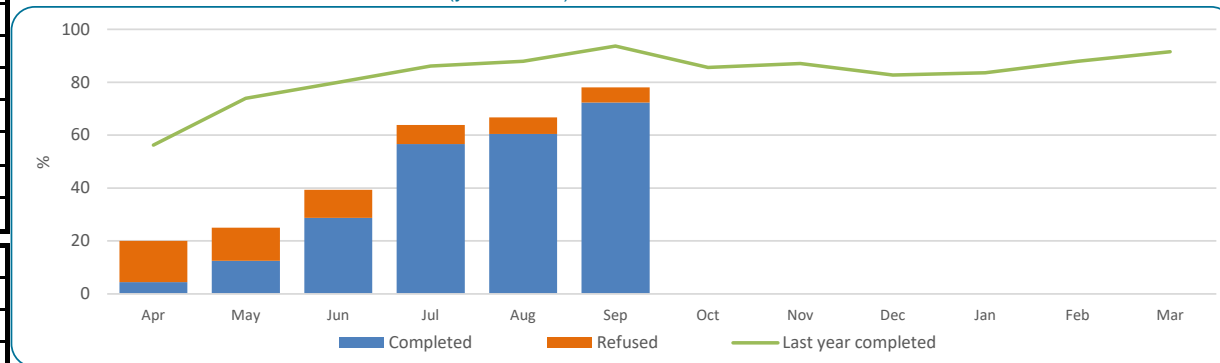
CSC 250b

	CSC 250		CSC 250b	
	Target	% of CiC who have an up to date health checks	% of CiC refusing engagement in their review health check (in month)	% of CiC who had a review health check completed (year to date)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	90%			90%
Apr-22		5.6	15.6	4.4
May-22		8.1	12.5	12.5
Jun-22		16.5	10.6	28.8
Jul-22		33.9	7.2	56.6
Aug-22		47.5	6.3	60.4
Sep-22		56.7	5.7	72.4
Oct-22				
Nov-22				
Dec-22				
Jan-23				
Feb-23				
Mar-23				
<b>Annual Trend</b>				
2019/20		91.2	3.1	93.3
2020/21		91.2	3.7	91.2
2021/22		90.5	3.7	91.6
2022/23		56.7	5.7	72.4

CSC 250: % of CiC who are up to date for a review health check



CSC 250b: % of CiC due a review health check (year to date) that have had one, and % that refused



## CHILDREN IN CARE: DENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

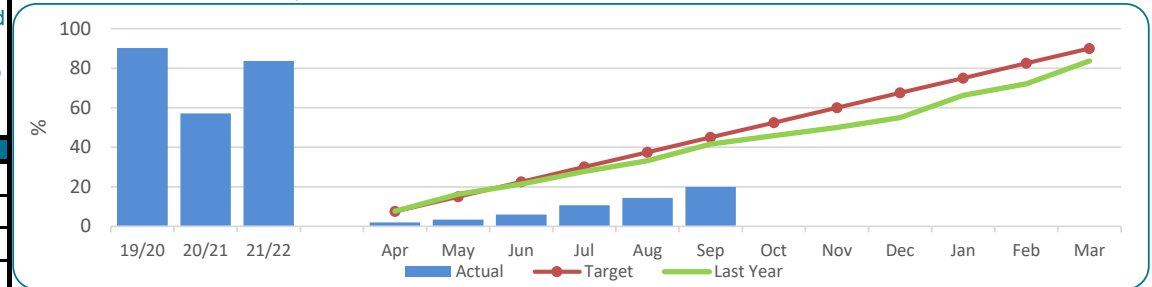
**DEFINITION**  
 Of the Children in Care (CiC) at 31 March who had been in care continuously for at least 12 months, the percentage who had had their teeth checked by a dentist during the previous 12 months, and the percentage who had had an annual health check during the previous 12 months (excludes any who will turn 18 before 31st March). Children in Care share many of the same health risks and problems as their peers, but often to a greater degree. These indicators track the participation of our Children in Care with dental checks as a proxy for monitoring the general health and wellbeing of the children, as well as providing a check on the effectiveness of joint working with Health to secure good health outcomes for Children in Care.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**  
 40.7% of children due a dental check assessment by September 2022 have had one completed. Work is progressing to secure check-ups with an NHS dentist which should see this proportion rise over the next couple of months.  
 Of the children who have not had their dental check, 1.9% of them are refusing to have one completed at this time. Although they are refusing, they are continually reminded of the benefits of having a check-up and encouraged to take part.

