

OPEN

Children and Families Committee

29 April 2024

Children and Families Q3 (October - December) Scorecard 2023/24

Report of: Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services

Report Reference No: CF/53/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide the Children and Families Committee with an overview of performance against the core indicator set within children's services. This report covers a range of the corporate objectives under the overarching corporate priority of a fair authority.

Executive Summary

- 2 This report provides an overview of quarter 3 performance for children and families services for the relevant indicators for the reporting year of 2023-24(1 October 2023 – 31 December 2023).
- 3 The committee will note the rate per 10,000 from quarter 3 is now calculated using the ONS mid-year estimate of 0-17 yr olds of 78,417 in line with the data published the latest Statistical first release [Children in need, Reporting year 2023 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics). This has increased from the 2020 mid year estimate of 78,068.
- 4 The committee will note that the national and statistical neighbour benchmarking data, where applicable, has been updated to reflect the 2022/23 reporting year statistical first release highlighted above

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Childrens and Families Committee is recommended to:

1. Scrutinise the performance of children's services for quarter 3.

Background

- 5 The outcomes framework scorecard contains 55 indicators across children's services and provides an overview of the core activity with the service areas that demonstrate how we support and safeguard children and young people in Cheshire East.
- 6 The following indicators have been highlighted for consideration – please note the numbers relate to the corresponding indicator in the attached appendix outcomes framework scorecard.

Social Care

- **1.15 - % of assessments completed within 45 days.** Quarter 3 shows a continued improvement, with a quarterly performance better than both the latest available statistical neighbour and national picture. This is seen as an early indicator that when needed individuals are receiving support in a timely fashion.
- **1.18-1.19 number and rate of S47 enquiries.** A s47 enquiry is undertaken when a child or young person is assessed to be at potential risk of significant harm. Our levels have been higher than our statistical neighbours. The Q3 performance and audit activity confirms that we are undertaking the appropriate level of intervention when required.
- **1.2 -1.21 – number and rate of Initial Child Protection Conferences.** Following a significantly high volume in quarter 2, the number in quarter 3 was more in line with an average quarter seen throughout 22/23. It is important to note that a couple of large families can have a significant impact on these indicators as they are report by individual not family cohort.
- **1.24 - % of ICPC within 15 days of S47 enquiry.** There has been a significant improvement in quarter 3. Holding the initial conference in a timely fashion, following the decision that one is required, is an indicator that the multi-agency partnership is working effectively to reduce risks and support families that require a more specialist intervention.
- **1.27-1.28 – number and rate of Children in Care.** The latest picture continues to show a reduction and whilst higher than statistical neighbours is lower than the national average and one of the lowest in the Northwest.

- **1.29** - Children looked after who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the last 12 months (%). There has been a small drop in quarter 3 performance. There is a focused piece of work to ensure that all appointments that have taken place have been captured and recorded in the appropriate section of the child's record together with addressing any overdue appointments with both carers and health.
- **1.31-1.32** – Children placed over 20 miles from their home address. There has been an increase in the % of both those placed in and out of borough. Whilst every effort is taken to place individuals close to their family and friends' network sometimes this is not possible. Whilst in some cases this may be the safest and most appropriate placement we continue to work closely with providers and develop our foster carer recruitment to ensure a sufficiency of provision within the borough.
- **1.37-1.4 – Social worker workforce data.** The latest data shows a reduction in the use of agency workers without a significant impact on overall establishment and vacancy rates. The continued oversight and management for timely closure is ensuring that caseloads remain consistent and at manageable levels.

Education

- **2.1-** There has been a small increase in the % of good/outstanding primary schools increase due to Monks Copenhall Primary Academy receiving a Good Inspection outcome for its first inspection since conversion. Together with secondary schools we remain consistently higher in the % of good and outstanding schools compared to our statistical neighbours and the national picture. The % of special schools is impacted by one school still awaiting inspection.
- **2.14 – 2.17** – Attendance data for the first term of the 23-24 school year shows a consistent picture at primary school level. Average attendance for secondary school students shows a slight improvement.
- **2.18 – Elective Home Education.** This is a slightly higher rate than Q2 but it is important to note this is a different school year cohort. Proactive work is ongoing by the team to support effective transition to new school years / establishments enabling the young people and families to re-enter school provision as soon as possible.

- **2.19 – Children Missing Education.** There is often an increase in Q3 when individuals don't enrol as expected at the start of the new school year. In the main this is because parent/guardians haven't notified that they have either moved or taken up an alternative place. The team utilises a national schools system to resolve UK moves together with national agencies where individuals are believed to have moved abroad.
- **2.2 - Total number with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) aged 0-25.** As a December 2023 there has been a further small increase in the number of individuals being supported with an EHCP. The team work with families over the summer period and at the start of new school years to ensure where needed the right support is in place to enable successful transitions to new schools.

Strong Start, Family Help, and Integration

- **3.14 – 3.15 - 2,3 and 4 -year-old offer.** The quarter 3 data shows a strong position with regards to the % of eligible children accessing the provision. This will give these young people to opportunity to achieve their full potential due to the earliest possible support.
- **3.16 – Supporting Families.** The local authority had a target of 480 families with successful outcomes in 2023-24. As at quarter 3 we have had 307 successful claims which is 64% of target.
- **3.17 – Young People accessing Youth Support offer.** We continue to offer a wide range of services across the borough which is evidenced by the increased number of individuals accessing a range of support.
- **3.18-3.19 –Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)–** This reflects a new cohort of Yr12 and 13. As in previous years there is a small increase in quarter 3. The reasons for being NEET include illness, caring responsibilities, or their initial choice post 16 not being the right next step for them. 6th form provisions, colleges and the youth service continue to work closely to provide a range of support to these young people.

Consultation and Engagement

7 Not applicable

Reasons for Recommendations

8 One of the key areas of focus for the Children and Families Committee is to review performance and scrutinise the effectiveness of services for

children and young people. This is in alignment with the strategic aims of a Fair Council.

Other Options Considered

9 Not applicable.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

10 There are no direct legal implications.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

11 Although there are no direct financial implications or changes to the MTFS as a result of this briefing paper, performance measures may be used as an indicator of budget pressures at a service level.

Policy

12 There are no direct policy implications.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

13 Members may want to use the information from the performance indicators to ensure that services are targeted at more vulnerable children and young people.

Human Resources

14 There are no direct human resources implications.

Risk Management

There are risks associated with some performance measures, e.g. increases in demand and timeliness of services.

Rural Communities

15 There are no direct implications to rural.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

16 Performance reports enable members to identify areas of good performance and areas for improvement in relation to children and young people, including cared for children.

Public Health

- There are no direct public health implications.

Climate Change

17 This report does not impact on climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager Bev.Harding@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Children and Families Outcomes Framework Score Card Quarter 3 2023
Background Papers:	None