

Public Document Pack

Contact: Brent Cross
Direct Dial: 01275 888078
E-mail: brent.cross@n-somerset.gov.uk
Date: Wednesday, 8 June 2022

Dear Sir or Madam

The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel – Thursday, 16 June 2022, 10.00 am – New Council Chamber

A meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel will take place as indicated above.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Councillors:

Wendy Griggs (Chairman), Mark Aplin, Caroline Cherry, Ciaran Cronnelly, Mark Crosby, Donald Davies, Hugh Gregor, Ann Harley, Nicola Holland, Ruth Jacobs, Huw James, Lisa Pilgrim, Timothy Snaden and Richard Westwood.

Added Members: Claire Hudson (Church of England Representative),
Vacancies: Primary and Secondary/Special School Parent Governor
Representative

Right to Speak: Fiona Waters (Weston College), Kenton Mee, North Somerset
Parent Carers Working Together, Vacancy: North Somerset Youth Parliament

This document and associated papers can be made available in a different format on request.

Agenda

1. **Election of Vice Chairman for the 2022/23 Municipal Year (Agenda item 1)**
2. **Apologies for Absence and Notifications for Substitutes (Agenda item 2)**
3. **Public Discussion (Standing Order SSO 9) (Agenda item 3)**

To receive and hear any person who wishes to address the Panel on matters which affect the District and fall within the remit of the Panel. The Chairman will select the order of the matters to be heard.

Members of the Panel may ask questions of the member of the public and a dialogue between the parties can be undertaken.

Requests to speak must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer, or the officer mentioned at the top of this agenda letter, by noon on the day before the meeting and the request must detail the subject matter of the address.

4. **Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda item 4)**

A Member must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest where it relates to any matter being considered at the meeting. A declaration of a disclosable pecuniary interest should indicate the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. A Member is not permitted to participate in this agenda item by law and should immediately leave the meeting before the start of any debate.

If the Member leaves the Chamber in respect of a declaration, he or she should ensure that the Chairman is aware of this before he or she leaves to enable their exit from the meeting to be recorded in the minutes in accordance with Standing Order 37.

5. **Minutes (Agenda item 5) (Pages 7 - 12)**

Panel Meeting – 10 March 2022 to approve as a correct record (attached)

6. **Matters referred by Council, the Executive, other Committees and Panels (if any) (Agenda item 6)**

7. **Annual Directorate Statement - Children's Services (Agenda item 7) (Pages 13 - 16)**

Report of the Director of Children's Services

8. **Chairman's Update on CYPS Panel Working Groups (Agenda item 8)**

9. **Overview of Findings from CAMHS Working Group (Agenda item 9) (Pages 17 - 28)**

Reports of the
(i) CAMHS Working Group and
(ii) Senior Contract Manager BNSSG CCG

10. Resetting the Education Agenda for North Somerset (Agenda item 10)
(Pages 29 - 46)

Report of the Assistant Director, Education Partnerships

11. Executive Member/Assistant Director Education Partnerships Report - Community of Practice SEND (Agenda item 11) (Pages 47 - 52)

Report of the Assistant Director, Education Partnerships

12. North Somerset's Annual Children's Social Care Complaints and Complements Report for 202/21 Financial Year (Agenda item 12) (Pages 53 - 66)

Report of the Director of Children's Services

13. Ofsted's inspection of Adoption West (Agenda item 13) (Pages 67 - 70)

Report of the Director of Children's Services

14. Performance Monitoring (Agenda item 14) (Pages 71 - 90)

Report of the Assistant Director, Children's Family Support & Safeguarding

15. Month 12 Children's Services Budget Monitor (Agenda item 15) (Pages 91 - 102)

Report of the Principal Accountant (Children's Services)

16. Panel's Work Plan (Agenda item 16) (Pages 103 - 122)

Report of the Scrutiny Officer

Exempt Items

Should the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel wish to consider a matter as an Exempt Item, the following resolution should be passed -

“(1) That the press, public, and officers not required by the Members, the Chief Executive or the Director, to remain during the exempt session, be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the ground that its consideration will involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.”

Also, if appropriate, the following resolution should be passed –

“(2) That members of the Council who are not members of the Children and Young People’s Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel be invited to remain.”

Mobile phones and other mobile devices

All persons attending the meeting are requested to ensure that these devices are switched to silent mode. The chairman may approve an exception to this request in special circumstances.

Filming and recording of meetings

The proceedings of this meeting may be recorded for broadcasting purposes.

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting, focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to the wishes of any members of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer’s representative before the start of the meeting so that all those present may be made aware that it is happening.

Members of the public may also use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

On hearing the alarm – (a continuous two tone siren)

Leave the room by the nearest exit door. Ensure that windows are closed.

Last person out to close the door.

Do not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do not use the lifts.

Follow the green and white exit signs and make your way to the assembly point.

Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so by the Fire Authority.

Go to Assembly Point C – Outside the offices formerly occupied by Stephen & Co

Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 10 March 2022

New Council Chamber - Town Hall

Meeting Commenced: 10.00 am

Meeting Concluded: 11.35 am

Councillors:

P Wendy Griggs (Chairman)

P Steve Hogg (Vice Chairman)

P Marc Aplin

P Ciarán Cronnelly

Hugh Gregor

A Nicola Holland

A Huw James

P Lisa Pilgrim

Tim Snaden

P Caroline Cherry

A Mark Crosby

A Ann Harley

A Ruth Jacobs

A Richard Westwood

Vacancy

Vacancy

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: None

Officers in attendance: Nicholas Brain, (Head of Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer) Michèle Chesterman (Democratic & Electoral Services Officer), Sindy Dube (Principal Accountant, Children's Services), Becky Hopkins, (Assistant Director, Children's Support & Safeguarding)

Other persons in attendance: None

CAY Chairman's Welcome

1

The Chairman welcomed everyone. On behalf of the panel, she expressed best wishes and thoughts for Cllr Mark Crosby's speedy recovery.

CAY Election of Vice-Chairman for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year (Agenda item 1)

2

Resolved: that the recommendation at the informal panel meeting on 30 June 2021 that Councillor Steve Hogg be elected Vice Chairman of the Children and Young People Services Policy & Scrutiny Panel for the 2021/22 Municipal Year be

endorsed.

CAY 3 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda item 4)

None

CAY 4 Minutes and Notes (Agenda item 5)

5.1 Formal Panel Meeting Minutes – 11 March 2021 recommended for approval as a correct record at Informal Panel meeting dated 30 June 2021 (for ratification)

5.2 Informal Panel Meeting Notes – 30 June 2021 (attached), for information.

5.3 Informal Panel Meeting Notes – 21 October 2021 (attached), for information.

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting on 11 March 2021 be approved as a correct record.

CAY 5 Family Support and Safeguarding Update (Agenda item 7)

The Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding presented the report. An up-to-date overview of the strengths, challenges and identified areas for development within the Family Support & Safeguarding Service was given. Members were provided with highlights of what was being done well and areas which were being focussed on to continue to strengthen and improve the service offered to children and their families.

The Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding highlighted strengths which included a strong member support for the children's services improvement journey with the establishment of the Corporate Parenting Panel chaired by the Executive Member, the establishment of a permanent senior leadership team, advice and challenge from the sector-led improvement partner, North Tyneside and redesign of the Front Door.

Members were informed that over the previous 12-18 months a realignment of the Senior Management Teams had taken place which had resulted in closer working relationships across the sector. In addition, Bethany Swan had been appointed to the post of Young Director. Members received reassurance that the performance information evidenced proportionate intervention with the right intervention at the right time to support children to remain in the care of their families and communities wherever possible.

With regards challenges, Members were made aware that although there had been considerable progress a strong and consistent model of practice had not yet been well embedded or consistently applied. Alongside this There was also a need to support team managers to ensure that supervision and management oversight evidenced reflection, clear direction of travel and responsive planning. Finally, developing and adopting a new QA system was highlighted as being one of the more urgent tasks.

In terms of an overview of the current position and a number of key issues were

discussed including performance information, repeat child protection plans, placement sufficiency, limited residential capacity to meet the needs North Somerset young people, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, the development of 16+ supported and independent living schemes, the percentage of 19-21 year old care leavers in education, employment and/or training and the percentage of 19-21 year old care leavers who were in suitable accommodation.

Concluded: that the report be received and comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 6 Children's Improvement Focus Group - Front Door - Forward Plan (Agenda item 8)

The Chairman provided an update on the CYPS Working Group addressing the Front Door and directed Member's attention to the Forward Plan and encouraged Panel attendance at the meetings which were scheduled to take place on a six-weekly basis until the end of the Municipal Year 2022/23.

The working group would focus on the child and family living experience and other agencies' experience of using the Front Door. In terms of location the meetings of the Working Group would take place virtually but also in person in the community or otherwise, as appropriate.

Concluded that:

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) panel members be encouraged to attend meetings of the CYPS Panel Working Group - Front Door

CAY 7 CYPS Working Group - Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) - Terms of Reference and Forward Plan (Agenda item 9)

The Chairman provided an update on the CYPS Working Group addressing the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) and directed Members' attention to the Terms of Reference and the Forward Plan for the working group.

Members were informed that the purpose of the working group was to identify and recommend further effective delivery of the Council SEND Improvement Plan in relation to the experiences of Parents and Carers. In terms of outcomes the aim was to ensure that parents and carers had timely, appropriate and successful experiences working with North Somerset Council and its partners. The group to make recommendations on the use of resources, to expedite the progress on removing barriers for parents and carers and to monitor progress. Meetings to take place bi-monthly, in person in the community or virtually, as appropriate.

Members were encouraged to attend the meetings of the working group.

Concluded that:

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) Panel members be encouraged to attend meetings of the CYPS

CAY 8 Q3 Performance Monitoring Report (Agenda item 10)

The Assistant Director, Family Support & Safeguarding, presented the report.

The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel received regular performance management reports to help members evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners were achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people's services, and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance. The report presented the standard items: any recent Ofsted inspections of council services; an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 3 2021/22, that fell under the remit of the Panel and an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council.

Members asked for further information regarding the low levels of referrals to which the Assistant Director, Family Support & Safeguarding responded that the Family Wellbeing Service had been expanded and there was no evidence of children being re-referred into the service. There was confidence that the application threshold at the Front Door was consistent and there was confidence that support was in the right place and was being monitored.

A discussion took place on missing children and missing episodes and the fact that there was no real national picture of children who never attended school. The question was asked as to the quality of data available. It was noted that Education colleagues were included in the weekly Front Door meetings. The Assistant Director, Family, Support & Safeguarding to refer the query to the Assistant Director, Education Partnerships to respond.

Members also queried the fact that the abuse or neglected percentage (page 11) was usually around 40-43% and whether the figure could be improved. It was noted that the service was aiming to reduce neglect by early help support. In terms of the threshold this percentage would be expected even if numbers reduced.

Concluded: that the performance information in the report be noted and comments on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance be sent to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 9 CYPS Working Group - Care Leavers (NEET) - Terms of Reference and Forward Plan (Agenda item 11)

The Chairman provided an update on the CYPS Working Group addressing Care Leavers not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) which aimed to identify barriers for care leavers in accessing education employment and training. Members' attention was drawn to the Forward Plan and their attendance was encouraged at the meetings scheduled to take place on a six-weekly basis until the end 2023 (virtually or in person, as appropriate).

The Working Group's purpose was to identify and recommend sustainable and effective delivery and creation of opportunities for all care leavers in North Somerset who were not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Concluded that:

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) panel members be encouraged to attend meetings of the CYPS Panel Working Group – Care Leavers NEET

CAY 10 Joint CAMHS (CYPS & HOSP) Working Group - Overview of Findings (Agenda item 12)

It was agreed that this item be deferred until the CYPS Panel meeting On 16 June 2022 to enable Health colleagues and other interested Councillors to attend and participate in the discussion.

Concluded: that the item be deferred until the next Panel meeting on 16 June 2022.

CAY 11 Month 10 Children's Services Budget Monitor (Agenda item 13)

The Principal Accountant, Children's Services, presented the report which summarised and discussed the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information as at Month 10.

Referring to the one-page summary sheet provided, Members were informed that Children's Services currently had a projected £798k underspend (2.9% of the net budget); this was a £284k favourable change when compared with the period 9 position.

The forecast underspend was mainly due to the spend on placements for children looked after being significantly less than the budget. This was representative of the fact that the budget was set when children looked after numbers were significantly higher than they were now, and, in addition, an allowance was made in the expectation that numbers would begin to rise once lockdown measures were eased; this had not yet materialised. Furthermore, work on reducing costs by "stepping down" young people to more appropriate and cost-effective placements was proving extremely productive. As a result of all these factors, the forecast spend was c. £1.5m less than the budget.

Members were made aware that there were further mitigations from reduced staffing costs through staff turnover / vacancy management and contributions to staffing and overheads from a number of grants from central government.

The main offsetting cost pressure was on support to families with disabled children. The growth applied in this area in the 2021/22 budget had not been sufficient to close the gap between the budget and demand in the current year, although this was being addressed as part of the MTFP and budget for 2022/23. Other cost pressures were on section 17 support (placement prevention), systems

improvement, and the SEND element of the education support services contract.

The deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant was estimated to have grown from £7.150m at the beginning of the year of £12.591m by the end of the financial year – the main overspend relating to out of area placements, top-up funding and bespoke education packages for children missing education.

Concluded: that the report be received and comments on the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children’s services and on the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position be forwarded to officers.

CAY 12 Panel's Work Plan (Agenda item 14)

Members discussed the Work Plan.

Concluded: that the work plan be received and updated as required.

Chairman

North Somerset Council

Report to the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 16 June 2022

Subject of Report: Children's Services Annual Directorate Statement

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services

Key Decision: No

Reason:

It does not meet the criteria for a key decision.

Recommendations

- i) That the Panel notes the plans for 2022/23.
- ii) That the Panel consider the ADS when setting their Work Plan.

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 Our business planning process sets out how we are going to achieve the aims and priorities we have identified in the Corporate Plan 2020-24 and how we will work towards a vision of an **open, fairer, greener** North Somerset. Business planning begins with the Corporate Plan and everything we do as an organisation should link back to it. The Plan guides our work and explains why we are focusing on specific areas. From there, Annual Directorate Statements outline the key commitments of each directorate for the year ahead to show how we will contribute to the Corporate Plan. Annual Directorate Statements are then used to inform Service Strategies, Team Plans and appraisals.
- 1.2 Progress against these commitments will be monitored through the 2022/23 Performance Management Framework which includes the directorate's risk register.

2. Policy

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan is the council's overarching strategic document. It is the only plan which covers the full range of the council's responsibilities and is an important tool to help focus our effort and resources on the right things. The Corporate Plan informs other key strategies and plans which vary widely in purpose, scope, and time horizon. The Corporate Plan does not replace these other documents but it should shape them whenever they are being updated.

