

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 21 October 2015

Subject: Performance monitoring 2015/16 (August 2015)

Lead officer: Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Performance, Children Schools and Families

Lead member(s): Councillor Maxi Martin; Councillor Martin Whelton.

Contact officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Head of Policy, Planning and Performance.

Recommendations:

That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel discuss and comment on::

- A. the current level of performance as at August 2015 for the reporting year 2015/16 (appendix 1).
- B. the specific additional information provided on school readiness; GCSE and A-Level results and NEET (appendix 2)

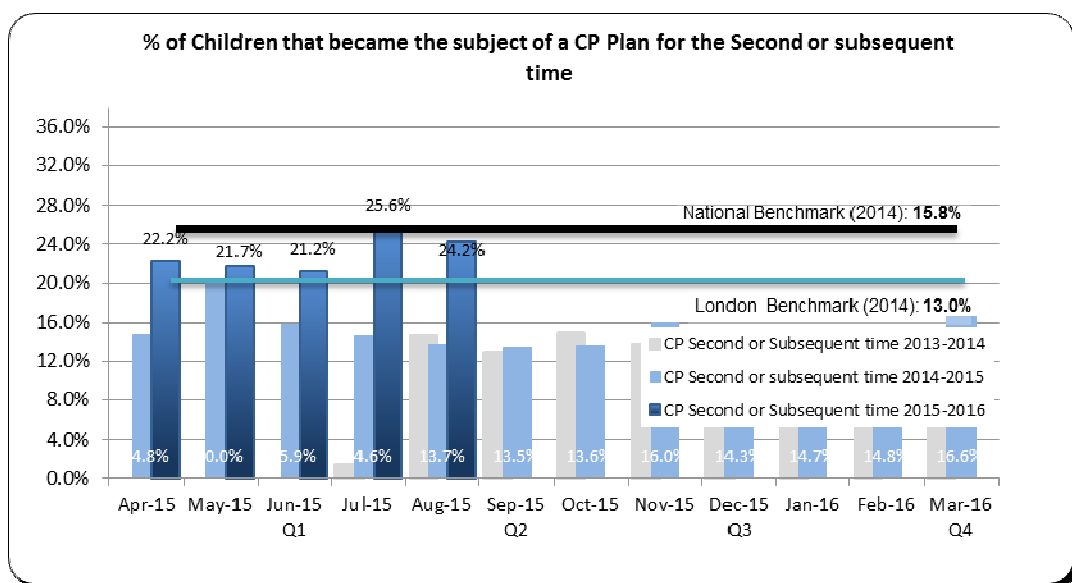
1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To provide the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel (CYP panel) with a regular update on the performance of the Children, Schools and Families Department and key partners. Data provided in appendix one is as at the end of August 2015. At the point of publishing this report the September 2015 data had not yet been validated (report due to be published 13 October 2015)
- 1.2. A number of additional education performance items are also presented in the second half of this report. It has been agreed with panel members that additional performance information will be included in this report as and when relevant. Performance information is provided in relation to recently published 'School readiness' data; the NEET scorecard and provisional GCSE and A level results. Members will be aware that the comprehensive Schools Standards report is routinely scheduled to be presented to the Panel in February 2016 following the publication of national benchmarking data.