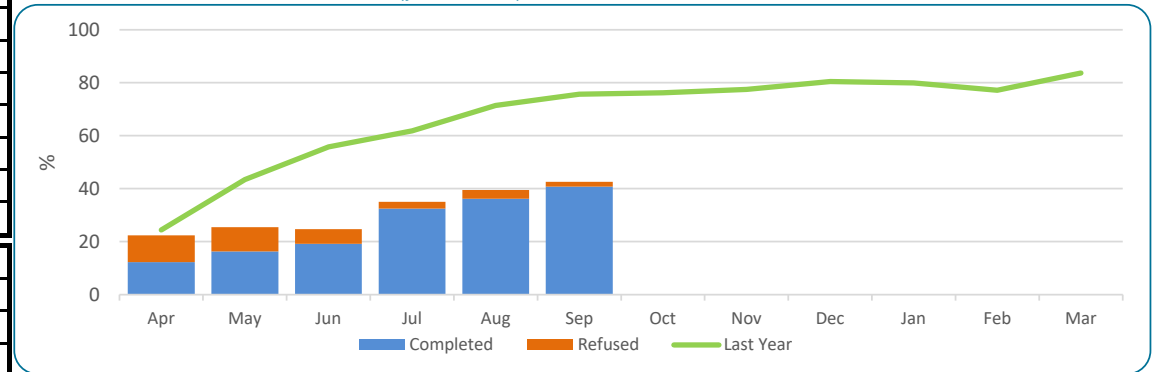
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		CSC 251	CSC 251d	
		% of CiC who have an up to date dental check	% of CiC refusing engagement in their dental check (in month)	% of CiC who had a dental check completed (year to date)
<b>In Month Performance</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>90%</b>		<b>90%</b>
	Apr-22	2.0	10.2	12.2
	May-22	3.5	9.1	16.4
	Jun-22	5.9	5.5	19.2
	Jul-22	10.6	2.6	32.5
	Aug-22	14.4	3.3	36.3
	Sep-22	19.9	1.9	40.7
	Oct-22			
	Nov-22			
	Dec-22			
	Jan-23			
	Feb-23			
	Mar-23			
<b>Annual Trend</b>	2019/20	90.2	3.1	90.2
	2020/21	57.2	2.8	57.2
	2021/22	83.7	2.6	83.7
	2022/23	19.9	1.9	40.7

CSC 251: % of CiC who are up to date for a dental check



CSC 251d: % of CiC due a dental check (year to date) that have had one, and the % that refused





## CARE LEAVERS

**DEFINITION**  
Former relevant care leavers split to show the young people who, at 31st March, will be aged 19-21 and those who will be aged 22-25. The percentage who were in suitable accommodation at their most recent contact, and the percentage who were not in employment, education or training at their most recent contact. This measures accommodation and employment outcomes for young people formerly in care - a key group at risk of social exclusion. It is intended to increase the proportion of former care leavers who are in suitable accommodation and employment, education or training.

**PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

98.2% of our care leavers aged 19-21 and 96.1% of our care leavers aged 22-25 were in suitable accommodation at the end of June 2022. This is below 100% due to young people being in custody.

Of the care leavers, aged 19-21, as of 30th September 2022, the following were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

- 3.6% NEET because of illness or disability
- 8.9% NEET because of other circumstances
- 7.1% NEET because of pregnancy or parenting.

This equates to 19.6% of our care leavers which is positively below the internal target of 30% NEET.

Of the care leavers, aged 22-25, as of 30th September 2022, the following were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

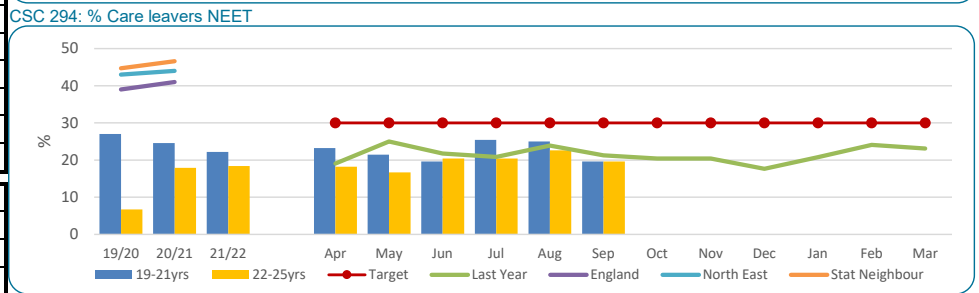
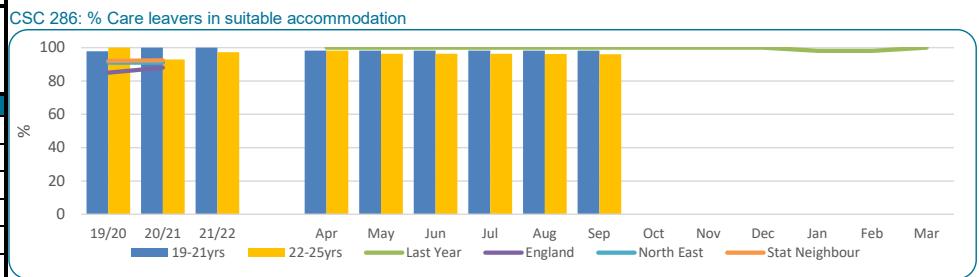
- 5.9% NEET because of illness or disability
- 5.9% NEET because of other circumstances
- 7.8% NEET because of pregnancy or parenting.

This equates to 19.6%.

21.4% young people, aged 19-21, were engaging in education (10.7% are in studies beyond A level) and 58.9% young people were in training or employment (28.6% in full time, 30.3% in part time).