3. Details

3.1 Directorate wide commitments

Our directorate wide business as usual and service improvement commitments:

Our commitment	What is the outcome we expect?
Undertake a Policy and Strategy review across the directorate.	All policies and strategies are up to date.
Develop and embed a clear Practice Framework which incorporates a strength, relational based and trauma informed approach and the Signs of Safety model.	The practice framework principles are owned by the service and evidenced in our interventions with children and their families and run as a thread through children's records.
Strengthen quality of supervision and management oversight.	Appropriate levels of management oversight and evidence of reflective and effective supervision.
Ensure timely resolution of directorate complaints.	Increase in the learning from complaints by officers to improve customer satisfaction.
Increase opportunities for young people to engage in education, employment and/or training opportunities.	Increase the number of young people on programmes engaged in education, employment and/or training.

Our directorate wide transformational commitments:

Our commitment	What is the outcome we expect?
Refresh the Children's Climate Emergency Strategy and deliver any in year actions in the action plan.	The action plan contributes to the organisational wide Climate Emergency Strategy and reduces our carbon footprint both organisationally and individually.
As part of the DSG Management Plan, lead the Council's participation in the DfE's Safety Valve Project, to ensure that benefits are maximised.	Strategies are in place to ensure the High Needs System is put on a sustainable footing, i.e. spend in the medium term can be managed with budgets.
Contribute to a mental health and wellbeing needs assessment for children.	Improved mental health outcomes for children and young people delivered across all agencies.

3.2 Children's Support and Safeguarding commitments:

Business as usual / service improvement / transformation commitments:

Our commitment	What is the outcome we expect?
Embed Phase 2 of the Front Door developments – to include the MASH, missing and exploitation meetings.	Children and young people benefit from timely and robust assessment of their needs and any identified risks. This results in the right intervention/support being provided at the right time and by the right services.
Review of the Family Wellbeing Service offer including consultation with partners inc. the voluntary sector and the public and publicising across the partnership.	Children and their families are not subjected to unnecessary assessments and processes. Children and their families know where to seek support.
Develop a robust and responsive QA framework to support a learning organisation to include purposeful case audit activity.	Children and their families receive effective, impactful interventions and support which are focussed on assessed needs and improve outcomes.
Complete an Exploitation Needs Assessment to inform an Exploitation Strategy.	Children and young people are supported, the risks to them reduced and they feel safer in their communities as a result of proactive disruption activity and the development of trusted relationships to enable positive engagement.
Achieve permanence for children by ensuring all children in care have clear plans for permanence which are appropriately tracked to avoid drift and delay.	Clear Permanence Plans in place – avoidance of drift and improved, more timely outcomes. Increased placement stability.
Seek regular feedback from children and families and use this to inform practice improvements.	Children and young people experience that their voices are heard and their experiences are understood. Children and young people are involved in the co-production of practice developments and this has a positive impact on their lives.
Commission a variety of placements to meet the needs of children and young people.	Children and young people are cared for/supported in provision which meets their needs.
Focused recruitment of mainstream, specialist fostering and supported lodging carers, and promotion of staying put scheme.	Increased pool of carers to allow for better matching between children and carers. More supported lodgings hosts to allow for a step down towards independence for our young people.
Deliver Children's Family Support and Safeguarding Recruitment and Retention Action Plan.	A stable workforce will provide consistency for children and families and allow practitioners to build relationships of trust and confidence and to intervene to achieve positive change together with children and their families.

3.3 Education Partnerships commitments:

Business as usual / service improvement / transformation commitments:

Our commitment	What is the outcome we expect?
Develop and deliver an Education Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders.	Increased participation, improved attendance, progress and attainment, particularly for vulnerable pupils.
Deliver the Education Commissioning Strategy including any in-year actions.	The strategy can follow our principled strategic priorities and deliver sufficient school places.
Ensure sufficiency of high-quality placements for 2-4 year olds including take up, quality, and training of workforce.	All entitled children receive high quality provision.
Deliver the SEND improvement plan in partnership with key stakeholders.	Improved outcomes for children with SEND.
The Virtual School ensures the right level of support for those children for whom they have legal responsibility.	Close progress and attainment gaps for children with a social worker.
Reduce the number of children missing education (CME).	All children receive a high quality education.
Promote good relationships with parents who are electively home educating their children and young people (EHE).	Ensure all children receive a suitable, full time education.
Improve the rigour of monitoring of safeguarding arrangements in schools and settings.	Children are safeguarded in all settings.
Ensure all children and young people have meaningful transitions to post-16.	All children have successful pathways to achieve their full potential.
Ensure we provide a comprehensive music education service to children, young people, their families and schools across North Somerset.	Continued delivery of high quality music provision.

4. Consultation

Consultation has taken place with a range of staff and been informed by priorities identified by them alongside the current Improvement Plans in Children's Services.

5. Financial Implications

The activities necessary to deliver the ADS are budgeted for within the directorate's budget. The directorate will continue to explore one off funding opportunities presented by government in order to expand or supplement the work.

6. Costs

As above.

7. Funding

As above.

8. Legal Powers and Implications

None.

9. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

This ADS contributes to the Climate Emergency Strategy through the implementation of the directorate's Action Plan.

10. Risk Management

Not applicable.

11. Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No.

12. Corporate Implications

None.

13. Options Considered

Not applicable.

Author:

Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services

Background Papers:

None.

This page is intentionally left blank

North Somerset Council

Report to the Children & Young People Policy & Scrutiny Panel and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP)

Date of Meeting: Thursday 16 June 2022 (CYPS) Thursday 23 June 2022 (HOSP)

Subject of Report: Overview of Findings from CAMHS Working Group

Town or Parish: N/A

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly, HOSP Chairman and Member of CYPS

Key Decision: No

Reason: To update Scrutiny Panels on Findings from CAMHS Working Group

Recommendations from the Working Group:

- HOSP/CYPS appreciates the collaboration and transparency of all parties involved in the working group discussions about parity of funding for children's and young people's mental health services in North Somerset.
- HOSP/CYPS believes it's clear that North Somerset children and young people do not receive parity of funding – and service – for mental health services when compared with Bristol and South Gloucestershire.
- HOSP/CYPS calls on the council, CCG and system partners to work together to begin to close the estimated £700k funding gap and to specifically improve services for eating disorders, learning disabilities, and primary & infant mental health services
- A progress report be provided to CYPS by no later than October 2022 outlining the steps that have been taken to improve parity from a funding and service delivery model perspective, and where gaps remain, what steps will be taken to improve these

Summary of report

As part of the SEND agenda for CYPS on 11 March 2021 there were discussions about parity of provision for mental health services for children and young people when compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This led to a recommendation that a working group would be set up to further investigate this and report back.

Due to the nature of the issue – children/young people and health – it was agreed that this would be a joint working group made up of HOSP and CYPS councillors and would be co-chaired by the Chair of HOSP (Cllr Cronnelly) and the Chair of CYPS (Cllr Griggs). The working group was supported by officers from North Somerset Council, BNSSG CCG, Sirona, AWP.

This report sets out an overview of those findings and makes a set of recommendations for both HOSP and CYPS to consider at their next meetings.

Policy

N/A

Details

The focus for the working group was to review and understand the parity in provision for North Somerset children and young people's mental health services when compared with other areas within the CCGs footprint.

To understand this issue the working group relied on a gap analysis that was co-ordinated by Avon and Wiltshire Metal Health Partnership (AWP). All parties such as AWP, North Somerset Council and the CCG were able to input into this. The working group are very appreciative of the work that everyone has put into this gap analysis.

This gap analysis looked at a range of children and young people's mental health services across the CCG's footprint and detailed the various service delivery models and funding differences in North Somerset.

At the time of writing this report the gap analysis – and subsequent remedial actions - are going through the internal governance process for the CCG and NSC, however, the working group already has enough information to report back to the panels. The contents of the gap analysis contained confidential information such as the service delivery model, funding and resourcing structures across various organisations and due to this it would be inappropriate for this information to be in the public domain. Therefore the Chairs have decided that the gap analysis report won't be included within this report to scrutiny.

However, a high level summary of what was reviewed, and what was discovered can be found below:

What services were reviewed and what did it show

The assessment reviewed all provision across BNSSG CAMHS services in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. In North Somerset specifically the CAMHS service has two teams – Core and Crisis – whilst in Bristol and South Gloucestershire there are additional specialist services. We learnt:

Core service

- North Somerset has a higher caseload figure than Bristol and South Gloucestershire due to a large number of young people on the waiting list
- The number of staff within the North Somerset core CAMHS team was broadly similar to Bristol and South Gloucestershire but they didn't have the same skills or specialist services

Eating Disorders

- The service in North Somerset is smaller, and is not a stand alone service, compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Crisis service

- The North Somerset service does not provide a service at weekends or in the evening like the Bristol and South Gloucestershire services do
- This issue has already been identified and there is currently work underway to provide a 24/7 crisis service across the full BNSSG footprint

Getting advice

- North Somerset has lower administration support than Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Learning Disabilities

- There is support available for children/young people with Learning Disabilities across all of BNSSG's footprint but North Somerset has less support available for those with mild learning disabilities
- North Somerset has no intensive positive behaviour support service unlike in Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- This is a gap that needs to be rectified

Autism Intensive Service

- There is no Autism intensive Service in North Somerset like there is in Bristol or South Gloucestershire
- This is a gap that needs to be rectified and there are plans in place to develop the service in 2022/23 and expand this into North Somerset

Specialist Substance Misuse

- This service is provided across the BNSSG footprint but the slight difference in North Somerset is this is a Tier 2 service whilst Bristol and South Gloucestershire has access to a Tier 3 service.

Youth offending service

- North Somerset provides this service and has a different service model to Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Thinking Allowed Service

- This is a specialist CAMHS service for children in care and the networks around them
- There is no Thinking Allowed service in North Somerset

Primary Mental Health Specialist

- This is a service across Bristol and South Gloucestershire that works to support the mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience of children, young people and their families. This is provided through a specialist team
- There is no equivalent specialist service in North Somerset

Primary Infant Mental Health Service

- This is a service that aims to promote the mental health and wellbeing of the infant population.
- There is no service in North Somerset and this is only provided in Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Tier 2 services

- Kooth is a service that provides young people with online access to a community of peers and experienced counsellors. North Somerset has an increased offer compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire and offers this to 11 – 25 year olds

- Off the Record: Provides free wellbeing info and support for young people. This has just launched in North Somerset. This service is already available in Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Summary of findings

The gap analysis showed that North Somerset did not have parity of funding and service with Bristol and South Gloucestershire and for there to be true parity in North Somerset the following service models need to be changed:

- Eating disorder pathway needs to be redesigned to align with Bristol and South Gloucestershire, including developing access to a specialist hub team
- CAMHS needs to develop a number of evidence-based care pathways using the I-Thrive framework. This will include training and development for staff in interventions such as supporting young people with more acute and complex mental health presentations
- Waiting list and service performance need to be improved, which includes redesigning the pathways
- The Bristol and South Gloucestershire Getting Advice Service needs to extend to include North Somerset
- Appropriate resourcing needs to be in place to support the transition of these services

From the perspective of parity of funding the following needs to happen:

- There needs to be increased investment in primary and infant mental health specialists. A focus specifically needs to be on provision for under 11s
- Investment is needed in Learning Disability Services, specifically intensive behaviour support and autism

What is the level of investment needed

It's estimated that the cost of trying to achieve parity in services will be £700k+. Responsibility for the funding and design of these services does not sit alone with either the local authority or the CCG and both will need to work together collaboratively.

However, it should be noted that it's anticipated the bulk of the £700k would need to be found by the local authority if the approach was to be aligned to how services are funded in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Has it been established if there's parity of funding and service

From the gap analysis seen by the councillors on the Working Group, and from conversations with officers, it is clear that North Somerset's children and young people do not receive the same parity of service when compared with Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

A lot of working is needed to close this gap and it will take a collaborative approach from everyone in the system to achieve this.

Next steps

The working group has now concluded and everyone has acknowledged that more work is needed across North Somerset to improve the parity with Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Currently the gap analysis is going through the governance process of North Somerset and BNSSG CCG to get internal sign-off and to agree next steps and responsibilities for dealing with the lack of parity.

The working group has made several recommendations based on what we've learnt which we hope that both HOSP and CYPS approve. We'd also recommend that both HOSP and CYPS should turn their focus to the scrutiny of the actions agreed to improve the gap analysis.

Consultation

N/A

Financial Implications

N/A

Legal Powers and Implications

N/A

Climate Change and Environment Implications

N/A

Risk Management

N/A

Equality Implications

N/A

Corporate Implications

N/A

Options Considered

N/A

Author: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly, Chairman Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

This page is intentionally left blank

Briefing Paper

Date: 16 May 2022

Title: Response to the Overview of findings from CAMHS working group

Author: Anna Clark, Senior Contract Manager, BNSSG CCG

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is:

- to provide a NHS response to the findings from the North Somerset CAMHS working group for those services which have a NHS responsibility to fund (either partially or in full)
- to outline the additional funding and support that has gone into Children's mental health services since service transfer in 2020.

2. Background

North Somerset Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) transferred to the Children's Community Health Partnership on 1 April 2020, from Weston Area Health Trust (WAHT) and are now provided by Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP) sub-contracted by Sirona care & health as the prime provider of CCHP.

At the point of service transfer, the CCG alongside AWP & Sirona agreed as part of a memorandum of understanding to take a three phased approach. The first phase was to transfer the services "as is" and to identify the key risks and any immediate quality and safety issues that needed to be addressed. Following this, it was agreed that AWP would identify other areas of quality and safety that require addressing and would then begin to harmonise and transform the services across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The CAMHS model of delivery is different across Bristol & South Gloucestershire services as compared to North Somerset. There are two teams currently within the North Somerset CAMHS services, the Core Service and Urgent Care Assessment Team (UCAT), whereas in Bristol and South Glos there are a number of additional specialist services outside of the core services as outlined in the table below.

As part of the SEND agenda for Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel on 11 March 2021 there were discussions about parity of provision for mental health services for children and young people when compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This led to a recommendation that a working group would be set up to explore this further.

The focus for the working group was to review and understand the parity in provision for North Somerset children and young people's mental health services when compared with other areas within the CCGs footprint.

The working group relied on a gap analysis that was co-ordinated by Avon and Wiltshire Metal Health Partnership (AWP) with input from all parties including AWP, Sirona, North Somerset Council and the CCG.

These findings were used to form the basis of a report to CYPS and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP).

During this time, the CCG in conjunction with Sirona and AWP have agreed additional funding to commission additional mental health services within North Somerset and address known gaps, where possible. These are outlined in the section below.

3. Key Updates

The working group found that North Somerset did not have parity of funding and service within Bristol and South Gloucestershire and that service models and pathways differed across the three areas.

The CCG has invested significantly in children's mental health across BNSSG since April 2020 and a considerable amount of work to develop the North Somerset services has taken place through AWP, both of which address key areas within the report.

