

Children and Families Service Key Performance Headlines at September 2022

Introduction

This report is intended to provide a very brief overview of the key performance headlines for the Children and Families Service as at September 2022. It is not intended to replace the full CFS Annual Report which will be reviewed at a later date by the CYP Scrutiny Commission and contains a full narrative around performance as well as key updates about the service.

Key Performance Headlines

- 3,707 referrals were received in 2021/22, a 27% increase from 2,930 received in the previous year. 1,935 referrals have been received between April and September 2022.
- 3,293 social work assessments were completed, a 15% decrease from the 3,858 completed in 2020/21. 2,075 assessments have been completed between April and September 2022.
- 211 children were supported on Child Protection Plans as at 31st March 2022, a 11% decrease compared to 237 children at the same time in 2021. 186 children are supported on Child Protection Plans at the end of September 2022.
- 405 children were looked after as at 31st March 2022, a 6% decrease from 431 children at the same time the previous year. 404 children were looked after at the end of September 2022.
- 179 children entered care during 2021/22, a 3% decrease from 185 children in 2020/21. 95 children entered care between April and September 2022.
- 15.3% of looked after children had three or more care arrangements in 2021/22, compared to 10% in 2020/21. 14% of looked after children had three or more care arrangements as at the end of September 2022.
- 71.2% of children who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years were in stable care arrangements of more than 2 years in 2021/22, a decrease from 77% in 2020/21. 65% of children were in stable arrangements at the end of September 2022.
- 387 care leavers aged between 17 and 21 were being supported by the Leaving Care service at 31 March 2022, an increase of 11 from 376 at the same point in 2021. 357 care leavers were supported at the end of September 2022.

Information about our looked after children

As of end September 2022, there were 404 Looked after children, down from a peak of 470 in November 2020. We believe numbers of looked after children increased as a result of family

stressors related to lockdown, with them coming down again and stabilising with a renewed focus across the service on ensuring right children come into care at the right time.

Number of children in care

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | End of September 2022 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|
| Number of children in care at snapshot date | 432 | 426 | 406 | 404 |
| Children entering care | 228 | 182 | 163 | 95 (April-September) |
| Children leaving care | 208 | 181 | 187 | 98 (April-September) |

Rate of children in care

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | End of September 2022 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Rate of children in care per 10,000 | 68 | 67 | 64 | 63 |
| Statistical neighbours | 60 | 63 | n/a | n/a |
| England | 65 | 67 | n/a | n/a |

Rates of looked after children per 10,000 in Hackney are now similar to our statistical neighbours. 31 (8%) of these children are unaccompanied minors, with the number of unaccompanied minors remaining below pre-pandemic levels.

Percentage of looked after children with three or more care arrangements in one year

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | September 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------|
| Hackney | 12% | 10% | 15% | 14% |
| Statistical neighbours | 10% | 9% | n/a | n/a |
| England | 11% | 9% | n/a | n/a |

The percentage of children aged under 16 who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years, who have lived in the same home for over 2 years

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | September 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------------|
| Hackney | 66% | 77% | 71% | 65% |
| Statistical neighbours | 71% | 70% | n/a | n/a |
| England | 68% | 71% | n/a | n/a |

There has been an increase in the number of children experiencing three or more care arrangements over the course of a year - the 2021/22 outturn was 15% which is higher than the statistical neighbour and national averages of 9%. There has been a decrease in the proportion of children aged under 16 who have been looked after for more than 2.5 years, who have lived in the same home for over 2 years (71% in 2021/22 compared to 77% in 2020/21). Hackney's performance against this indicator is in line with the statistical neighbour and England averages in 2020/21. 2020/21 stability figures were particularly good, believed to be influenced by the context of lockdown in the pandemic. However, further analysis is underway on the cohort of children with 3+ care arrangements and those who have left long term homes to think about what we need to do to address this

We have also taken steps to improve the process of oversight for planning for children once they enter a legal framework and beyond the conclusion of any legal proceedings, again to help ensure that the right decisions are made for children, at the right time. For example through our Permanency Planning Meetings, which are overseen by senior managers, and ensure parallel planning is in place to consider alternative routes to permanency for long-term looked after children.

Adoption

Three children were adopted in 2021-22, with ten children adopted in the first six months of 2022-23 alone, all aged under 5 years old. Adoption levels were low in 2020/21, due primarily to court delays related to the pandemic (trend seen across Adopt London North). A significant number of adoption proceedings are expected to conclude in 2022/3.

There have been 16 Special Guardianship Orders (SGO's) in 2021-22, with a further 7 granted in the first six months of 2022-23. Greater attention has been placed over the past year on the prospect of progressing alternative routes to permanency through adoption or SGO for children in long-term care, with a small but significant number of positive outcomes to this approach.

Care Leavers

387 care leavers aged between 17 and 21 were being supported by the Leaving Care service at 31 March 2022, an increase of 11 (3%) from 376 at the same point in 2021. 357 care leavers were supported at the end of September 2022. There were 63 care leavers aged 22 and older being supported as at 31st March 2022, lower than the 79 supported as at March 2021. This has decreased to 55 care leavers being supported as at 30th September 2022.