11.8% young people, aged 22-25, were engaging in education (7.8% are in studies beyond A level) and 68.6% young people were in training or employment (23.5% in full time, 45.1% in part time).

	19-21 year olds		22-25 year olds	
	% Care leavers in suitable accommodation	% Care leavers NEET	% Care leavers in suitable accommodation	% Care leavers NEET
<b>Target</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>30%</b>		
<b>Apr-22</b>	98.2	23.2	98.2	18.2
<b>May-22</b>	98.2	21.4	96.3	16.7
<b>Jun-22</b>	98.2	19.6	96.3	20.4
<b>Jul-22</b>	98.2	25.5	96.3	20.4
<b>Aug-22</b>	98.2	25.0	96.2	22.6
<b>Sep-22</b>	98.2	19.6	96.1	19.6
<b>Oct-22</b>				
<b>Nov-22</b>				
<b>Dec-22</b>				
<b>Jan-23</b>				
<b>Feb-23</b>				
<b>Mar-23</b>				
<b>Annual Trend</b>				
2019/20	97.8	27.0	100.0	6.7
2020/21	100.0	24.6	92.9	17.9
2021/22	100.0	22.2	97.3	18.4
2022/23	98.2	19.6	96.1	19.6



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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
19 DECEMBER 2022**

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**THE REFRESHED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES PLAN 2023 -2028**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report asks Scrutiny to consider the proposals for the refreshed Children and Young People’s Plan 2023 – 2028. Although no longer a statutory requirement, the production of a Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) as a strategic plan for delivering outcomes for children and young people and the setting of priorities for the medium term, and as such is considered to be best practice.

**Summary**

2. The CYPP is one of the identified delivery plans within the Council Plan and identifies what key actions will be taken to deliver the agreed priority of “ensuring that every child in Darlington has the best start in life so that our children and young people can grow and flourish.”
3. The CYPP forms a part of the Council’s Policy Framework and must therefore be approved by Council.
4. Engagement activity with a wide range of stakeholders, including children and young people has been used to develop the refreshed Plan. Consultation feedback on the draft ambitions and priority actions will be used to inform the final refreshed CYPP 2023 - 2027 Plan which will be launched in Spring 2023.

**Recommendation**

5. It is recommended that Scrutiny consider the proposed approach to refreshing the CYPP.

**Christine Shields  
Assistant Director Commissioning Performance and Transformation**

**Background Papers**

6. No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

S17 Crime and Disorder	This plan will support measures to reduce crime and disorder amongst young people
Health and Wellbeing	This report supports the strategy to improve the health and well-being of children and young people
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no implications arising from this report
Diversity	There are no implications arising from this report
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Children and Young People
Budget and Policy Framework	N/A
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Council Plan	This report contributes to the priorities agreed by the Council
Efficiency	This report supports the efficient use of partner resources through shared priorities
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

7. Although there is no longer a statutory requirement to produce a CYPP, it is considered good practice to produce a strategic document across partner organisations as there is still a statutory duty for partner agencies to co-operate to support and safeguard children. Regulatory bodies, such as Ofsted also routinely comment on the existence or otherwise of a strategic plan.
8. Development of the refreshed Plan has taken place with input from a wide range of stakeholders including children and young people; young carers; health; police; the voluntary sector, and schools.
9. The Plan is being produced at a time of significant austerity in public finances and will need to be delivered within existing resources, maximising partnership working to deliver the refreshed Plan, and use every opportunity, where possible, to attract additional funding.
10. The refreshed CYPP will be a five-year plan and will be reviewed each year to ensure the key actions being addressed are based on evidence of where the greatest need is and where the biggest impact can be made.
11. Progress against the refreshed CYPP will be managed through the Health and Well Being Board.
12. The refreshed CYPP and its priorities is being extensively consulted on using direct face to face consultation within local schools and the College and with the Darlington Youth Partnership and the Youth MP. Engagement of key partners has also taken place through a multi-agency Steering Group.
13. Following consultation the approach being proposed for the refreshed CYPP is to outline the revised ambitions and priorities for Darlington using short videos/blogs and a poster rather than a lengthy document.
14. Appendix 1 highlights some of the feedback from young people as part of: Make Your Mark; Junior Member of Youth Parliament elections; the Health & Well-being Focus Group held at Polham Hall school and consultation held during Holiday Activity Fund activity sessions.
15. Information has been sent out to schools in their October bulletin and has also been emailed directly to teachers leading on School Council activity (see Appendix 2). Several schools have already responded, and others have invited the Participation Team to meet their school council to discuss their ideas around the 3 themes. Appendix 3 shows photos taken at a session recently held at Redhall school.
16. A Council of School Council meeting will take place towards the end of November which will focus on the refreshed CYPP.
17. To ensure every young person has the opportunity to voice their opinion there has been activity on our Social Media platforms encouraging children and young people to share their views. Emails have gone out to the Consultation & Engagement Network and direct emails

have also been sent to various community and voluntary sector groups such as uniformed organisations, as well as church and support groups.