Table 1: CCG CAMHS Investments during 2020 - March 2022

Investments	Funding	Impact
Implementation of laptus (Electronic Record System)	£132,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring North Somerset services onto the same electronic record system as Bristol and South Gloucestershire To move North Somerset CAMHS from paper records to an electronic record system which will address some quality and safety concerns and ensure effective reporting.
Agency Staffing	£180,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognised difficulties in recruitment and retention within CAMHS and agreed to fund current agency spend whilst this was addressed.
Off the Record	£200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting Advice & Signposting service available in Bristol & South Glos – extended into North Somerset during 2021/22.
Autism Intensive Service	£65,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service available in Bristol & South Gloucestershire. CCG has identified health funding on a recurrent basis. Local Authority funding has been identified on a non-recurrent basis (not included in this figure) for 2022-23 through S256 NHS Health funding, passed through to the local authority.
Long Term Plan Funding – Core Teams	£155,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding was agreed BNSSG wide to address the long-term plan. This figure outlines the additional capacity and funding agreed for North Somerset teams.
Funding for additional mental health support in schools	£250,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Recurrent funding identified to support North Somerset schools with additional mental health services

Response to the Overview of findings from CAMHS working group

		whilst MHSTs were implemented and recognising the scale of need in the area.
Transitions Worker in North Somerset	£120,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding identified to ensure that a transitions worker was available in North Somerset services which will align to the offer in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.
Total North Somerset specific	£1,102m	
24/7 Crisis Line	£260,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Line funding agreed during COVID-19 and continued post-pandemic. Available across BNSSG on a 24/7 basis to CYP, parents, carers and professionals.
CAMHS Crisis Service (Including expansion into North Somerset)	£641,092	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extending Bristol & South Glos Crisis Service into North Somerset which should go live Summer 2022.
Mental Health Support Teams (Wave 6)	2021-22 - £164,834 2022-23 - £777, 871	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health Support Teams in schools will support with early intervention and prevention. These roles will start in North Somerset during 2022.
Long Term Plan Funding	£949,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding to support the delivery of the Long Term Plan objectives. North Somerset specific funding has been included above. Remainder of funding to support other locality teams, acute hospital pressure and waiting list initiatives (including within North Somerset).
Eating Disorders Funding	£200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding to support the Eating Disorders pathway (BNSSG wide)
Transitions	£330,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding to support the transitions pathway for 16-25 year olds as part of the long term plan. (BNSSG wide)
Mental Health Support Teams (Wave 4)	2021-22 - £759,788 2022-23 - £1,112,639	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health Support Teams in schools will support with early intervention and prevention. Bristol & South Glos were wave 4.
Sub-total - BNSSG service improvements	£5,195,224	
Total: All North Somerset & BNSSG Service Improvements	£6,297,224	

Table 2: Investment into AWP CAMHS Contract**

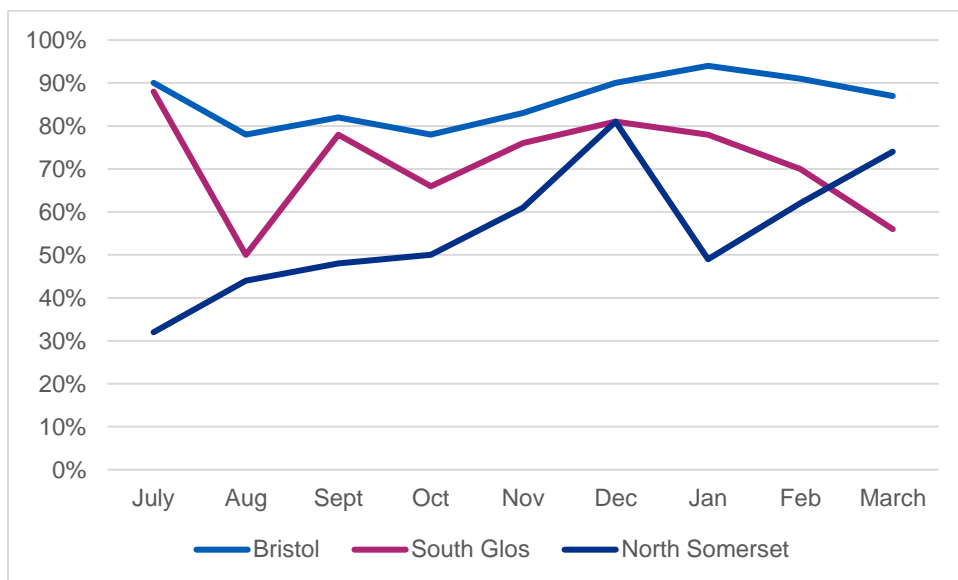
(This does not include Local Authority funded services outside of the CCHP contract)

Area	Weighted population (0-16 only)	CCG investment	Bristol City Council Investment	South Glos Council Investment	North Somerset Council Investment	Spend per 100 across Health & Care
Bristol & South Glos	8,288	£8.6m	£1.630m	£140k		£122,293

North Somerset	2,224	£3m			£0k	£131,834
----------------	-------	-----	--	--	-----	----------

** Overall funding position for CAMHS at the end of 20/21 and will not include all of table 1 contributions.

Table 3: % with treatment start within 18 weeks



Improvements have been made within the North Somerset teams with treatment within 18 weeks beginning to compare to that of Bristol & South Gloucestershire services.

The report also highlighted that caseloads remain high in North Somerset as compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire. However, since the gap analysis was initially produced, these caseloads have been reduced with the rates in North Somerset at a similar rate per 1000 as Bristol.

Table 4: Caseloads across BNSSG

Caseload	Caseload (March 2022)	Rate Per 1000	Population Size (0-18)
Bristol	1849	18	102572
South Glos	705	11	65094
North Somerset	796	18	43984

Service Specific Challenges

AWP are currently undertaking work to align the service provision in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. There have been significant recruitment and retention issues which the provider is addressing and is being supported by the CCG. A recruitment premium has been put in place alongside a recruitment event to encourage applicants in the area.

Crisis Services: The report identified that North Somerset does not have an equivalent crisis service to Bristol and South Gloucestershire. As illustrated in table 1, this has been addressed by the CCG and is currently being mobilised by AWP for delivery from Summer 2022.

Learning disabilities and Autism: In 2021/22 as part of the S256 funding in 21/22 it was agreed that there would be an expansion across the 3 Local Authority areas of the Autism Intensive Service. As there is a time delay in reaching all areas the CCG has spot-purchased the service to provide for a number of young people. Recruitment is underway into the service to put in place these packages for the identified young people.

The CCG has increased its funding into AIS (see table 1), however, additional service funding for 2022 has been agreed as part of the S256 funding through the local authority. From 2023/24, additional funding will be required from the local authority to ensure that the same level of capacity can remain available.

For learning disabilities, whilst the report has identified that there is no separate team (like the Bristol and South Gloucestershire model), the North Somerset CAMHS team does employ specialist LD practitioners who provide support for young people with mild and moderate learning disabilities.

If there was further investment in Learning Disability services, specifically intensive behaviour support and autism, this could serve as an invest to save model and would help prevent expensive out of area placements for these young people.

Eating Disorder services: a different service model is in place to that of Bristol & South Gloucestershire. The eating disorder pathway needs to be re-designed to align it with the Bristol and South Gloucestershire model. This will include having access to the specialist hub team and training in evidence-based treatment. Recruit to train practitioners have already been employed and will be trained at Exeter University over the next year.

Getting Advice and Signposting: The CCG has expanded Off the Record (OTR) into North Somerset to mirror the service provision in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This has been well received within the area and OTR held a launch event with local providers, commissioners and councillors.

Other Issues to be addressed

- Primary Mental Health Specialist (PMHS) and Primary Infant Mental Health Services (PIMHS) – This service is commissioned by the Public Health teams in Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- Be Safe Service – Commissioned by the Public Health and Local Authority teams in Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- Thinking Allowed

4. Summary

This paper was written in response to the overview of findings from CAMHS working group.

The CCG would welcome further conversations regarding additional funding for those services that continue to require investment as outlined in the paper, 'Overview of Findings from CAMHS working group'.

Re-setting the education agenda in North Somerset



Page 27

Agenda Item 10

**Pip Hesketh, Assistant Director for Education Partnerships,
North Somerset Council, June 2022**



Context

SEND Improvement Notice, November 2021 - 6 remaining areas of significant weakness

Pertinent findings:

- Strategic leadership – not felt at the front line
- SEND reforms Fewer children and young people in mainstream school with SEND
- Needs not identified or met early enough – perception that children’s needs being ‘held’ in primary schools, but needing intervention/support in secondary schools

Education Investment Area – February 2022 - ranks 43 of 55 lowest performing local authorities for ***progress and attainment*** for progress and attainment

- Most schools in North Somerset are academised
- No real clarity about who will receive funding and how much but majority will benefit academies

Schools White Paper – statute by January?

SEND Green Paper – in consultation

Context 2

North Somerset has a distinctive profile and patterns in outcomes for children

- Rate of EHCPs increased by 27% compared to 10% increase nationally
- Small percentage of children with SEND in Mainstream schools
- Gaps for our most vulnerable children are significant – FSM, children with SEND and children with a social worker
- Children with vulnerabilities are over represented in those who have persistent absence and who are excluded
- EHE rates have increased significantly
- COVID19 has created new levels of need – its impact for children and young people will endure
- Impact of COVID19 on school staff wellbeing (through continuous change, additional support and monitoring of vulnerable children)



back to home page

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Demographic profile part 1



Cohort snapshot date

07 March 2022

SEN stage (ctrl + click to select multiple)

EHCP

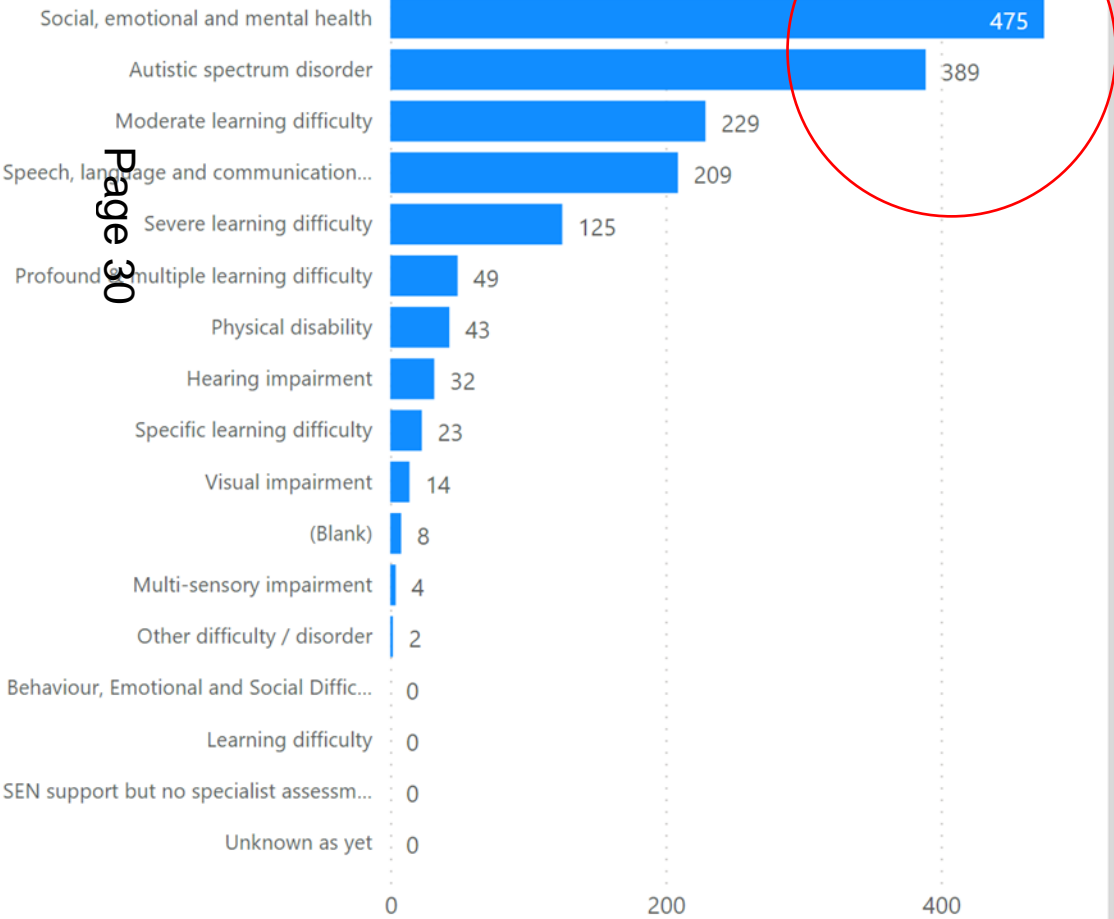
SEND school support

Not SEND

Commentary: Social, emotional and mental health is the most common primary need for EHCP students and the second most common for SEND school support students, for whom specific learning difficulty is the most common primary need. The proportion of students with an EHCP has increased yearly, with the number of students with SEND school support increasing at a lesser rate.

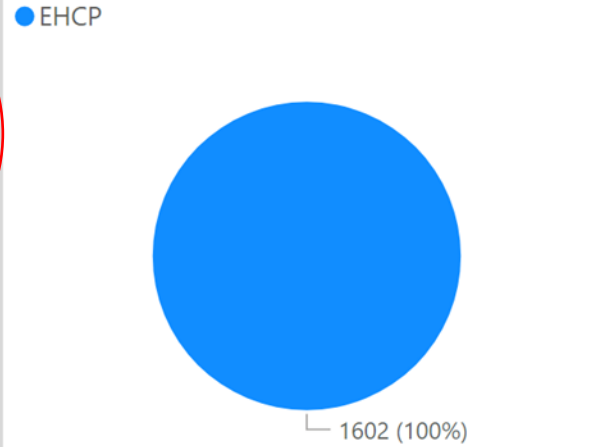
SEND cohort by primary need

EHCP

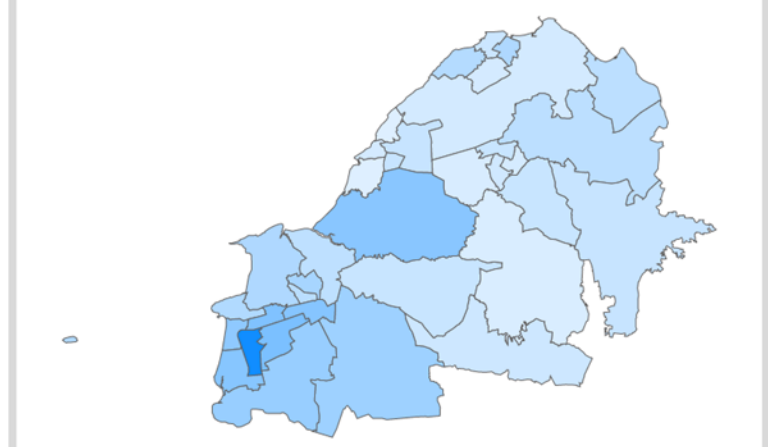


Page 30

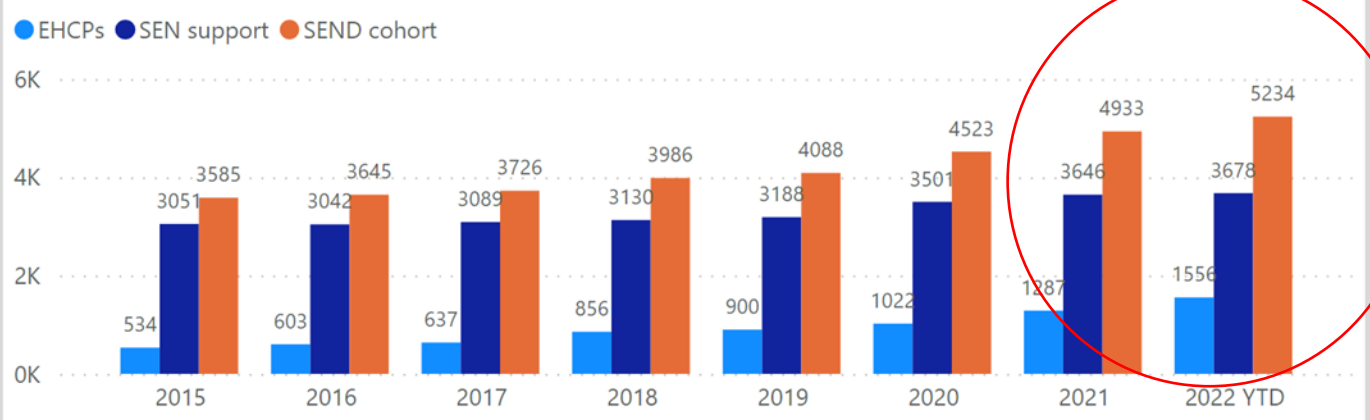
Cohort by SEN stage



Cohort by ward



SEND cohort size per year (census data)



