

Appendix 2: Children’s Performance indicators – Rational and linkages

CYP Scrutiny Panel Performance Index

| | Performance Indicator | Rationale/Why Important |
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| 1 | Number of Common and Shared Assessments undertaken (CASA) | This is not a target measure. Numbers of CASAs undertaken is an indicator of early identification of problems/issues for a child. These are assessments undertaken by a wide range of the children’s workforce in the context of Merton’s Child and Young Person Wellbeing Model. The measure links to a suite of other indicators including numbers of contacts and referrals, single assessments, and CiN Plans. |
| 2 | Single Assessments completed within the statutory timeframe | Single Assessments are instigated after consideration of presenting issues by MASH. They are undertaken in order to identify whether or not statutory thresholds for children’s social care have been met and statutory services are required. There is a 45 day statutory timescale for completion. The measure links to CASAs; referrals; CiN Plans and Section47 safeguarding investigations. |
| 3 | Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) completed within the statutory timeframe | In line with Children and Families Act 2014, EHC plans replaced SEN Statements. They result from a multi-dimensional assessment of education, health and care needs. They specify outcomes to be achieved for a child and identify provision to meet those outcomes. There is a 20 week statutory timescale for completion. For the next few years conversion of ‘old’ SEN Statements and Learning Disability Assessments (LDA Section 139A) to ‘new’ EHC Plans will also be monitored against national targets. |
| 4 | Child Protection Rate per 10,000 | This is a prevalence measure which is examined by managers and regulators alongside other rates including CiN and LAC. These provide a proxy for the ‘balance’ in the child care system. Can also reflect events/issues nationally e.g. media coverage of child abuse enquiries. Rates should be broadly in line with benchmarks, particularly statistical neighbours. |
| 5 | Number of Children on Child Protection Plans | Similarly this is not a performance measure but indicates prevalence of need for intensive social care intervention. Also volume of intensive casework and social worker capacity required to fulfil statutory duties. Links to Child Protection Plans for children subject to a CP plan for the second or subsequent time in respect of decisiveness and impact of child protection interventions. |
| 6 | Numbers of Family Groups subject of Child Protection Plan | With relatively low numbers of children on Child protection plans the numbers of family groups are monitored as they can have a disproportionate impact on overall percentages etc. |
| 7 | Allocated Social Workers Child Protection | It is a statutory requirement that all Child Protection Plan casework is allocated to qualified social workers. This is a proxy for high quality interventions undertaken by qualified practitioners who are subject to national professional standards. |
| 8 | Quoracy (Quorate attendance at child protection conferences) | Child protection plans almost invariably require input from a range of professional disciplines and agencies. This is a proxy for appropriate engagement of key agencies e.g. NHS; Police in Child protection planning and delivery. |
| 9 | Timeliness of Child protection reviews | There is a national framework of expectations around interventions with children requiring safeguarding (see also above). This measure is a proxy for appropriate management/IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) oversight of complex casework and decisive social work planning. |

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| 10 | Child protection visits | As above this demonstrates appropriate contact between a child and the allocated social worker and is, in effect, a minimum standard. |
| 11 | Percentage of Children subject of a Child protection plan for the second or subsequent time | If a second child protection plan is required for similar reasons, this could indicate potential lack of impact of earlier Child protection interventions. Often can demonstrate multiple risks/challenges faced by children and families. Prompts enquiry into whether or not other statutory interventions should be/should have been considered. |
| 12 | Looked After Children rate per 10,000 | As above this is a prevalence measure to be looked at alongside others including CiN/CP rates and should also be, broadly, in line with statistical neighbours. |
| 13 | Number of Looked After Children | As above this is compared with appropriate benchmarks and the measure also indicates professional social work capacity and placements/budgets required to fulfil statutory responsibilities. |
| 14 | Allocated Social Workers Looked After Children | It is a statutory requirement that all LAC casework is allocated to qualified social workers. This is a proxy for high quality interventions undertaken by qualified practitioners who are subject to national professional standards. |
| 15 | Timeliness of Care proceedings | It is imperative to avoid 'drift' in making permanency plans for LAC. Time taken to undertake care proceedings is a proxy for decisive casework and can be looked at alongside timeliness of achieving adoptions. Measure can be affected by issues beyond professional control e.g. court delays. |
| 16 | Timeliness of Looked After Children reviews | There are statutory requirements for reviewing the care plans for LAC within set timescales. This measure is a proxy for appropriate management/IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) oversight of complex casework and decisive social work planning. |
| 17 | Percentage of Looked After Children participating in there reviews | In line with best practice and Merton's own User Voice Strategy, LAC of sufficient age and understanding are encouraged to participate in a variety of ways in their own reviews – e.g. attending; chairing; written submissions; use of advocate. |
| 18 | Stability of placements, 3+ moves | There are two key measures for placement stability – the numbers of placement moves in a year and the long term stability of placements. Placement stability is a foundation stone for improving outcomes for LAC as it enables consistent relationships between young people and their carers; consistent school placements; a settled context in which young people can develop social networks etc. While some placement moves are 'positive' – eg move to a permanent home; move to withdraw a young person from a risky environment, others occur due to eg breakdown of relationships/behaviour issues etc and should be minimised. |
| 19 | Stability of placements, length 2+ years | There are two key measures for placement stability – the numbers of placement moves in a year and the long term stability of placements. The length of placement indicator refers to 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. Placement stability is a foundation stone for improving outcomes for LAC as it enables consistent relationships between young people and their carers; consistent school placements; a settled context in which young people can develop social networks etc. While some placement moves are 'positive' – eg move to a permanent home; move to withdraw a young person from a risky environment, others occur due to eg breakdown of relationships/behaviour issues etc and should be minimised. |

