

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 11th March 2024

Wards: All

Subject: Performance Report

Lead officer: Jane McSherry, Executive Director of Children, Lifelong Learning and Families

Lead member(s): Cllr Brenda Fraser, Cabinet Member Children’s Services, and Cllr Sally Kenny, Cabinet Member Education and Lifelong Learning

Contact officer: Tim Wallder, Interim Head of Performance, Improvement and Partnerships

Recommendations:

- A. Members of the panel to discuss and comment on the contents of the report

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report summarises the performance information for 2023/24, up to 31st January 2023, as set out in the accompanying document, the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Performance Index 2023/24.

2 DETAILS

Exception Report

- 2.1. The following indicators are marked as amber or red.

No	Indicator	Rating	Service Commentary
8	% of children subject of a CP plan who had a CP visit within timescales in the month	R	This indicator is Red as performance as of November was 88% compared to our target of 90%. This has continued on an upward trajectory from the last performance report.
14	% of Looked After Children cases which were reviewed within required timescales	A	Performance on this indicator is now back up to 95% which is just below the target of 96%. The service continues to closely monitor progress.
22	% of total 0-5 year estimated Census 2011 population from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) whose families have accessed children's	R	The previous 2 years data has been adjusted to reflect the current measure and give a more accurate comparator. This target is RAG rated Red as performance is at 58% against the target of 65%. Current performance

	centre services (cumulative)		shows an improvement compared to this time last year.
27	Reception year surplus places	R	The indicator is currently RAG rated as Red with the surplus is in reception places at 14% against a target of 5-10%. This has increase from 9.8% because it now has data for the 2023/24 school year and demand for places has fallen without the corresponding fall in admission numbers. Officers have negotiated a number of schools to reduce PAN from 2024/25
28	Secondary school surplus places	R	The indicator remains RAG rated Red. There has been a slight increase from the previous report.
33b	% of care leavers (aged 19-21) not in education, employment or training (NEET) and Unknown	A	The indicator is currently RAG rated Red as performance is at 38% compared to a 32% target. 6% cannot be in EET for valid reasons. Merton's current performance continues to be better than the 40% London and 44% England benchmark.

Commentary

Indicator 13: Average number of weeks taken to complete Care proceedings against a national target of 26 weeks

- 2.2. Nationally, the duration of care proceedings has increased. This is a result of court closures during the pandemic.
- 2.3. A range of influences impact on the duration of court proceedings – some of which are outside of the authority's immediate control. These include court availability, the availability and timeliness of expert witness input, and the desire to engage effectively with the wider family network to explore alternatives (where appropriate and safe to do so).
- 2.4. The service has monthly court and PLO tracking meetings including legal representatives. On a quarterly basis, representatives from the Children and Families Court Advisory Services (Cafcass) attend. These meetings allow the authority to raise concerns about timeliness. A permanent court progression officer is now in place with positive anecdotal feedback on her impact.
- 2.5. Merton continues to receive positive feedback from Merton's link judge on the Council's PLO work.

3 AMENDMENTS, CORRECTIONS AND DATA CAVEATS

Amendments, Corrections and Data Caveats

3.1. We are currently unable to report against the following indicators:

No	Indicator	Service Commentary
6	% of quorate attendance at CPP conferences	Following amendments to the system workflow, as part of the Mosaic Repair Project, a report has now been built to extract this data and we are currently in the process of user acceptance testing.
29	Youth services participation rate	This data is no longer collected nationally, and the indicator is on hold until new guidance is published later this year.

Appendices – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Performance Index 2023/24.

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