Note that the above chart is based on census data, not snapshots, and is unaffected by the filters on this page



[back to home page](#)

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Experience of the system part 2

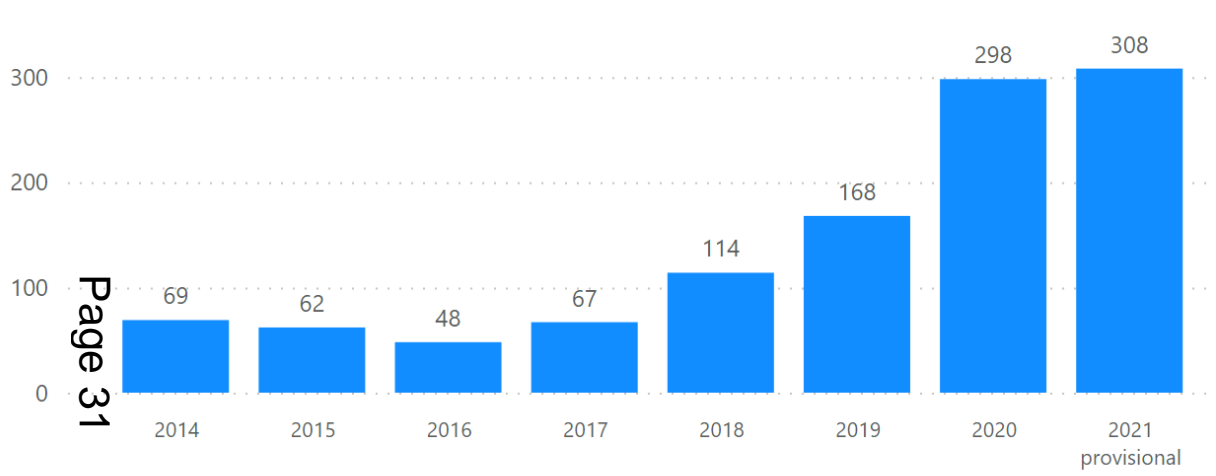


2014 2021

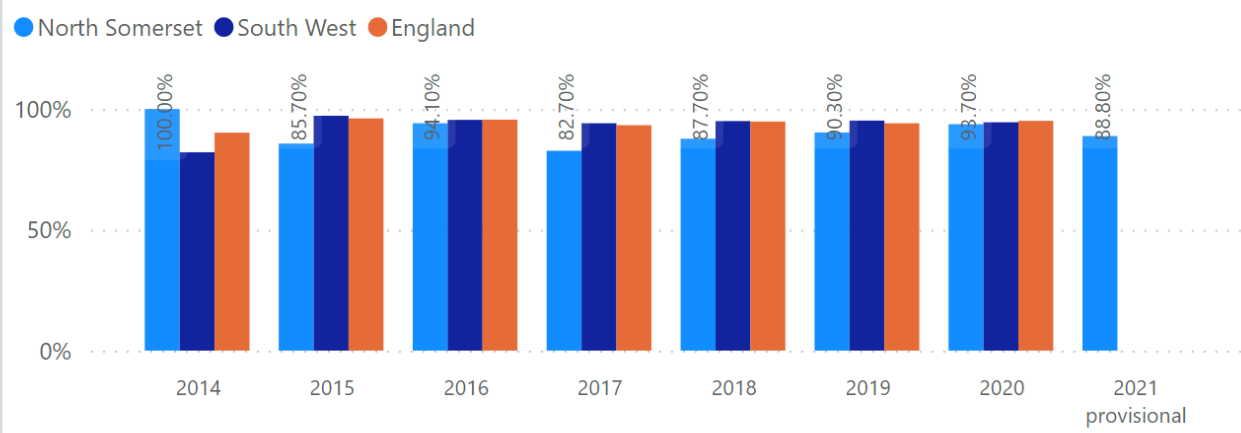


Commentary: While the rate of new EHCPs in the 0-25 population was significantly under comparator values from 2014-2019, 2020 saw the rate increase from 29 per 10,000 to 50 per 10,000, over 20% greater than 42 in the South West and far greater than England's 34. This rate was maintained into 2021. The rate so far in 2022 is 7 - without an increase in new plans later in the year, we are likely to see a drop in the total rate for 2022 compared to 2021.

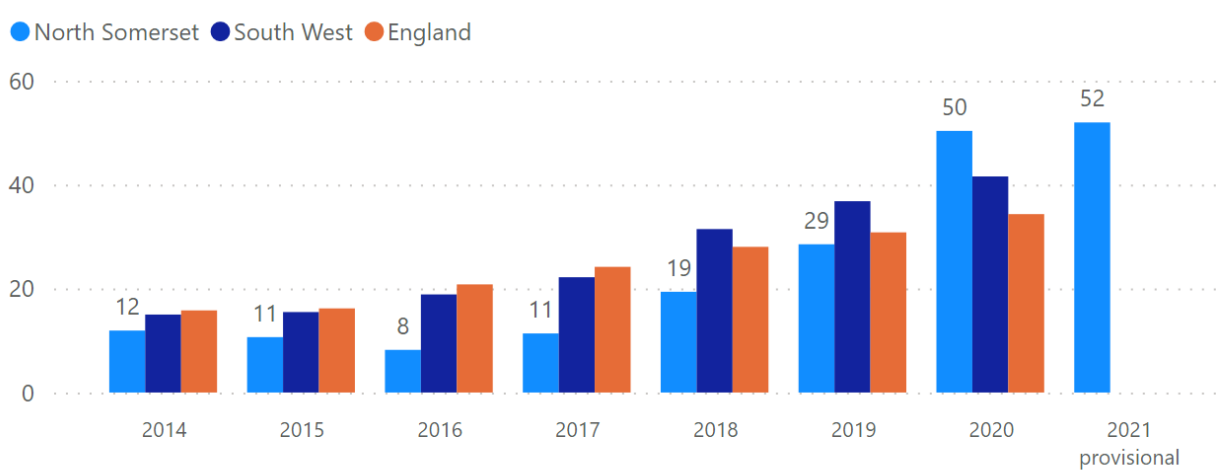
Number of new EHC plans



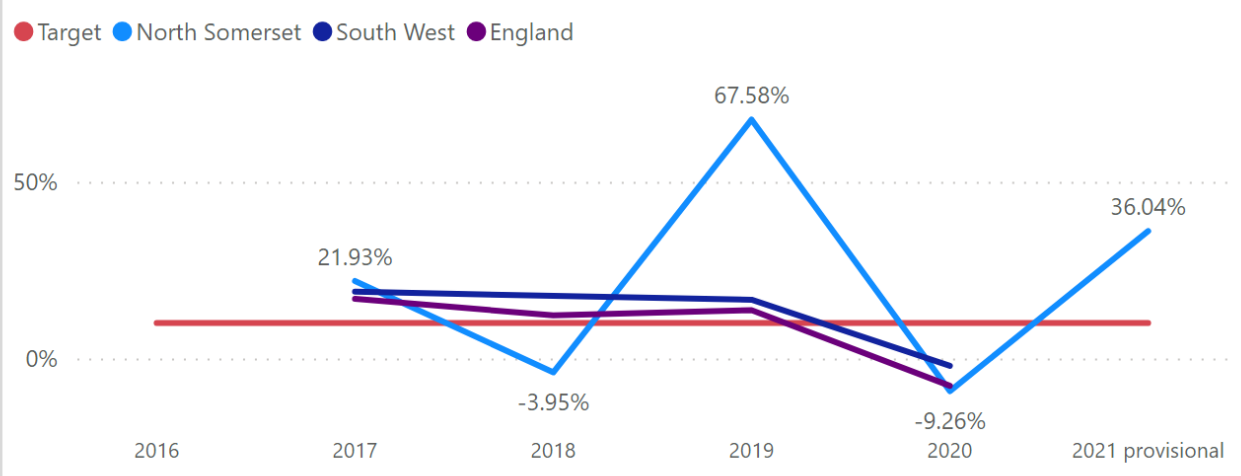
Percentage of children assessed for whom EHCPs were made for the first time during the year



Rate of new EHC plans per 10,000 0-25 population



Percent change in requests for EHC plans per year





back to home page

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

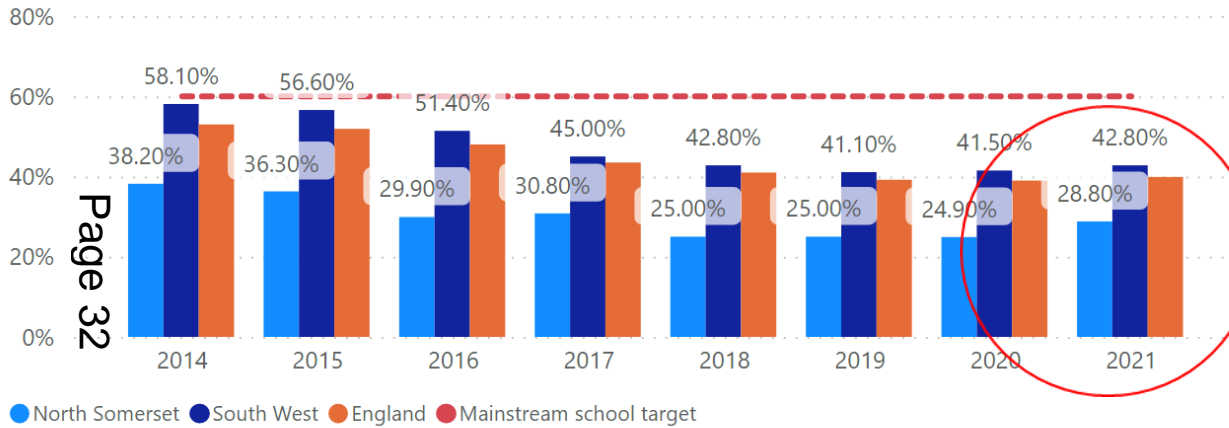
Destinations part 1



2014

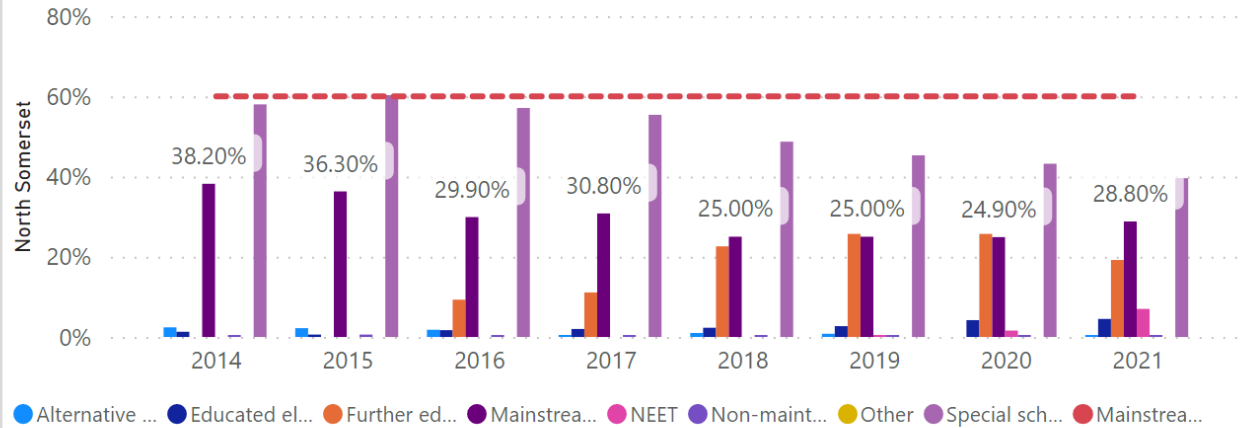
2022

% in mainstream school - children and young people with LA-maintained EHCPs (from SEN2 census data)

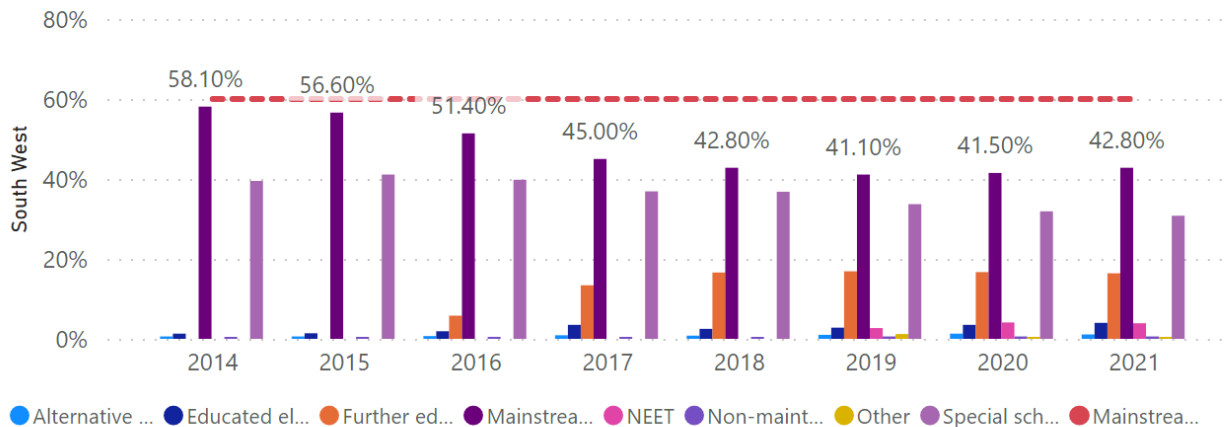


Commentary: North Somerset has consistently had a far smaller proportion of EHCP students at mainstream schools than the South West and England, generally 15-20% less. North Somerset has a greater proportion of EHCP students at special schools and in further education, accounting for much of this difference. NEET has increased across all areas over 2020 and 2021, likely as a result of COVID. North Somerset's NEET figure of 7% in 2021 compares poorly to 3.9% in the South West and 2.5% in England.