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| 20 | Percentage of Looked After Children in Independent Fostering Agencies | Although placements with foster carers are, almost invariably, the first option to be considered for LAC, a shortage of 'in house' carers i.e. recruited and approved by LB Merton results in placements being commissioned from independent sector providers. These are often profit making organisations, carers are often not local and carers are not supported or managed by Merton services. Also, placements are typically significantly more expensive thus adding to pressure on placement budgets. Our aim is to reduce dependency on IFA placements. This indicator should be reviewed with the numbers of children in care at any given point, the profile of these children and their likely needs and our progress in recruiting In-house foster carers. |
| 21 | Number in house carers recruited | In view of the above we have set ambitious targets for increasing the number and range of in-house foster carers. |
| 22 | Numbers of Looked After Children, adopted or subject of a Special Guardianship Order | The key aim for looked after children who cannot return to their families of origin is to find alternative permanent families. Numbers of adoptions and Special Guardianship arrangements are, therefore, closely monitored by managers. Central government, from time to time and including the present government, issues policies aimed at increasing the number of children adopted. |
| 23 | Percentage of Children's centres graded good or outstanding by Ofsted (overall effectiveness) | Like schools and other children's services, children's centres are subject to regulation from Ofsted. Our ambition is that services provided by LB Merton are at least good or better. This measure is a proxy for the quality of early years provision which is a key enabler of improved outcomes in later childhood. |
| 24 | Childrens Centre access from children living in deprived areas | Children's centres are, increasingly, targeted services which aim to 'reach' more disadvantaged families, including those from more 'deprived' areas of the borough. High quality early years provision is known to be a particularly important contributor to improved outcomes for disadvantaged children and to narrowing gaps in outcomes in line with Merton's Community Plan. |
| 25 | Percentage of Schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted (overall effectiveness) | Schools are subject to regulation and inspection from Ofsted. Our ambition is that LB Merton schools are at least good or better. This measure, to be considered alongside eg Key Stage results, progress measures, attendance and exclusion data, is a proxy for the quality of Merton's schools provision. |
| 26 | Primary Permanent Exclusions | Permanent exclusion can severely disrupt a pupil's education and social networks and exclusion in the primary phase can be particularly damaging to education outcomes in the longer term. The LA has mechanisms in place to both minimise time out of education and to identify alternative provision for pupils who are permanently excluded. The measure needs monitoring even though Merton has not had a permanent exclusion from primary schools for some considerable time. |
| 27 | Secondary permanent exclusions | Permanent exclusion can severely disrupt a pupil's education and social networks. It can be extremely challenging to find alternative school/alternative education for pupils excluded in the secondary phase because of the nature of the factors leading to the exclusion. However, the LA has mechanisms in place to both minimise time out of education and to identify alternative provision for pupils who are permanently excluded. |
| 28 | Secondary persistent absence | The LA monitors persistent absence in primary, secondary and special school sectors. Persistent absence harms pupils' outcomes but also triggers powers and duties the LA has to ensure pupils' attendance. |

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| 29 | Percentage of Reception year surplus places | The LA has a statutory duty to provide sufficient suitable school places for children and young people in the borough. The challenge is to have neither an over-supply nor an insufficiency of places. A reasonable level of surplus is required, however, to enable an element of parental choice. |
| 30 | Percentage of Secondary school (year 7) surplus places | The LA has a statutory duty to provide sufficient suitable school places for children and young people in the borough. The challenge is to have neither an over-supply nor an insufficiency of places. A reasonable level of surplus is required, however, to enable an element of parental choice. |
| 31 | Youth Service Participation | Participation in positive activities and informal educational curriculum provided by or enabled by LBM youth service supports positive outcomes for young people, particularly those from more disadvantaged areas. |
| 32 | Percentage of CYP who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) | Non-participation in education, employment or training beyond age 16 is a major predictor of long-term unemployment and low income. This indicator should be reviewed alongside the 'Not Known' outturn. |
| 33 | Percentage of CYP who's 'Education, Employment or Training'(EET) status is "Not Known". | The EET status of young people can be difficult to ascertain eg once pupils leave Merton's schools. The aim is to have a low number of young people whose EET status is 'not known'. This indicator should be reviewed along side the NEET outturn. |
| 34 | First Time Entrants (FTE) in the youth justice system aged 0-17 | Offending can be linked to factors such as truancy, low attainment, substance misuse, employability etc and the challenge to the council, schools and partner agencies in a local area is to prevent young people from entering the youth justice system. |
| 35 | Re-offending rate by young people in the Youth Justice system | This indicator measures the re-offending of specific cohorts of young people following an initial pre-court or court disposal. |
| 36 | Number of families 'turned around' by the local Transforming Families programme (nationally known as Troubled Families) | The national Troubled Families initiative aims to 'turn around' families identified with multiple issues including anti-social behaviour; worklessness; poor school attendance etc. Without effective intervention, these families are particularly likely to require statutory interventions and are potentially the most costly on the public purse. |
| 37 | Commissioned services Monitoring | The CSF department commissions some services to be delivered by third parties inc the local community and voluntary sector. It is important that these services are monitored to ensure compliance with service specifications and value for money. |