18. Amy Edwards, Darlington's Junior Member of Youth Parliament, and her Deputy Ella Wallace have created videos on what makes them Glad, Mad & Sad about living in Darlington. Ella's video was posted to social media sites on 20 October. To date it has had 1.2k views and has a reach of 2.9k. There are 6 comments on the original post, with 2 sharing their glad, sad, and mad ideas. The post has been shared 11 times and had a total of 20 comments and 41 reactions. Amy's video was shared on 9<sup>th</sup> of November, and figures will be reported in due course.
19. All videos that are collected as part of this ongoing work will be compiled into a full-length video. This will be hosted on YouTube and will be posted on Darlington Borough Council and partners websites. It will also be used on our social media channels to promote the refreshed CYPP, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (depending on the length of the video).
20. The poster will also be featured on the website and in social media, and will be sent across to local nurseries, schools, colleges, and our partners. We would recommend that they either print them out for use in their spaces or newsletters or be hosted digitally on their websites.
21. The refreshed CYPP will be completed and launched in Spring 2023

## Appendix 1 - Children & Young People's Consultation

### **MYM** (Feb 2022) – 7 secondary schools/3477 votes

- Health & Well-being – access to MH support and food poverty
- Environment – Climate Change & Plastic Pollution
- Education & Learning – Improved Climate education, free uni and better MH support

### **JMYP** (March 2022) – 12 primary school/1241 votes across year 4, 5 & 6

- Free outdoor activities to help keep children fit and healthy
- School to plant more trees – cleaner air
- Children to help choose new school staff
- Road Safety – stricter speed limits around school
- Bullying – blanket policy across all schools
- Environment – recycling mandatory across all schools & environmental education as part of PSHE

### **Well-being Focus Group at Polam Hall (July 2022)**– School Council Reps

#### I feel healthy when?

- Good nutrition and feel positive and happy - school improving balanced diet by demonstrating & improving understanding of good nutrition – practical examples
- Good mood and feel more motivated
- Sleep and good breakfast
- Sport & exercise
- Good environment and positive attitude
- Reading leads to good mental health – variety of books difference between school & reading for pleasure
- When I feel motivated – which happens when I have been outdoors and taken part in exercise – see a big improvement since covid

#### Describe Health and Wellbeing in 3 words?

- Happy, safe, growth
- Mood, mental, physical
- Self-care, environment, people
- Safety, happiness, relationships with friends & family
- Peace of mind (effects the way you learn – school help but its out responsibility took a hit through covid, but schools did what they could)
- Comfortable, secure, kind
- Calm, family, life

#### What are the main issues affecting young people in your area?

- Mental wellbeing – not seen as important as physical wellbeing – anxiety/scared to come back to school
- Social anxiety – pressure of coming back and what people might say
- Isolation – shock to the system to be back at school/leaving family members
- What kids can access at the shops – unhealthy food
- Self-confidence – living on social media and pressure to live perfect lives

- Eating things that aren't good for you and being shamed for it
- Generalisation/stereotypes – grown-ups' expectations of what they think young people will do and the worries of young people spreading covid 'super spreaders'

What are some of the solutions?

- CHAM's waiting lists to long – 6mths to 2 yrs. – groups sessions might help and free up time for those in need of more support on an individual basis
- Not enough places to go and do positive activities – for example community centres – this leads to issues when young people play out without supervision – parent classes to help those with issues live in a calmer environment
- Shops – target local smaller shops and ask them to do better – not sell unhealthy things to children
- Violence and aggression – seen in the media
- Social media makes young people mature quickly – seeing things a lot earlier than younger generations

What do you wish people in power knew?

- Don't generalise – not everything works for everyone – there is not enough research happening
- Set some rules – adults educated around how to treat and talk to young people
- Stereotyping young people does not help – makes MH worse
- Peer to peer support
- Get down with the young people!
- Don't have experience of growing up now – we are people not numbers and stats
- Understand that economics and things important but so is mental health

How accessible are Health and Wellbeing services for young people?

- Often find support is marketed to adults or not in a way to attract young people's attention – often underestimate our intelligence
- What about using pop-ups or adverts and directly target young people
- Accessibility for young people to access MH support is very slim – needs to be a wider range of support (discussed I Thrive model)
- Accessibility to support on the internet is great but how do we know we are accessing the right support
- Discussed Kooth – what's its usage? Felt it was a good balance but not for everyone

### **HAF Sessions (Summer 2022)**

Firthmoor – 6-10 years old

What's good?

- Soft play – DC & roarsome, rof59, planet leisure, jump 360
- Game World
- Dolphin Centre – all the activities it offers
- Feel safe in local area/ parents & HAF club makes me feel safe
- Events in town over summer – beach party and magic
- HAF sessions – spending time with friends, making new friends, learning new skills
- Parks – South Park, Preston Park
- Shopping in town
- After school clubs



- Hippodrome
- MUGA to play football in
- Railway Museum
- No worries – at school I have people to talk too

Want to see more of?

- More activities – outdoor water park like at Chester-Le-Street, bug hunting club, jewellery making classes
- More shows & activities at Firthmoor Community Centre
- Plant more trees
- Trip
- School – only 3 days a week!
- Schools keeping up with technology
- Better school lunches
- More spaces to learn new sports & make new friends – more HAF clubs
- More bins and bins that make compact & compost

Mount Pleasant – 7- to 10-year-olds (Dave Draws map of Darlington)

What's good?