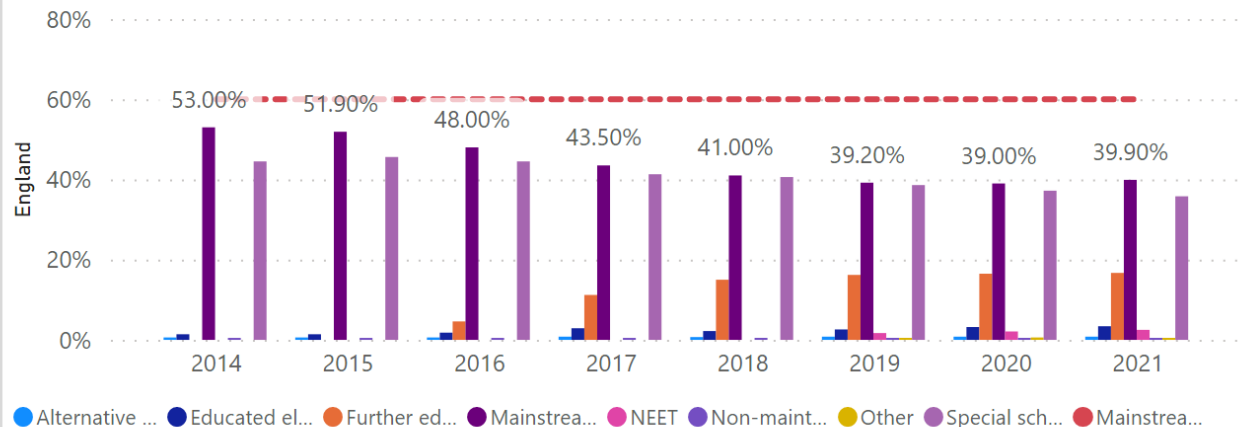
North Somerset - placements of children and young people with LA-maintained or EHCPs (from SEN2 census data)



South West - placements of children and young people with LA-maintained or EHCPs (from SEN2 census data)



England - placements of children and young people with LA-maintained or EHCPs (from SEN2 census data)





back to home page

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Destinations part 2

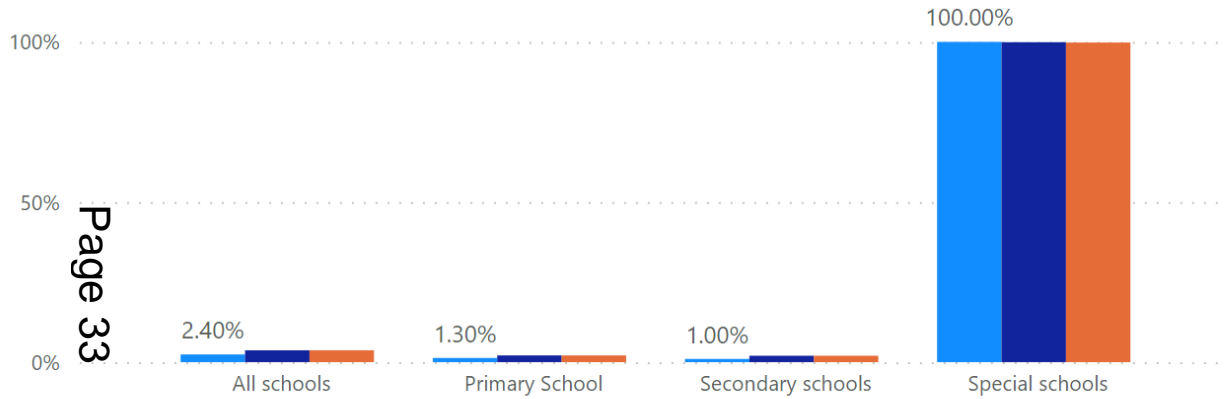


2014

2022

Percentage of students with an EHCP per setting type (from Jan 2022 census)

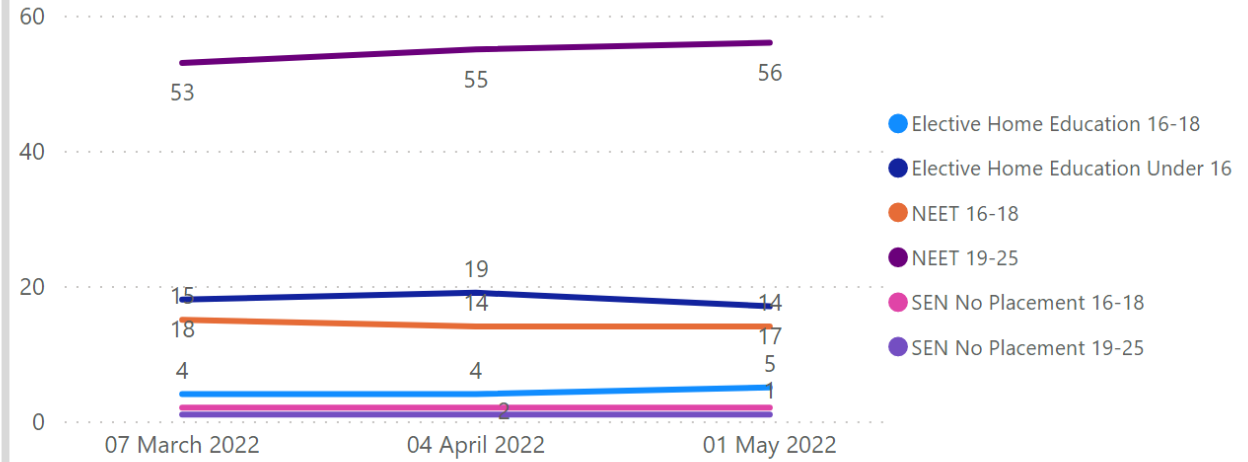
North Somerset Stat Neighbours England



Page 33

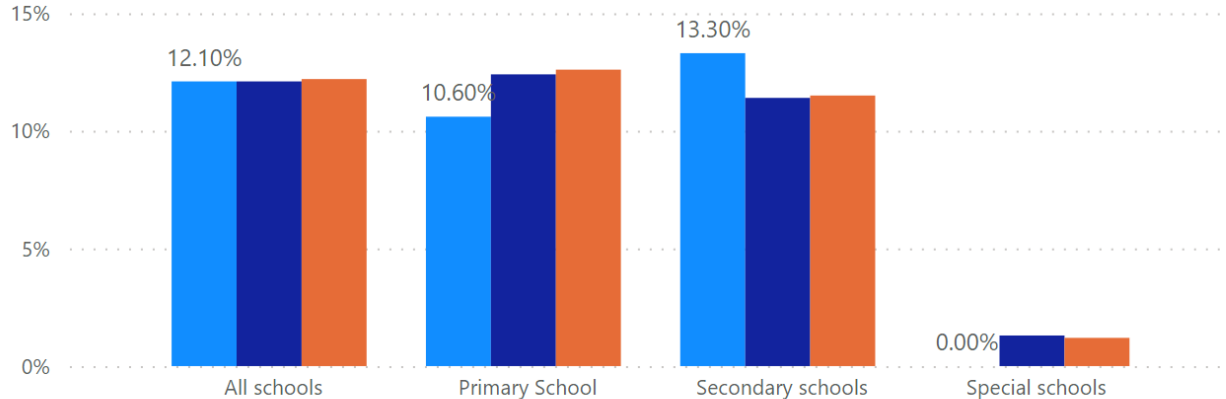
Commentary: In the January 2022 census 2.4% of students at North Somerset schools had an EHCP, significantly less than the 3.7% seen at South West and England levels. For SEN school support, while the overall proportion of students was very similar to comparators, the proportion in primary schools was significantly less and the proportion in secondary schools significantly higher than comparators.

EHCP students EHE, NEET and no placement per snapshot

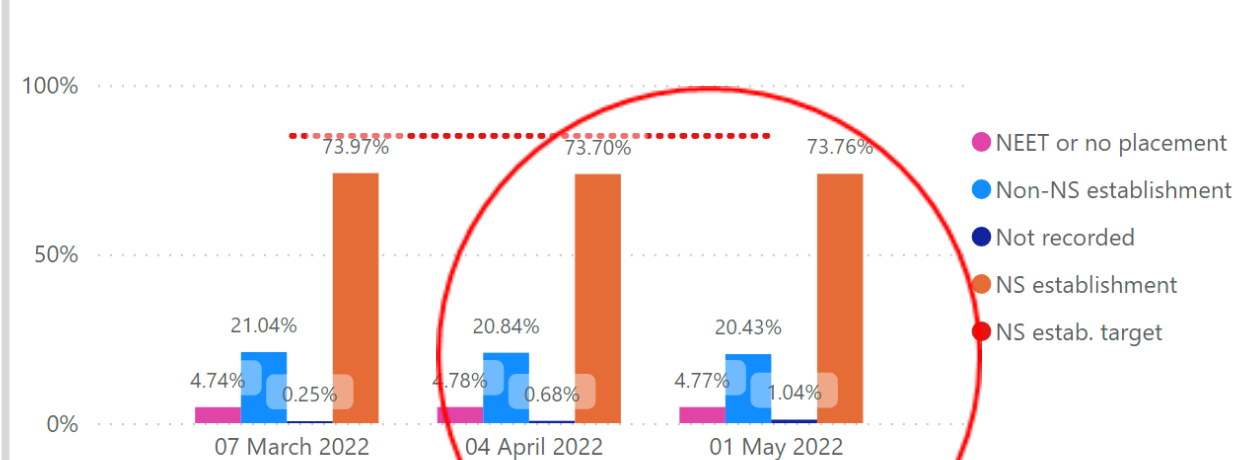


Percentage of students with SEN school support per setting type (from Jan 2022 census)

North Somerset Stat Neighbours England



EHCP students by location of principle establishment per snapshot





back to home page

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Outcomes - children's social care



Cohort snapshot date

04 April 2022

SEN stage (ctrl + click to select multiple)

EHCP

SEND school support

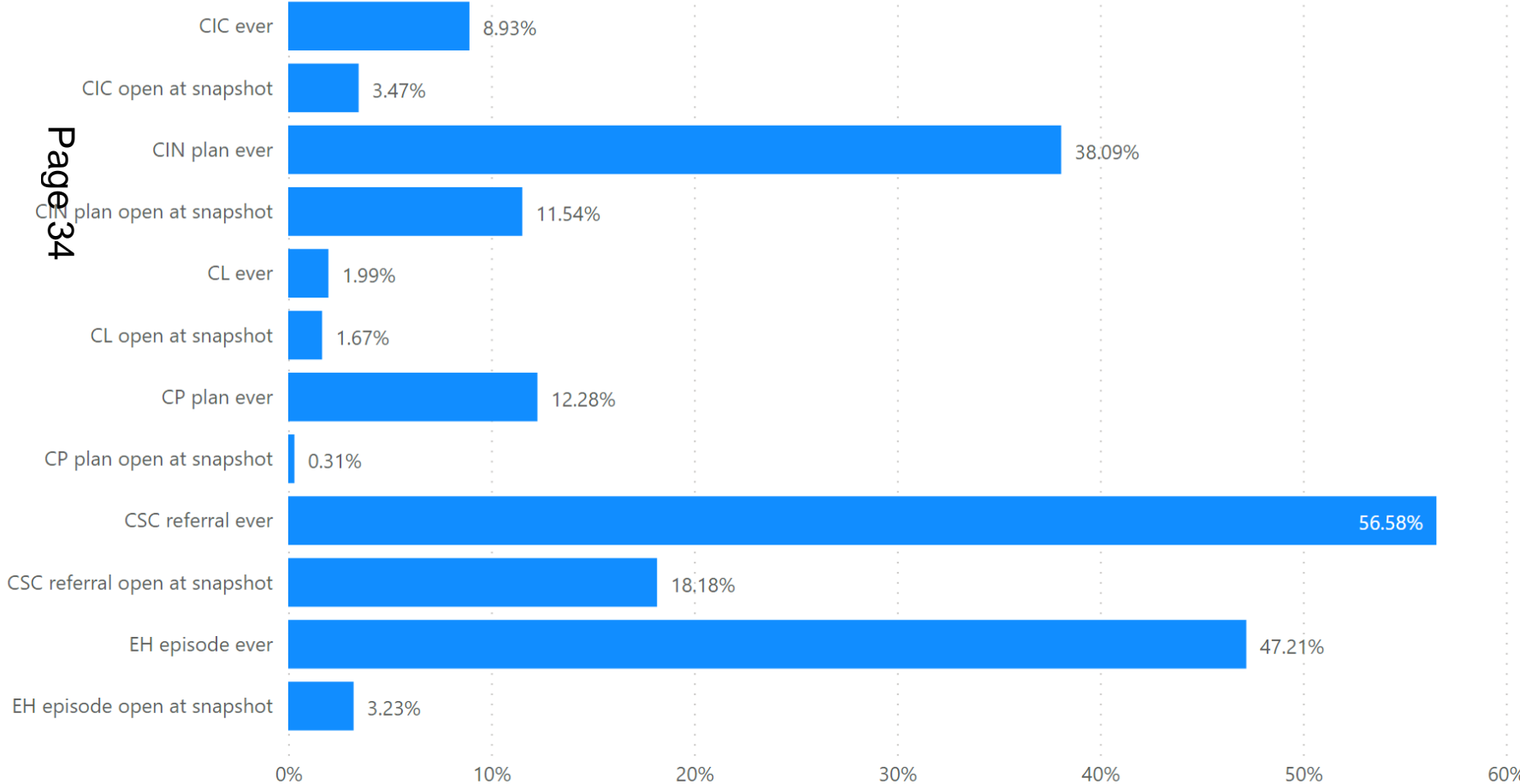
Not SEND

Commentary: 56% of the current EHCP cohort and 24% of the SEN school support cohort have had a CSC referral at some point in the past, compared to 9% of non-SEND students. Currently 18% of EHCP students have a open CSC referral, compared to a proportionally far smaller 2.8% of SEN school support students and 0.7% of those without SEND.