2. DETAILS

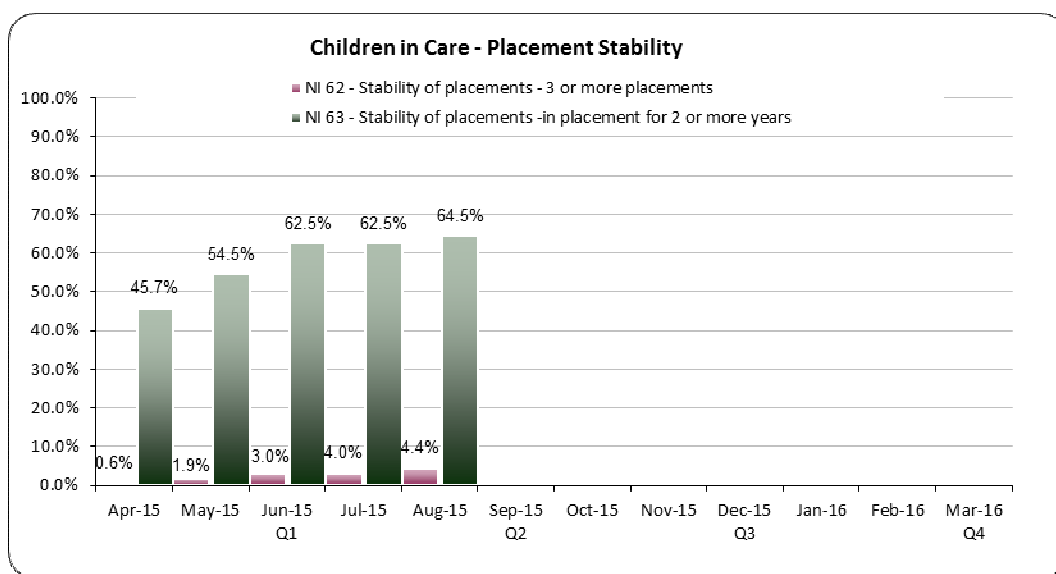
- 2.1. At a Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in June 2007 it was agreed that the Children Schools and Families department would submit a regular performance report on a range of key performance indicators. This performance monitoring report would act as a 'health check' for the Panel and would be over and above the more detailed performance reports scheduled to the Panel which relate to specific areas of activities such as the annual Schools Standards report, Corporate Parenting Report, safeguarding performance report etc. This performance index is periodically reviewed and revised by Members. A new dataset was agreed at the January 2015 Scrutiny meeting and has been implemented from April 2015.
- 2.2. **August 2015 Performance commentary**
- 2.3. Appendix one presents the performance dataset for 2015/16. Comments are provided below on exceptions only for those indicators reporting as Red or Amber.
- 2.4. **Line 11 Percentage of children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time – Red.**

- 2.5. Twenty four per cent of children subject to a child protection plan were the subject of a plan for the second or subsequent time. This indicator relates to 23 children with previous plans (new child protection plans started YTD 95). A second plan is established where concerns which led to the original plan re-occur or where new concerns arise. Due to the small numbers of children in this cohort one or two larger sibling groups can skew performance considerably It should be noted that in August eight family groups represented 21 of the 23 children.
- 2.6. The cohort of children who have been made subject to a Child Protection plan for the second and subsequent time has increased significantly in 2015/16 and is higher than Merton's norm. This indicator is above national average of 15.8% and above the London average 13% (CIN 2013/14). The reasons are varied, for example the children have been subject to a child protection plan a significant period ago or have transferred from another borough. An in-depth audit has been scoped and is underway, outcomes and recommendations are to be reported to CSF DMT and the MSCB.



- 2.7. **Line 17 Percentage of LAC participating in their reviews - Red**
- 2.8. Eighty eight per cent of looked after children participated in their reviews this relates to 120 of 134 (excluding children under 4 years), this is slightly below our target of 90%. Ensuring looked after children are able to participate in planning their futures and reviewing the progress of these plans are a key priority for both IROs and social workers. An improvement plan is in place to improve participation, ensure reviews are child friendly and support the participation of all looked after children, this includes providing older children with an increased opportunity to chair their own reviews and developing skills in engaging and communication with children who have communication difficulties.
- 2.9. **Line 19 Stability of placements of Children in Care (length of placement) – Red.**
- 2.10. This length of placement indicator refers to a small cohort of children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more. As at the end of August 64.5% of this cohort had been in placements for 2 years or more. This is close to the national benchmark of 67% (2013/14). This is an improvement from our year end performance of 45.7%.

- 2.11. The placement length indicator is complemented by the placement moves indicator (3 moves or more), Merton's August performance 4.4% is much better than the national benchmark 11% (2013/14).



- 2.12. It should be noted that these improvements have taken place after a considerable focus on placement stability following a management analysis of permanence and placement stability undertaken at the end of April 2015 and the implementation of an improvement plan.