- Nice places to walk – fields and along the river
- Dolphin Centre – all activities
- Head of Steam
- Theatre
- Brick train
- South Park – lots of space
- Cockerton Park
- Planet Leisure
- 'It's my home town'
- Library and holiday activities

More of?

- Activities on the river!
- Cut the grass in the parks
- Plant more trees
- Sometimes I don't feel safe down the alleys near me as there are gangs of older young people

Corporation Road Primary – 7- to 10-year-olds

What's good?

- All the activities & events in the town centre
- Soft plays
- Dolphin Centre
- Shopping
- Eating out – white horse pub, Starbucks & Costa
- Library – reading challenge
- Outdoor ambitions activities in parks
- Head of Steam

- Gymnastics Club
- After school clubs
- Hangout and play at Springfield Park and North Park - feel safe but sometimes the teenagers make it a bit scary
- Play out after school with friends and I feel safe
- I ride my bike to friends' houses and we hang out and listen to music

More of?

- More clubs – after school activities like those we've enjoyed at HAF
- Littering campaigns
- Plant more trees
- Stop pollution of our local areas

How do you feel?

- Bullying can happen anywhere, and it can cause worries
- 'I have a lot of stress in my life, so I draw a lot to help relax
- Feel relaxed about my SAT's – looking forward to them being over so I can go on a residential
- Stop bullying – there should be no more fighting

Dolphin Centre – 10 to 14 years olds from Carmel and Rydal

What's good?

- Darlington is quiet
- People take care of you
- These HAF activities – apart from dance and no swimming this time!
- Town Centre
- Dolphin Centre
- Library – need more books in different languages/enjoyed activities in holiday for example Harry Potter
- Head of Steam
- Schools are really good

What's not so good?

- Bullying – not dealt with when reported
- Vaping should be stopped
- More swimming in schools
- Tackling the litter issues in local areas
- Worry about the environment
- Pedestrian safety – not enough zebra crossings
- Paths and roads need fixing as not safe when riding our bikes/ more bike paths
- More bike trails – ramps not just in skate park areas
- Bus stops with cover for people waiting – often go to school wet!
- Sporting events & activities for everyone – now in secondary schools activities are very selective – non-competitive opportunities
- Bands in the parks
- Treasure hunts

Dolphin Centre – 7 to 11 years old – Wyvern, Reid Street, Mount Pleasant, Holy family, Winfield

What's good?

- Dolphin Centre
- HAF activities
- People are nice
- Shops in the town centre
- Parks – Cockerton, West Park, Preston, South Park, Denes
- Head of Steam
- Activities – football, gymnastics, dance

What could be better?

- Everyone learn sign-language
- Better sized houses
- Ban drugs and smoking
- Tackle littering, more recycling, stop vandalism
- Improve roads and paths – stop us tripping over
- Pedestrian safety - more zebra crossings and better placement of them
- Bike riding safety
- Healthy food in schools
- More clubs like this (HAF)/ give us chance to have taster sessions of lots of different sports & activities
- Bus stops and buses being late

Worries

- Cost of living crisis – worries for my parents now and me when I am older
- More and better jobs
- Like to play out but sometimes don't because of gangs of teenagers

## Appendix 2

### Email to schools

#### **What makes you happy? Children and Young People's Plan – attachment 3**

- *Darlington Borough Council is in the process of refreshing the Children and Young People's Plan. The aim of the plan is to understand the needs of children and young people and ensure we are able to provide the best support possible to everyone aged 0–25-year-old living in Darlington.*
- *A copy of the current plan can be found [here](#) and as you will see, it is rather long! We are hoping to make this plan much simpler and children and young people friendly.*
- *To help us ensure we are doing our very best, we would love to hear from your pupils! We simply want them to tell us, what makes them GLAD, MAD & SAD about growing up in Darlington.*
- *They can draw a picture using the template below, take some photos or make a short video however they want to respond. Their responses will be used to help ensure we are providing our children and young people with what they need and please note they may be used in future marketing so parental consent might be required.*
- *If your School Council would like us to come in and talk to them about this then please get in touch with [joanne.shutt@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.shutt@darlington.gov.uk) by Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> November. We'll be more than happy to come along, have a good discussion and help with recording their thoughts either via a short video or simply making some notes.*

**Living in Darlington -  
What makes you...**

Glad?  
.....

Sad?  
.....

Mad?  
.....

Darlington Borough Council with partners such as the Police, Health and voluntary sector are looking to refresh our Children and Young People's Plan.

The aim of the Plan is to help us make Darlington the best possible town to grow up in.

If you go to school or college in Darlington can you help us make sure we are looking at the things most important to you!