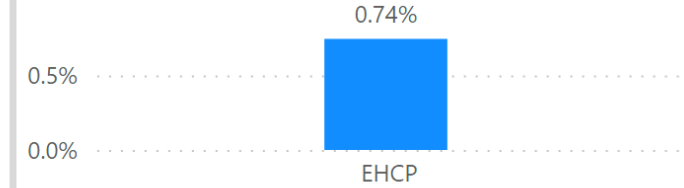
Children's support and safeguarding for children in the snapshot cohort

● EHCP

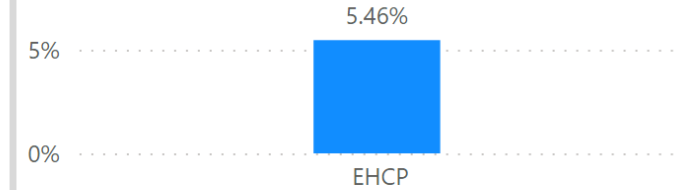
Page 34



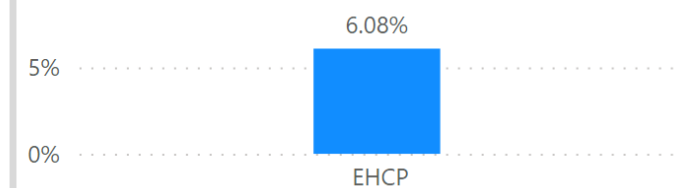
% of cohort with a YOS statutory intervention ever



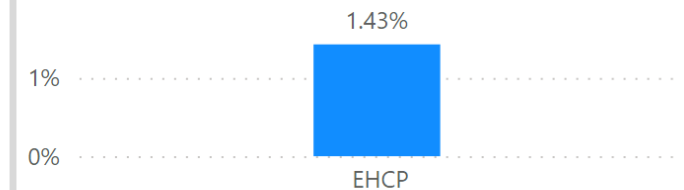
% of cohort with a YOS non-statutory intervention ever



% of cohort with a missing episode ever



% of cohort with CSE flag ever





back to home page

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Outcomes - attendance and exclusions



Cohort snapshot date

04 April 2022

SEN stage (ctrl + click to select multiple)

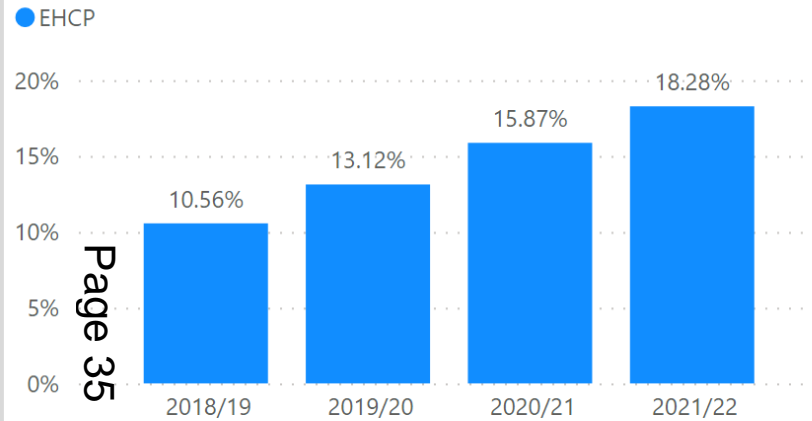
EHCP

SEND school support

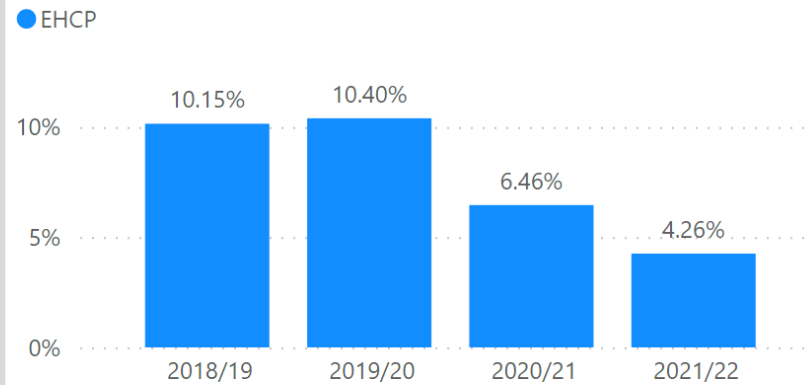
Not SEND

Commentary: These measures categorise students based on their current SEND status, not the status as of the given exclusion / absence. Looking at our cohort of EHCP students as of 04/04/2022, 1% of them had a permanent exclusion in 2018/19. This dropped to 0.74% in 2019/20 then 0.08% in 2020/21 which is a fantastic improvement.

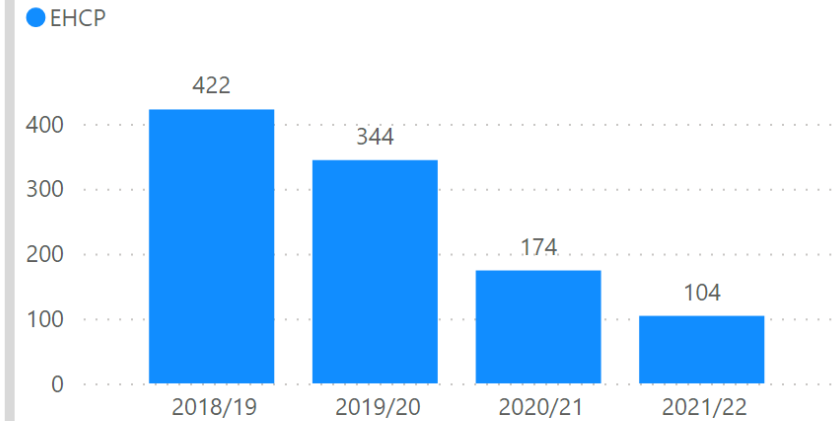
Authorised absences - average percentage of sessions for snapshot cohort during the given year



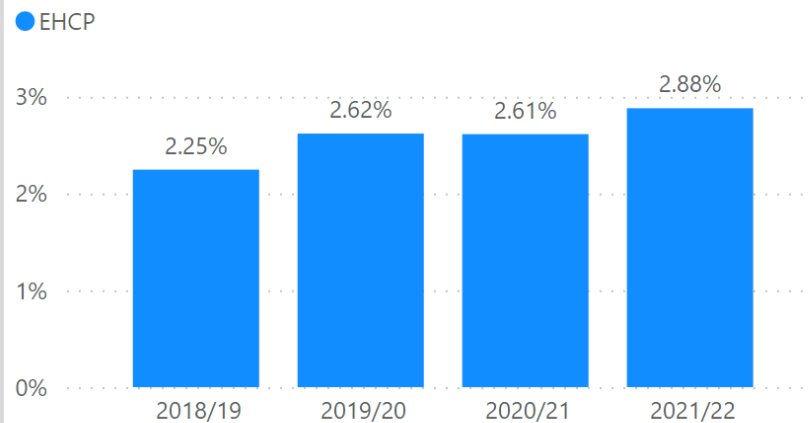
Fixed exclusions - percentage of snapshot cohort with at least 1 during the given year (for academic ages 4-15 during the given year)



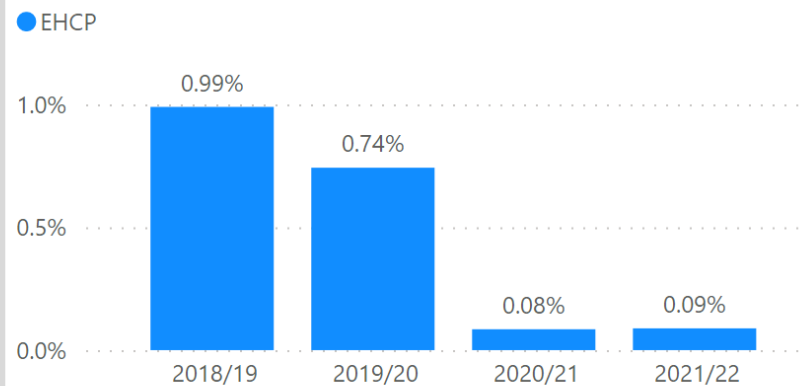
Fixed exclusions - total (for academic ages 4-15 during the given year)



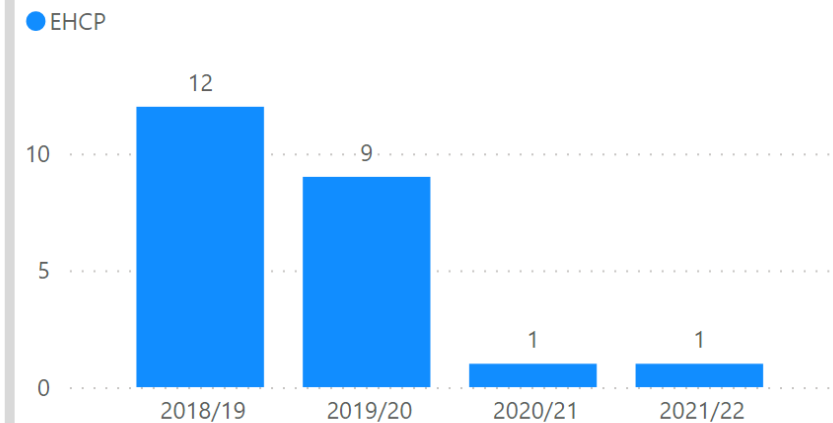
Unauthorised absences - average percentage of sessions for snapshot cohort during the given year



Permanent exclusions - percentage of snapshot cohort with at least 1 during the given year (for academic ages 4-15 during the given year)



Permanent exclusions - total (for academic ages 4-15 during the given year)





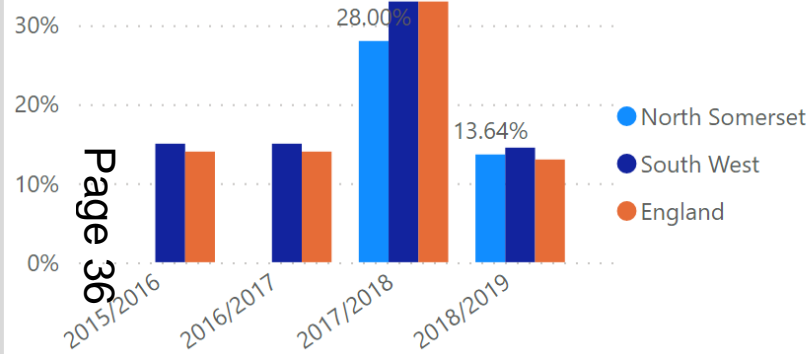
North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Attainment - primary

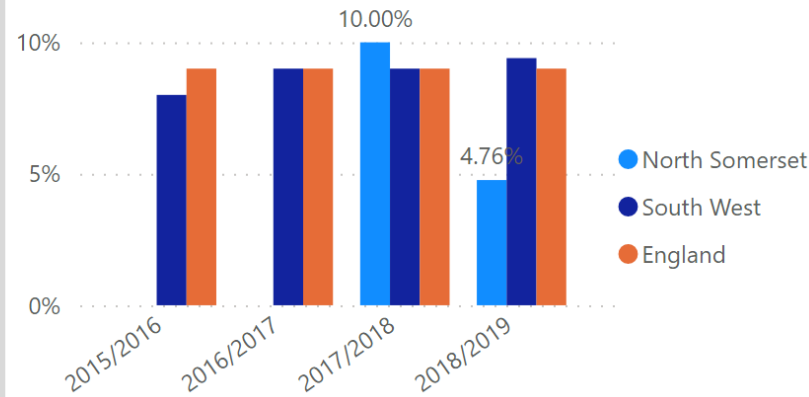


Commentary: Data is not available for 2020 or 2021 due to COVID-19. Suppressed figures have been filled with local data where available. KS1 reading attainment was poor against comparators in 2017/18 but this improved in 2018/19. KS1 writing shows poor performance against comparators in 2018/19, a significant drop from the previous year. KS1 maths shows fairly strong historical attainment, but in 2018/19 this dropped to under the South West average, but was very similar to the England average. KS1 science attainment has consistently underperformed comparators with a downward trend over the available years. KS2 attainment in reading, writing and maths has similarly trended downwards over available years.

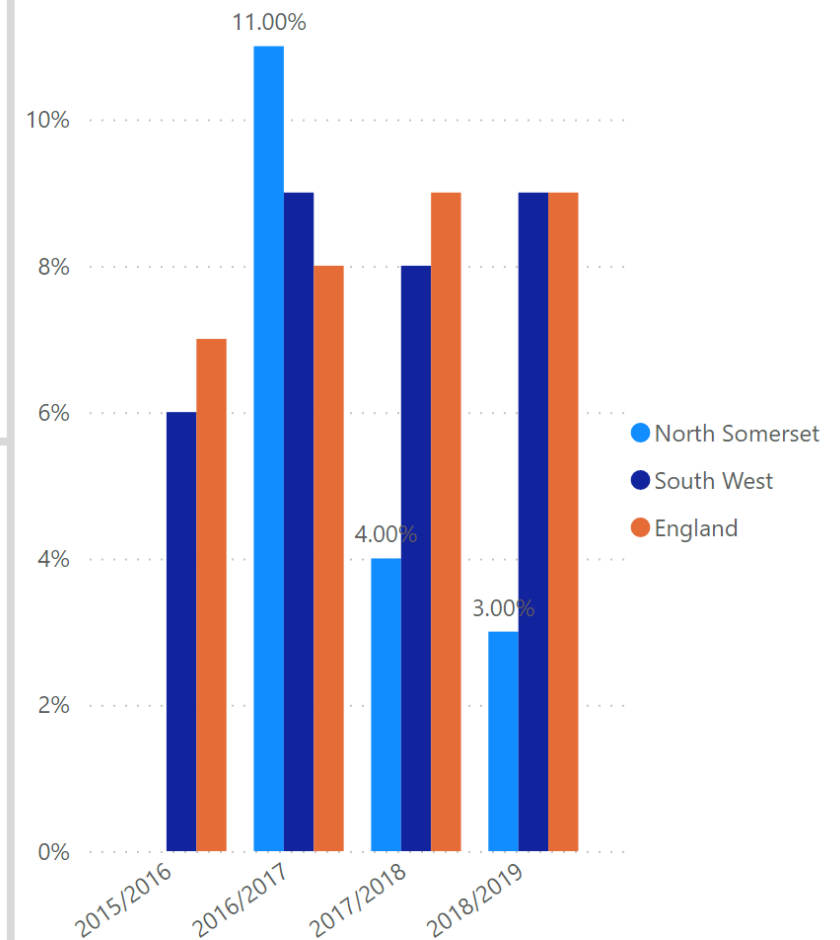
KS1 reading - percentage of EHCP pupils achieving expected standard



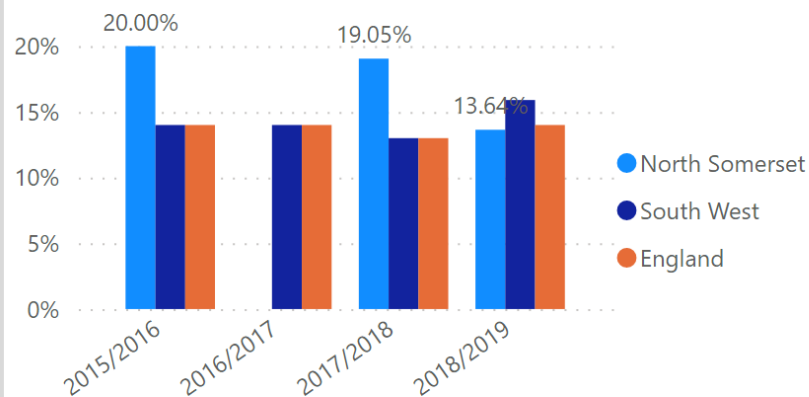
KS1 writing - percentage of EHCP pupils achieving expected standard



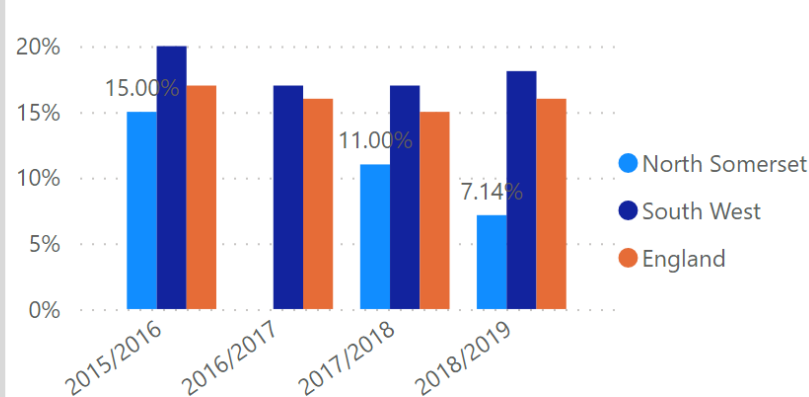
KS2 - percentage of EHCP pupils achieving expected standard in reading, writing and maths



