

OPEN

Children and Families Committee

18th Sept 2023

Children and Families Q1 scorecard 2023/24

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

Report Reference No: CF/01/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide Children and Families Committee with an overview of performance against the core indicator set within the 3 service areas of 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 1 performance for children and families services for the relevant indicators for the reporting year of 2023-24. It also provides where applicable the outturn position for the reporting year end.
- 3 The committee will note that the format has changed in line with their request and now includes information around the acronyms used and the alignment with the Corporate Plan Aim of a Fair Council. The report now also reflects a rolling 4 quarter activity with the latest quarter reported highlighted in blue.
- 4 The committee will note that work is underway to commence reporting workforce data including caseloads as requested from quarter 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Childrens and Families Committee is recommended to:

1. Scrutinise the performance of children's services for quarter 1 and the finalised performance for the full reporting year.

Background

- 5 This quarterly report provides the committee with an overview of performance across Children's Services. This report relates to quarter 1 of 2023-24 (1 April 2023 – 30 June 2023).
- 6 The outcomes framework scorecard contains 52 indicators across children's services and provides a strategic overview of the core activity with the service areas that demonstrate how we support the children and young people in Cheshire East.
- 7 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 1 has maintained the improvement in performance and there remains a focus to bring this closer to national average performance. This is seen as an early indicator that when needed individuals are receiving support in a timely fashion.
- **1.18 – 1.21 Rate of S47 and ICPCs.** The rate of S47 activity has increased with the 22–23-year outturn higher than the latest statistical neighbour average albeit in line with the latest available national picture. An annualised position based on Q1 would suggest that 2023-24 will be a similar picture. Given the reduction in those progressing to an Initial Child Protection Conference and the number of Child Protection cases, a detailed audit of cases has been completed to ensure that we are appropriately undertaking S47 activity, and that decision making is clear. This included analysis, where applicable, of individuals on a Child in need plan for over 12months. This activity found that decision making was sound and that individuals were being supported at the right level of need.
- **1.24 - % of ICPC within 15 days of S47 enquiry.** Following an isolated drop in performance in Q4, there was a significant improvement in Q1. 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.** This remains higher than statistical neighbours and national averages and continues to be influenced by Cheshire East's support for the National Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) scheme. Due to this almost 1 in 3 young people in care is aged 16-17 currently. This knowledge is being used to inform the updated sufficiency strategy for placements together with the services that will be needed for an increasing cohort of care leavers.
- **1.29 – Children looked after who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the last 12 months.** Following work with our NHS colleagues to ensure that all cared for children are registered and have access to a dentist we have reported a significant improvement in the % with an annual dental check at 75% for 22-23 up from 51% in 21-22. We are working alongside health partners to ensure more robust in year reporting so we can improve this further.

Education

- **2.1 – 2.12** – The % of primary and secondary schools judged **good or outstanding** has improved throughout the year and now stands at 94% and 91% respectively. This ensures that for most of our pupils they experience a high-quality education. Work continues with those schools that haven't been judged at that level or are yet to be inspected to ensure that they have the appropriate tools and support to improve.
- **2.16 - % attendance for special school pupils.** There was a slight improvement in Q1 and remains a priority of our ongoing Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) improvement journey to ensure that our more vulnerable pupils receive a full education experience.
- **2.18 – Elective Home Education.** Q1 has shown a continued upward trend which appears to be due to an increase in the number of parents deregistering their children to electively home educate them as a result of their child's mental health and anxiety about attending school. A focused session was delivered at the schools' senior mental lead network meeting in April, with peer challenge and support around children experiencing emotionally based school non-attendance. The team continues to complete pre-deregistration meetings with children, parents and professionals to help inform their decision.

- **2.19 – Children Missing Education.** From January, the attendance and children out of school team have been delivering webinars about children missing education and commenced termly targeted support meetings with all schools. This increased awareness and support with pupil level data has initially led an increase in reporting children missing education. There is a national process for schools to inform local authorities where young people present in their area, and we work closely alongside national departments where individuals move abroad.
- **2.26 – 2.27 - New Education and Health Care plans completed within 20 weeks.** This continues a steady improvement journey together with considerable progress with the average plan now taking around 20.1 weeks. This is in part due to the continued improvement in advice from Educational Psychologists being received within 6 weeks from request which, for many young people, is an integral part of the assessment process.

Strong Start, Family Help and Integration

- **3.14 – 2-year-old offer.** We continue to promote maximum take up of the 2-year-old offer which can fluctuate from term to term. 92% of this cohort are attending good/ outstanding provision.
- **3.15 – 3–4-year-old offer.** The local authority has always been outstanding in ensuring that most of those eligible access the full offer available. Importantly 96% of individuals are attending good/ outstanding provision which is higher than the national average of 93%.
- **3.16 – Supporting Families.** The local authority had a target of 480 families with successful outcomes in 2023-24. We currently have over 1,000 families being supported either at Early Help or Child in need level and in quarter 1 we had 50 successful claims.
- **3.18-3.19 –Not in Education, Employment or Training -** Although still slightly lower than the national picture it has increased slightly this quarter. This does however relate to only 207 individuals, with only 156 available to the labour market. Of these 16 have already secured work with an agreed start date or engaged in voluntary work with the rest actively being supported to find education/ employment or training. In July we held our first ever supported internship graduation event to celebrate the achievements of 34 graduates alongside friends, family, job coaches and employers.

Consultation and Engagement

8 Not applicable

Reasons for Recommendations

- 9 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

- 10 Not applicable.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 11 There are no direct legal implications.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 12 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

- 13 There are no direct policy implications.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 14 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

- 15 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

- 16 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)

- 17 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

- 18 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 June 2023
Background Papers:	None