Draw or write what makes you glad, sad and mad about living in Darlington in the spaces provided overleaf

When you're done, fill in the information below:

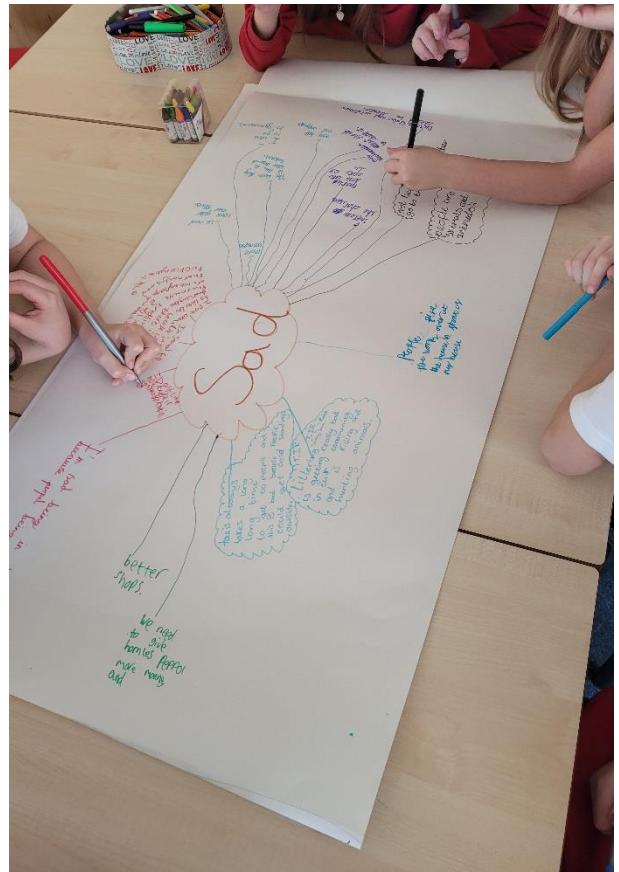
Name .....

Age .....

School .....

.....

Appendix 3



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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
19 DECEMBER 2022**

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**WORK PROGRAMME**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2022/23 Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included.

**Summary**

2. Members are requested to consider the attached draft work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the 2022/23 Municipal Year which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and recommendations previously agreed by this Scrutiny Committee in the last Municipal Year.
3. Once the work programme has been approved by this Scrutiny Committee, any additional areas of work which Members wish to add to the agreed work programme will require the completion of a quad of aims in accordance with the previously approved procedure. (**Appendix 2**)

**Recommendations**

4. Members are requested to note the work programme and consider any additional items which they may wish to include.

**Luke Swinhoe  
Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Author: Allison Hill

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Council Plan	The report contributes to the Council Plan in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the Plan.
Efficiency	The Work Programmes are integral to scrutinising and monitoring services efficiently (and effectively), however this report does not identify specific efficiency savings.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. The format of the proposed work programme has been reviewed to enable Members of this Scrutiny Committee to provide a rigorous and informed challenge to the areas for discussion.
6. The Council Plan sets the vision and strategic direction for the Council through to May 2023, with its overarching focus being 'Delivering Success for Darlington' .
7. In approving the Council Plan, Members have agreed to the vision for Darlington which is a place where people want to live and businesses want to locate, where the economy continues to grow, where people are happy and proud of the borough and where everyone has the opportunity to maximise their potential.
8. The vision for the Children and Young People portfolio is :

**'a borough where young people get the best start in life, can maximise their potential and are safe'**



to maximise the potential of our young people by working with partners to maximise educational achievement; working to remove barriers to young people reaching their potential and working at a Tees Valley level to match jobs with skills and training.

#### **Forward Plan and Additional Items**

9. Any Member seeking to add a new item to the work programme will need to complete a quad of aims. **Appendix 2**
10. A copy of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

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## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
<b>Performance Management and Regulation</b>	Q2 19 Dec 2022	Sharon Raine	Agreed set of indicators	To receive quarterly monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary
<b>Children and Young Peoples Plan 2023-28</b>	19 December 2022	Christine Shields		To consider the proposals for a refreshed Children and Young Peoples Plan
<b>Darlington Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report</b>	19 December 2022	Ann Baxter, Independent Chair		Annual monitoring
<b>Outcomes of the recent Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services</b>	19 December 2022	Chris Bell		To provide Members with an update on the outcomes of the recent Ofsted Inspection
<b>Medium Term Financial Plan</b>	9 January 2023 Special Meeting	Elizabeth Davison		To consider the MTFP and scrutinise those areas within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee
<b>2022/23 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment</b>	27 February 2023	Tony Murphy/Nicola Davies		Annual Report
<b>IRO Annual Report</b>	27 February 2023	Martin Graham	CSC201	To examine the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer for Looked After Children

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Link to PMF (metrics)</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role</b>
<b>Children's Services Self-Assessment - Overview</b>	September 2023	Chris Bell		To provide Scrutiny with the Annual Self-Assessment for Children's Services so that constructive 'critical friend' challenge takes place to drive improvement in public services
<b>Children and Young People Public Health Overview and Childhood Healthy Weight Plan</b>	September 2023	Ken Ross	PBH 009 PBH 013c PBH 016 PBH 018 PBH 020 PBH 021 PBH 054	Annual Monitoring
<b>Local Designated Officer Annual Report</b>	September 2023	James Stroyan		To examine the Annual Report and assure Members that allegations made against staff who work with children are reported and how they are actioned
<b>SEND Written Statement of Action</b>	Tba	Tony Murphy		To continue to update scrutiny committee on the implementation and progress of the SEND Written Statement of Action developed following the Ofsted/CQC Inspection on the provision of Special Educational Needs (SEND) support in Darlington.
<b>Learning and Skills Service Annual Report</b>	October 2023	Paul Richardson		Annual Report to demonstrate challenge