KS1 maths - percentage of EHCP pupils achieving expected standard



KS1 science - percentage of EHCP pupils achieving expected standard





back to home page

North Somerset SEND data dashboard

Overall demographic profile - age, gender and ethnicity



Cohort snapshot date

04 April 2022

SEN stage (ctrl + click to select multiple)

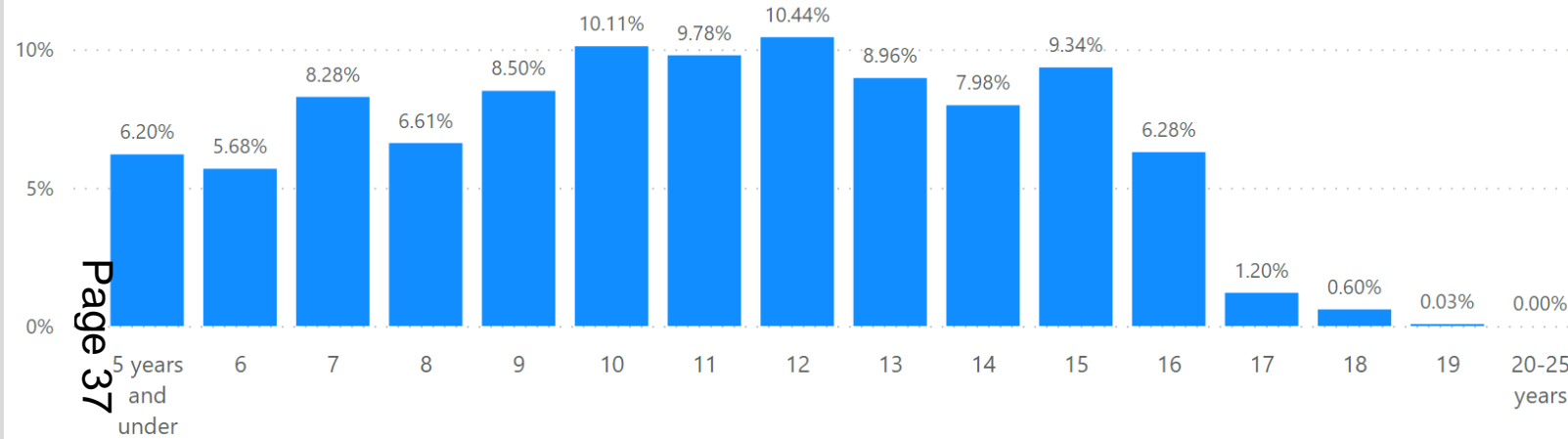
EHCP

SEND school su...

Not SEND

Commentary: Note that non-EHCP snapshot data is sourced sourced from the school census. Due to this, non-EHCP data generally ends at age 18. Therefore all students in the 20-25 age category are expected to be EHCP students.

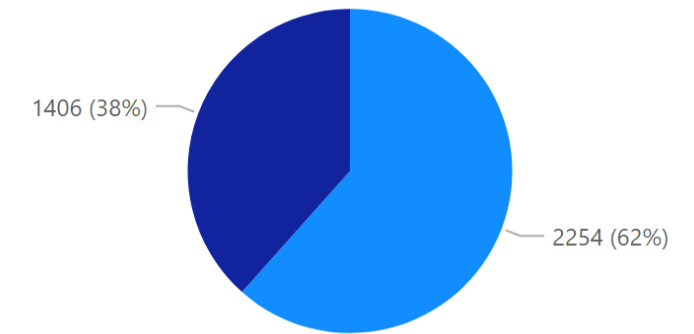
Cohort by age (%)



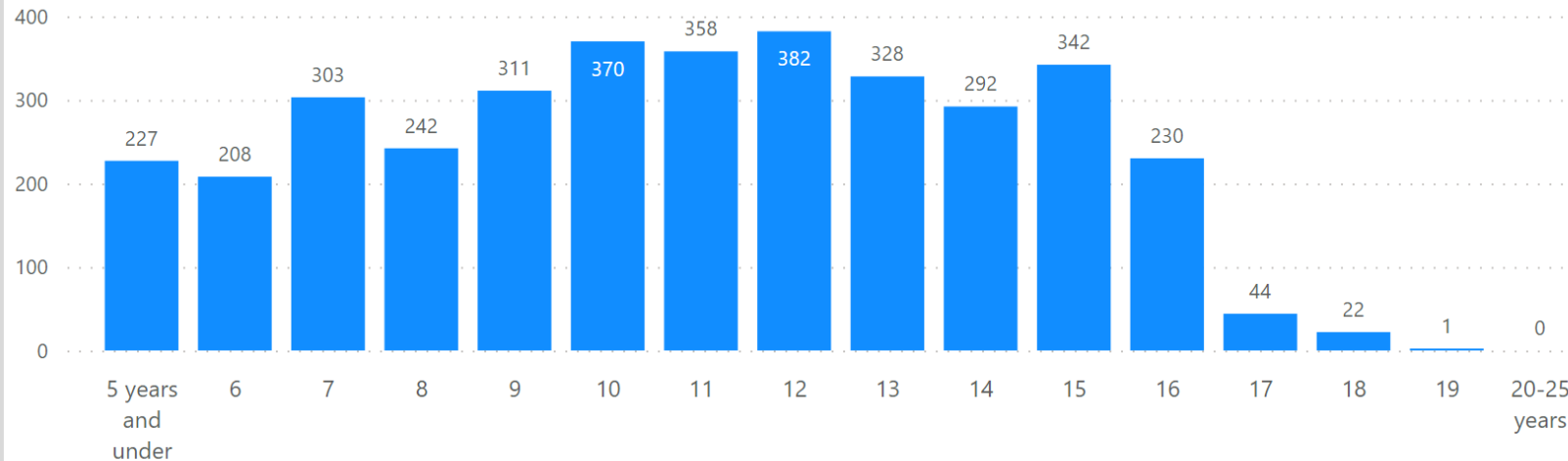
Page 37

Cohort by gender

Male Female

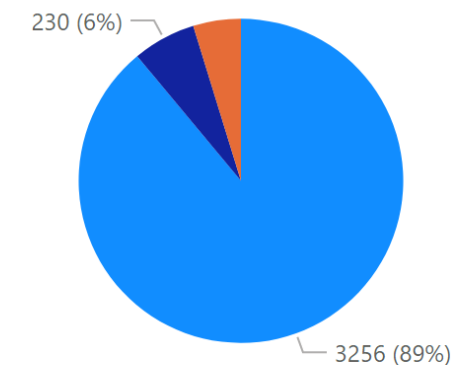


Cohort by age (numbers)



Cohort by ethnicity

Ethnicity (white all) Ethnicity (BAME all) Not recorded



An Education Strategy for North Somerset

Principles

- Every child receiving a relevant high quality education in their *local* area alongside their peers
- Every child known well – diversity of need and talent recognised as a strength of a healthy and high performing educational provision
- Needs identified and met early – a multi-agency approach to supporting children and their families
- Trusted relationships and nurture fostered in every school
- Children and young people setting the agenda
- Focus on closing gaps for the most vulnerable
- Operating in a climate of accountability, transparency and challenge to achieve best value for public money

What will this achieve?

- A diverse population in every school and a culture which **identifies needs early**
- Normalisation of SEND and mental health issues and a deep sense of belonging which **reduces the need to leave the system**
- All children making better progress and achieving more highly
- Smoother transitions between education stages
- Increased parental confidence in the mainstream system
- Improved transitions into adulthood

What pain will be spared?

Improved engagement – including children and young people with anxiety

Reduced escalation of need

Reduced requests for statutory needs assessments

Reduced requests for Special School Places

Reduced requests for additional funding

Reduced complaints and tribunals

More efficient and user friendly systems that support those who need them quicker

SEND Improvement Plan – May 2022 Update

- Programme Manager now appointed – Paul Wilson
- DfE now attending SEND Improvement Board and formal reports being submitted each month
- Education workstream – Area 3 largely **GREEN**
- Audits of SEND Information Reports - 85% Green
- ASP Reports and Training delivered – to be re-run in term 6
- Governor and QFT Training delivered and to be re-run in term 6
- Two MATS creating SEND and Inclusion Strategy (that we know of – there may be more)
- <https://worle-school.org.uk/new-page> – worth a look!
- Additional places to be provided at Baytree and through new SEMH school
- Additional capacity to support children in mainstream schools through Nurture Groups
- TUF Review (including Review of SEN provision) in process of being commissioned
- Children and young people’s SEND Council – setting the agenda for their own priorities
- Scrutiny Panel now visiting schools to meet parents with children and young people with SEND

DSG Management Plan

1. Early Identification of Need / prevention of escalation of need

Keep children at SEND Support levels in Mainstream Schools

- Graduated Response – refresh and roll out June 2020
- 7 Nurture Groups being commissioned in mainstream schools
- Mental Health in Schools Project
- Training and support of schools – SEND and Trusted Relationships/ Trauma Informed practice
- Extension of SENDIAS contract
- Of 31 families using SENDIAS SEND Support Worker, only 5 went on to request SNA
- Transition support projects
- Early Help in Schools Project (EH Team plus health co-located located in highest need secondary schools)
- Improved communication with parents and carer through improved Local Offer

2. Increasing local SEND Provision

- SEMH School – 22 places this year, 65 places overall
- Baytree school expansion

3. Improvements in Commissioning

- Review of Truro Pathways
- Review of Special School Provision
- Use of AP Framework for all AP – transfer students at transition stages from bespoke packages
- Renegotiate unit cost of NM Independent Placements

4. Other efficiency measures

- Re-forecast need
- Top Up Funding Review
- Increase Health contributions
- Review of Post 16 provision
- Review of arrangements to SEN school reserves
- Management of duration of EHCPs

5. To support this, we need

Cap and national rates for Independent sector

Re-enforce the message to parents/carers and schools that mainstream is a positive choice

Focus of Education Investment Area to be SEND

Ofsted focus on prevention/early identification and closing gaps

More realistic funding and clarification on education/health split of funding

Examples of authorities who have achieved balanced book and managed demand

This page is intentionally left blank

Community of Practice - SEND



Page 45

Agenda Item 11

March 2022



What is the Community of Practice?

Page 46

Conceived by Cllr Catherine Gibbons, Executive Member Children's Services and Lifelong Learning
Borrows from the Academic world

A Community of practitioners who want to share ideas explore concepts and models of good practice to improve their own practice

The Community promotes different perspectives as part of a healthy professional culture

The Community has common purpose – in North Somerset, this is SEND



How does it work in North Somerset?

Page 47

Original concept developed following 1:1 between Executive Member and AD Education Partnerships

An innovative vehicle for a wide range of stakeholders and practitioners to discuss the complex and challenging world of SEND

MATs and SATs invited to nominate their 'prime movers' in SEND and then invitation extended to other agencies

Chairship is shared

Work programme agreed democratically agreed

Decisions made democratically

Community self-organises through volunteering to take forward agreed pieces of work



Why does it work?

It's democratic

It has common purpose but is multi-disciplinary

Its real – SEND Priorities form the basis of discussions

It's challenging – challenge is encouraged, valued and respected – this gets to the heart of the issues

System leaders don't often get to talk about practice but *this* is their passion

What is a typical meeting?

Meets every other Friday afternoon at 3pm – attendance is voluntary but around 40 people come

Starts with a presentation, or several, or a provocation or a fact – to stimulate debate

Debate amongst community – exchange of ideas

Conclusion to debate agreed and course of action

Attendance high – even on a Friday afternoon

The work is getting done

NSPCWT are also part of the Community and

Contribute to and support its work



Examples

Example 1 – Graduated Response

The Community of Practice looked a range of tools and models for identifying SEN Needs, including the North Somerset Graduated Response

Members of the Community presented models that they liked from whatever source they liked which work for them

In groups they debated what each had to offer, agreeing that they liked NS Graduated Response but that it could be improved

Members of the Community volunteered to join one of 3 groups to look at the Graduated Response in educational phases – Early Years, School Age and Post 16. They redrafted it together and then came together to ensure there was consistency. The new Graduated Response is now in process of being printed

Example 2 – Recruitment Fair

Through the discussions about meeting need, Members agreed that there was a shortage of staff in several key areas. They took the initiative between them to organise a recruitment fair which takes place on March 31st in Winter Gardens



What next?

- Continue with work programme
- Ensure the Community is credited with its work
- Build habits and new ways of working
- Consider transferability to other areas of work

North Somerset Council

Report to the Children & Young People Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 16 June 2022

Subject of Report: North Somerset's Annual Children's Social Care Complaints and Complements Report for the 2020/ 21 financial year

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services

Key Decision: No

Reason: This report is for information only

Recommendations

It is recommended the members review the content of the Annual Report on Children's Services Complaints and Complements (attached), referred to this panel for consideration and any further actions.

1. Summary of Report

1.1 The annual report for 2020/21 covers the Council's actions and responses to complaints and complements about Children's Social Care.

2. Policy

2.1 'Getting the Best from Complaints' recommends that an Annual Report on the operation of the Complaints Procedure be presented to the Executive Member for Children's Services. This information, as contained in this report, is referred to this Panel for review and comment before its submission to the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning.

3. Details

3.1 In the twelve months 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, twenty-five Children's Services Social Care complaints were administered by the directorate. Whilst 8 were resolved at the pre-complaints stage, nine proceeded to Stage 1, four to stage 2 and none to Stage 3 of the statutory complaint's procedure. Four cases were referred to the Local Government Ombudsman. Further analysis is contained in the attached Annual Report – appendix 1.

A report covering the period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 will be submitted next year.

4. Consultation

4.1 Not applicable.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The statutory guidelines require the Council to employ an independent Investigation Officer to investigate for all Stage 2 and 3 complaints and to submit their report on recommendations. We used one provider in 2020/21 – South West Region Board – at a cost of £2,900 in the 2020 - 21 financial year.

Costs

See above - £2,900 in the 2020- 21 financial year.

Funding

Costs are funded from Council resources.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

6.1 As set out in 'Getting the Best from Complaints' - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-getting-the-best-from-complaints>

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

7.1 There are no direct outcomes in terms of climate change to the complaints process.

8. Risk Management

8.1 A failure to present annual report is contrary to the guidelines as set out in 'Getting the Best from Complaints (2006)'.

9. Equality Implications

[Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes/No **No**

9.1 The evaluation and analysis of complaints is an important means of monitoring and improving service standards including service access for groups within local communities.

Monitoring complaints ensures that those with protected characteristics are dealt with fairly.

10. Corporate Implications

10.1 Legislation and guidance requires that an Annual Complaints Report is produced and reported to the relevant organisation.

11. Options Considered

11.1 None – Getting the Best from Complaints recommends that an Annual Report on the operation of the Complaints Procedure be presented to the Executive Member for Children’s Services.