2.13. **Other published Children Schools and Families data**

- 2.14. Members requested that alongside this performance dashboard report officers would put forward other data/published performance information where relevant. Below comments are therefore provided in relation to 'School readiness', the DfE NEET scorecard and provisional GCSE and A level results. Members will be aware that the comprehensive annual Schools Standards report is scheduled to be presented to the panel in February 2016 when national benchmarking data is published.

- 2.15. **School Readiness**, Public Health England's August 2015 report: 'Improving school readiness: Creating a better start for London' shows that Merton is in line with the London average for the proportion of our children who are 'school ready' at age 5, there was a 13.9 percentage point rise in school readiness in Merton from 2013 to 2014. School readiness is used to describe a child who is assessed as having reached a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that they have achieved at least the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development, physical development, communication, and language) and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

- 2.16. In Merton the Early Years, Childcare and Children's Centres Service works with partners to improve school readiness by providing early help, early education and learning, family support and co-ordinated health services. This includes the delivery of, or support to the delivery of, sustainable locality based provision for young children and families, targeted at those most in need. The Public Health England report also illustrates that Merton is in line with the London average for the proportion of children from disadvantaged backgrounds (eligible for free school meals) who reached a GLD in 2014 (44.4%), and that this is an 11.5 percentage point increase on the previous year.

- 2.17. **Provisional GCSE and A level results**, only provisional data for both GCSEs and A level results is available at this stage. Merton schools continue to perform strongly this year at GCSE with some of the fastest improving results in London

over the last five years. While our results are still provisional, we know there have been national issues in connection with the marking of some subjects, with appeals in progress and being considered we are unable to provide the borough average at this stage. As a council we are committed to allowing our young people achieve their full potential through education with improving standards but also ensuring our schools give them the best possible start in life.

- 2.18. Sixth forms across Merton have seen their best-ever A-Level results with provisional figures showing an increase in pupils achieving the top grades this year as well as an improvement in every grade band. Results out in August showed that overall, the number of students achieving A* – A grades this year rose 5% in comparison to last year to 25% with half of students awarded A* – B grades, up 7% on last year. Merton performed better than the national average for both A* – E grades, achieving 99% against 98% and A* – C grades, 79% against 77%. This represents a 1% improvement on A* – E grades and a 7% improvement on A* – C grades compared to last year.
- 2.19. **NEET Scorecard**, The DfE publishes an estimate each year of the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training. Evidence shows that there are a range of factors than can affect the proportion of NEET. This scorecard aims to put the headline figures into context by setting them alongside a range of other related information. The scorecard is presented in appendix two.
- 2.20. In Merton our NEET outturn remains broadly in line with national figures - 4.3% compared to 4.7% nationally, within the third quintile. We are doing particularly well with our 16 year old NEETs figure - only 1.7% compared to 2.2% nationally. Our 'known' figure 93.4% has improved to be well above national 91%. However this has resulted in our 're-engagement' EET figure to be in the bottom quintile 4.2% compared to 7.7%.
- 2.21. 93.3% of our 16 to 17 year olds are participating in education; this places us in the top quintile performing well above the national average of 90.6%.
- 2.22. Our September Guarantee figures (also 16 and 17 year olds) have improved significantly from September 2012 (87.3%) to September 2014 (92.8%) albeit below national levels (93.2%). The Raising the Participation Age working group (RPA) have commissioned a deeper analysis to support an action plan moving forward which will target specific cohorts of NEET.
- 2.23. Other elements of the scorecard cover published education data relating to 2013/14 including attainment at GCSE, (5 or more A*to C) - Merton at 64.2% performed well above the national average of 53.4%; overall absence - 4.9% Merton performed better than the national average of 5.2%; persistent absence 4.6% again Merton performed better than the national average of 5.3%.

3. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

Appendix 1: CYPP performance index 2015/16 (August 2015)

Appendix 2: NEET Scorecard July 2015.

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 4.1.1. CSF Performance Management Framework <http://intranet/departments/csf-index/csf-performance.htm>