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Link to PMF (metrics)</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role</b>
<b>Adoption Tees Valley Annual Report 2021/22</b>	October 2023	Vicky Davidson-Boyd, Service Manager, Adoption Tees Valley		Annual monitoring

**REVIEWS PENDING**

<b>Autism Provision Review Group</b>	Final Report to Health and Housing on 14 April 2021.  Cross Party Joint Working Group to be established – ongoing.	Christine Shields	To review the provisions and services and contractual arrangements between this Council and our providers who provide the Autism provisions, diagnoses and support services for Darlington
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**MEMBER BRIEFINGS**

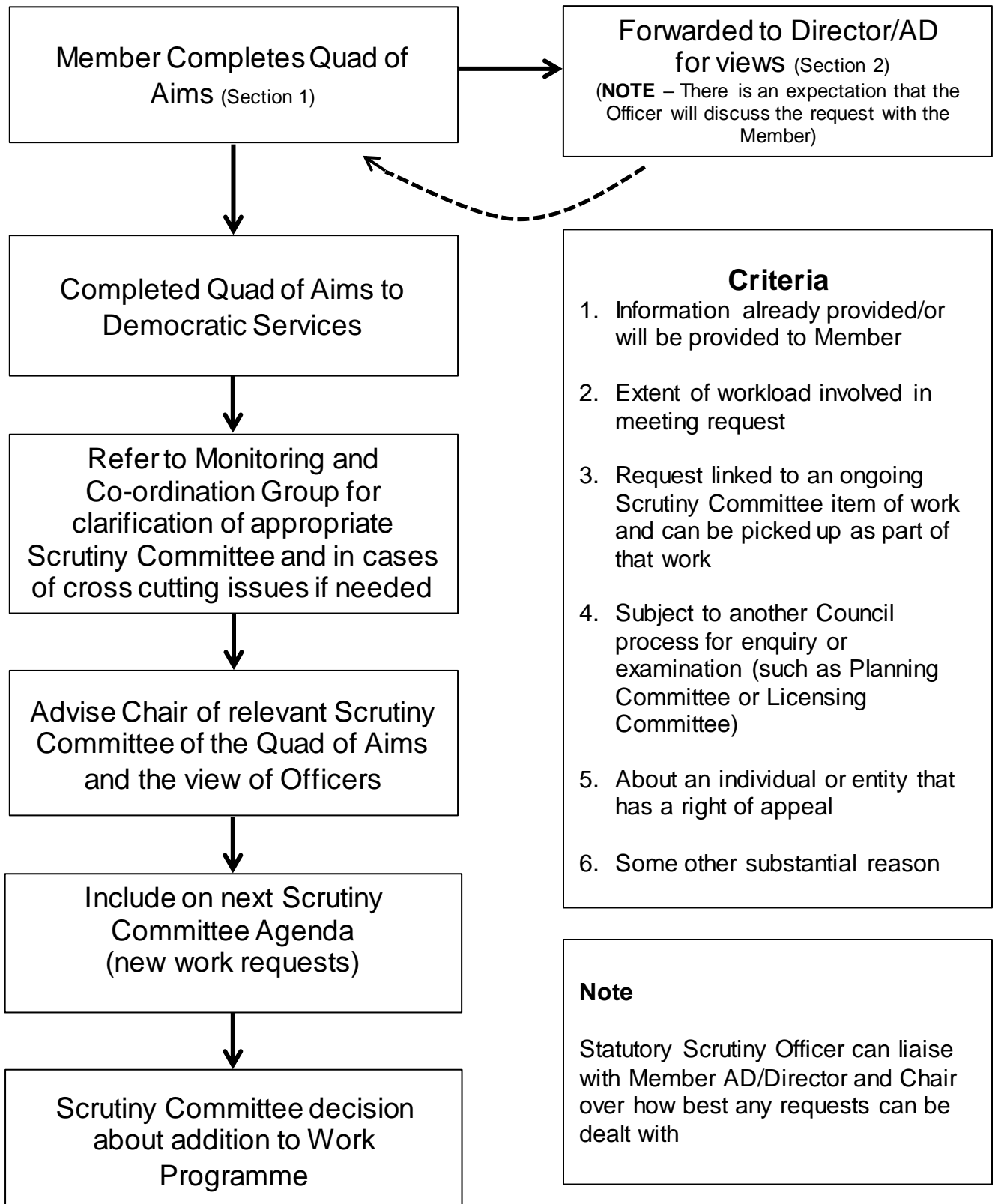
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Link to PMF (metrics)</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role</b>
Tees Valley Combined Authority Education and Skills – Role and Funding	4 February 2022	Shona Duncan, Head of Employment, Education and Skills, Tees Valley Combined Authority		Joint presentation to CYP and Economy and Resources Scrutiny to receive specific information on the funding allocation as it relates to this authority and where the spend (adult education up to 28 years) is being focused.
Meet with Young People (Council or Schools)	22 February 2022	Joanne Shutt		

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Link to PMF (metrics)</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role</b>
Councils/Youth Partnership)				

**ARCHIVED ITEMS**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>When considered</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Scrutiny's Role</b>
<b>Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26</b>	Special 10 January 2022	Elizabeth Davison	To consider the MTFP 2022/23 to 2025/26 and make any views, and in particular, those in relation to those services and finances which are specifically within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee
<b>Accessibility Strategy</b>	21 February 2022	Tony Murphy/ Eleanor Marshall	Progress to date in respect of the review of the Special Educational Needs (SEND) Accessibility Strategy 2017-2020
<b>Vulnerable Pupil Panel</b>	25 April 2022	Tony Murphy/Calvin Kipling	To examine the mechanics of the vulnerable pupil panel and to learn about the process and what the scale of the attendance challenge is
<b>Missing and Exploited Young People</b>	27 June 2022	Alison Poulter	To provide Scrutiny with an update following concerns over the increase in numbers of missing
<b>Childcare Sufficiency Task and Finish Review Final Report</b>	31 October 2022	Tony Murphy/Helen Ellison	To report the findings and recommendations of the Group

## PROCESS FOR ADDING AN ITEM TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WORK PROGRAMME



**PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

# QUAD OF AIMS (MEMBERS' REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED BY SCRUTINY)

## SECTION 1 TO BE COMPLETED BY MEMBERS

**NOTE** – This document should only be completed if there is a clearly defined and significant outcome from any potential further work. This document should **not** be completed as a request for or understanding of information.

REASON FOR REQUEST?	RESOURCE (WHAT OFFICER SUPPORT WOULD YOU REQUIRE?)
PROCESS (HOW CAN SCRUTINY ACHIEVE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOME?)	HOW WILL THE OUTCOME MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

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Signed Councillor .....

Date .....



**SECTION 2 TO BE COMPLETED BY DIRECTORS/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS**  
**(NOTE – There is an expectation that Officers will discuss the request with the Member)**

	Criteria
1. (a) Is the information available elsewhere? Yes ..... No ..... If yes, please indicate where the information can be found (attach if possible and return with this document to Democratic Services) .....	1. Information already provided/or will be provided to Member
(b) Have you already provided the information to the Member or will you shortly be doing so? .....	2. Extent of workload involved in meeting request
2. If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff? .....	3. Request linked to an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and can be picked up as part of that work
3. Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that? .....	4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee)
4. Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway? .....	5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal
5. Has the individual or entity some other right of appeal? .....	6. Some other substantial reason
6. Is there any substantial reason (other than the above) why you feel it should not be included on the work programme? .....	

**PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**Signed** ..... **Position** ..... **Date** .....

**PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLAN**



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

**FORWARD PLAN  
FOR THE PERIOD: 2 NOVEMBER 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023**

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Council Tax Exemption for Care Leavers 2023/24	Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Council Tax Support - Scheme Approval 2023/24	Council 24 Nov 2022 Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Darlington Transport Plan, Darlington Town Centre Transport Plan and Darlington Parking Strategy	Council 24 Nov 2022 Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Disposal of Land at Neasham Road for Housing Development	Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Housing Complaints Reforms	Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 2 2022/23	Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 - Quarter 2	Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Town Centre Parking Offer	Cabinet 8 Nov 2022
Childcare Sufficiency Task and Finish Review	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Complaints Made to Local Government Ombudsman	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Final Version of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD) Design Code - Skertingham Garden Village	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
First Homes Policy Position Statement	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Health and Care Integration and the Health and Wellbeing Board	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Housing Revenue Account - Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Housing Services Fire Safety	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLAN**

Policy	
Land Assembly for Development at Gladstone Street / Kendrew Street (including Northgate House)	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Land at Faverdale - Burtree Garden Village Development	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Mid-Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management 2022/23	Council 26 Jan 2023 Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Procurement Plan Update	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Proposed Construction and Skills Hub on Council land at Faverdale	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Schedule of Transactions - December 2022	Cabinet 6 Dec 2022
Maintained Schools Capital Programme - Summer 2023	Cabinet 10 Jan 2023
Quarter 2 - Council Plan 2020/23 - Delivering Success for Darlington - Performance Report	Cabinet 10 Jan 2023
Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings 2023/24	Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Darlington Capital Strategy including Capital Programme	Council 16 Feb 2023 Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Housing Revenue Account - Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27	Council 16 Feb 2023 Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27	Council 16 Feb 2023 Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy Report 2023/24	Council 16 Feb 2023 Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3	Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Schools Admissions 2024/25	Cabinet 7 Feb 2023
Housing Services Allocations Policy	Cabinet 7 Mar 2023
Housing Services Low Cost Home Ownership Policy	Cabinet 7 Mar 2023

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
FORWARD PLAN**

Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)	Cabinet 7 Mar 2023
Annual Audit Letter 2020/21	Cabinet

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