Author:

Steve Devine
Complaints & Directorate Governance Manager

Education Partnerships
Children’s Services
North Somerset Council

Sally Varley
Head of Strategic Planning &
Governance

Tel: 01275 882171

01275 884857 or 07917 587280

E-Mail: complaints.manager@n-somerset.gov.uk Sally.Varley@n-somerset.gov.uk

Post: Castlewood, Tickenham Road, Clevedon, UK BS21 6FW

Web: www.n-somerset.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1 attached

Background Papers:

None



Children's Services

Annual Report

Representations and Complaints

1 April 2020– 31 March 2021

Steve Devine
Complaints & Directorate Governance Manager

Sally Varley
Head of Strategic Planning &
Governance

Education Partnerships
Children's Services
North Somerset Council

Tel: 01275 882171

01275 884857 or 07917 587280

E-Mail: complaints.manager@n-somerset.gov.uk Sally.Varley@n-somerset.gov.uk

Post: Castlewood, Tickenham Road, Clevedon, UK BS21 6FW

Web: www.n-somerset.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides service users, their families and other stakeholders with information about complaints and representations received about children's social care. It aims to measure the effectiveness of the Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions. The report provides an analysis of outcomes and trends from the information received during 2020-2021 as well as the impact on service delivery and learning from complaints.
- 1.2 The report also captures compliments and areas of good practice.

2. The Statutory Context

- 2.1 This annual report is a statutory requirement for Children's Social Care Representations, including Complaints and Compliments. This report reflects the data recorded on the Council's Complaints database, Casetracker, during the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 based on the following legal guidance:

'The statutory procedure for Children's Social Care is "The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006" and accompanying Statutory Guidance "Getting the Best from Complaints".'

3. Participation, Early Response and Resolution – an overview of the benefits

- 3.1 The Council's Complaints Process aims to be as simple and straightforward as possible for children and young people and their parents/carers to raise concerns and feel that they have been dealt with properly and fairly, even if they do not always agree with or are fully happy with the outcome. The Council aims to learn from all feedback and, where appropriate, act to improve the quality of its services for the individual complainant and for other service users. Complaints can be made from parents, carers and children and young people. In 2020-2021 most of complaints were made by parents and carers.
- 3.2 Within Children's Social Care, the importance of listening to children, encouraging children to make their voices heard and to be involved in active participation is recognised. The complaints system is one of the many ways children and young people can do this.

Social care practitioners are encouraged to routinely seek feedback from children, young people and families, and this is completed during the support and at the end of the support. Practitioners and managers share the learning and recognise what went well to ensure a continuous endeavour to strengthen our services. The practice model of strengths based relational practice ensures that assessments and plans are support are co-produced and when this is not possible, differences of opinion are clearly recorded so that young people's voice is both acknowledged and heard. Quality assurance audits also feature a requirement for the auditor to seek feedback from parents and young people, their voice is clearly recorded and form part of the overall audit report which influences actions plans that arise from the audits

individually and collectively.

The practice model of strengths based relational social work that utilises the signs of safety model allows for partnership working with young people and their families. This model of working seeks transparent conversations about how well the plan of support is working and show commitment to adjusting/reviewing any issues that are identified by the family as barriers to change. This actively seeks to resolve frustrations, concerns and ultimately complaints. Team managers are active in communications and visits to families that raise unease, worries or complaints and this, in combination with the pre-complaint process, is making good progress in both preventing complaints and resolving complaints at an early stage.

- 3.3 The Council is aware of the benefits of learning from engagement from its stakeholders, even when this participation is in the form of a complaint. Problems and concerns can be raised, discussed and, in most cases, resolved quickly and informally. Young people are encouraged to feel that they can speak out and that it can make a difference. Even where a complaint has not been upheld, the feedback gained is an integral part of the quality assurance process which feeds into the development and monitoring of services. A good response to a problem or concern is likely to prevent it becoming a complaint at all; whereas a poor response to a representation or complaint is likely to leave the complainant feeling that their concerns have not been taken seriously or properly investigated.

4. Advocacy

- 4.1 Section 26A **Children Act 1989** requires the authority 'to make arrangements for the provision of advocacy services to children and young people making a complaint under the Act'.

Any child making a complaint under the Act is offered the use of a free advocacy service, through all the stages of the complaint's procedure up to the Local Government Ombudsman. This is an enormously beneficial resource.

- 4.2 Young people in North Somerset can access the services of the Junction 21 Mentoring & Advocacy Coordinator. This post is part of North Somerset's Youth Offending Service. Two young people made use of the advocacy service in 2020-21. One was from a child looked after who felt they were being asked to move into supported housing too early. The engagement of the social worker resulted in a withdrawal of the complaint following an agreed placement move. The second was about a delay in personal allowance payments for which an apology was given to the complainant.

5. The Complaints Procedure

- 5.1 North Somerset does not only act on complaints made in writing. Where responses are not in written form, it is imperative a clear and accessible record is maintained.

Social Care Representations

Representations, (which are potential complaints if not dealt with appropriately) are usually dealt with at point of contact. Representations are recordable when there is a

more detailed or involved response, involving, for example, swift decision making and/or response by Team Management, in order to resolve a concern.

We have a portal available to aide convenience for complainants and transparency. This is being embedded and predicted to assist the swift completion of complaints.

5.2 Stage 1- Local Resolution (Informal Stage)

Most stage 1 representations are actioned by local managers, (normally Team Leaders), or those appointed by the Head of Service or appropriate Assistant Director. The Council's procedure requires that Complainants receive a response within ten working days. This may involve meetings or discussions with the Complainant or other parties in order to clarify issues. The manager will seek to find a practical resolution to the issue and will conclude this with a written response.

All letters to Complainants from the Complaints Officer give a date by which a response should be received. Fuller responses from Service Leaders or their designated responder should contain advice to contact the Complaints Officer if dissatisfied with the response received.

5.3 Stage 2 - Investigation Stage

When a complainant is not satisfied by the Council's response at Stage 1, they may request that their concerns are escalated. Stage 2 complaints are overseen in line with the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations (2006) and associated guidance.

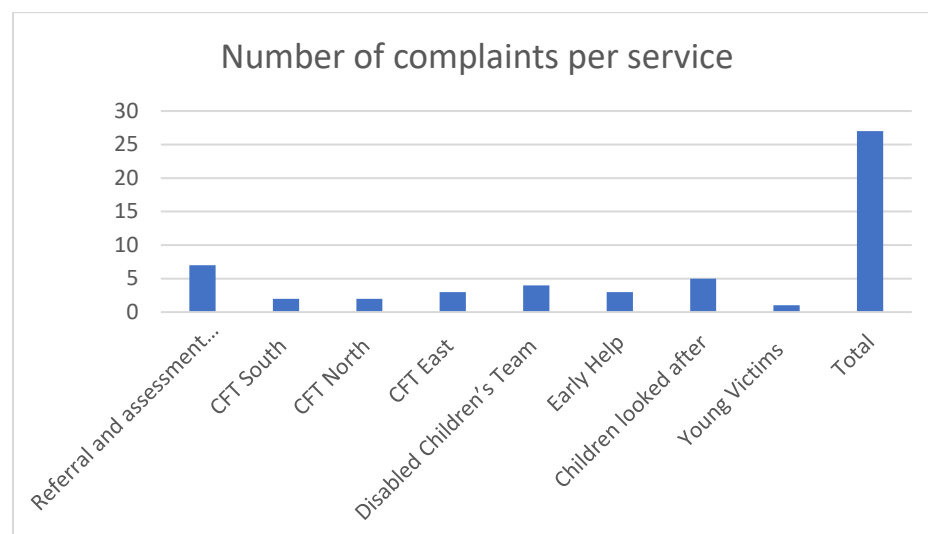
The Stage 2 complaint is investigated by an external Investigating Officer (IO), not associated with the case and further reviewed by another Independent Person (IP). North Somerset engages external IOs and IPs that are appointed from the South West Regional Complaints Register. Reports are shared with the Council and the complainant and their findings are reviewed locally by the Assistant Director for Children Support and Safeguarding, who responds to this stage of the complaint.

The guidance recommends that reports and adjudication should be completed within 25 working days. This can sometimes be complex, noting that external interviews, data gatherings and reviews all need to be undertaken within this timetable. If the review cannot be completed in 25 working days, then 65 working days (approximately 13 weeks) can be given to complete the report and adjudication. There is no specific time for the adjudication letter to be completed by the Council's Assistant Director after the reports have been received but they recommend a response should be done between 5 and 10 days after they have received both reports. The written response to the complainant will detail the decisions on the complaint and will set out any actions to be undertaken by the service or department, including relevant timescales.

In 2020-2021, 2 cases advanced to Stage 2. It is felt the effective resolution of complaints by Teams and Service Leaders within the Stage 1 process has contributed significantly to this low figure.

Name of Service	Number of complaints
Referral and assessment team	7
CFT South	2

CFT North	2
CFT East	3
Disabled Children's Team	4
Early Help	3
Children looked after	5
Young Victims	1
Total	27



5.4 Stage 3 – Review Stage

Where the complaint has not been resolved at Stage 2, the complainant has the right to request that any outstanding complaints are reviewed by a panel at Stage 3.

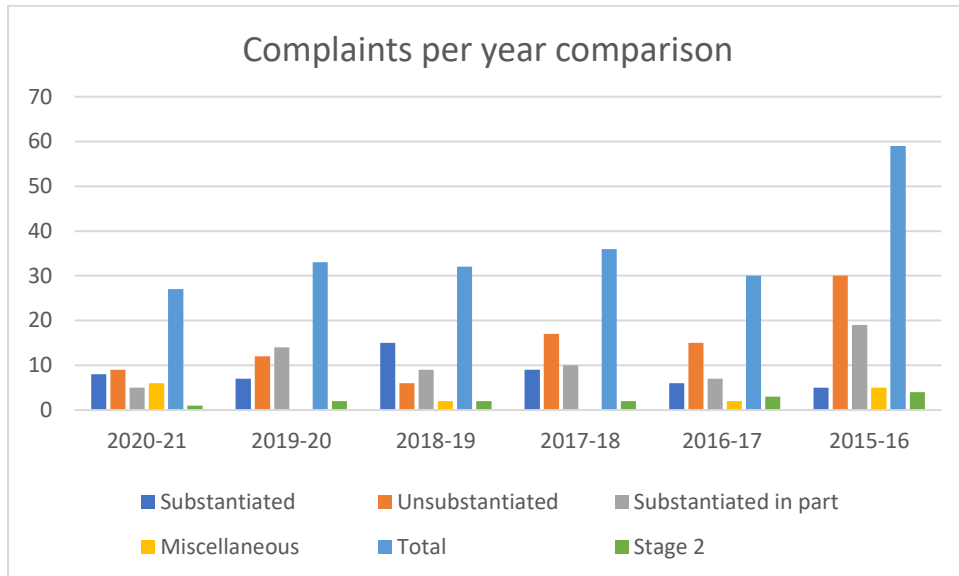
The North Somerset Review Panel has three members. For complaints considered under legislation, all three members must be independent of the Council. The Review Panel does not re-investigate the complaints but acts as an arbitrator and makes recommendations for consideration by the Assistant Director, Support and Safeguarding. The Assistant Director will respond in writing to any findings and recommendations of the Panel.

There were no stage three complaints during 2020-2021.

Summary of complaints 2020 -21

- 5.5 In the twelve months 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 of the 9 stage 1 complaints, outcomes were as below:

Year	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Substantiated	8	7	15	9	6	5
Unsubstantiated	9	12	6	17	15	30
Substantiated in part	4	14	9	10	7	19
Miscellaneous	6		2		2	5
Total	27	33	32	36	30	59
Stage 2	2	2	2	2	3	4



5.6 Two complaints proceeded to Stage Two. The first centred on whether to initiate care proceeding (upheld), the second a disagreement over decisions made and funding allocated. This remains outstanding.

Outstanding	1
Withdrawn	1
Total	2

5.7 No complaints advanced to a Stage Three Review of the Children's Complaints Procedure.

5.8 A summary of those groups who have complained in 2020-21 is as below:

Who complained	
Who complained	Numbers
Carer	
Child/young person	2
Parent	19
Relative	5
Grandparent	1
Total	27

Most complaints were from parents who are unhappy with the decision of a social worker about actions taken in relation to the care of their child.

5.11 The reasons why a statutory complaint in 2020-21 was made is shown below (some have more than one reasons for the complaint):

The reasons why a statutory complaint in 2020-21 was made is shown below:

Statutory reason for complaint categories	Numbers
An application of eligibility and assessment criteria	
Contact with Children	2
An unwelcome or disputed decision	1
Quality, frequency, change or cost of a service	
Poor communication	6
Attitude of Staff	2
Delivery - non delivery of service	7
The quality appropriateness of the service	2
A delay in decision-making or the provision of a service	2
Assessment, care management and review	5
Totals	27

6. Local Government Ombudsman

- 6.1 A complainant may approach the Local Government Ombudsman at any time with their concerns. Any complaint needs to have been fully investigated within the Council's procedures before the Ombudsman will undertake an investigation.
- 6.2 Three complaints were made to the Ombudsman. One was upheld.

The complainant alleged that the Council failed to regard her service user, who she cares for permanently, as a child in care and, if it had, the Council would have had to provide both financial and other support to her and to her the child

The LGO found it is more likely than not that the child would have been regarded as a looked after child, and the Council would have assessed carer as a family foster carer. The LGO concluded, it is likely she would have been approved and therefore experienced injustice

One complaint the local authority declined to investigate as it was in the realm of the court. The ombudsman agreed with the local authority's position . One complaint was declined by the authority as a significant amount of years had passed and it would have been a challenge to conduct a considered investigation, the Ombudsman agreed with the authorities position.

7. Monitoring

- 7.1 This monitoring information is provided for inclusion in the Corporate Feedback, Complaints & Ombudsman Annual Report. It is submitted to Councillors and the Directorate's Directorate Leadership Team for review. The relevant teams and Heads of Service are informed about individual complaints when received. Team Leaders

provide feedback on action taken to resolve the complaints they have dealt with. The report, once agreed, is available on the Council's web site.

8. Compliments

- 8.1 In addition to receiving complaints, the Council also receives compliments for good service. This feedback is shared with the staff concerned and used to demonstrate where things are going well.
- 8.2 In the period 2020 -21 there was 36 recorded instances of complimentary feedback about the hard work and care taken of an officer and their student when looking after looked-after children. This is a significant increase on last years figure of 20 and represents a success in capturing the good work achieved
- 8.3 Compliments received from professionals and co-workers are recorded as part of a staff member's appraisal.

Service	Number of compliments
CFT North	6
CFT East	4
CFT South	7
Children's Centre	1
Children Looked ad After	9
Early years	2
Fostering	4
Care leaving team	2
Children with disabilities	3
Total	38

- 8.5 Examples of compliments received in this period have been:

1. I would just like to sincerely thank Miriam Dean, as well as her student, Gemma Rawlings, who have been working tirelessly on behalf of my twin daughters (who are currently 'looked after') since last Autumn. It has been a long, bumpy journey, but I have always liked and admired both women; they are warm, kind, respectful, decent woman and have always been wonderful with my daughters. Difficult decisions have been made and tough conversations had. However, both Miriam and Gemma have always been considerate towards me as the birth mother and been open to hearing my feedback, concerns etc. I will be sad when both cease to work with my daughters, due to moving on, however I will never forget everything they have done for my family and wish them both the best in their career pathways.

The agency has been brilliant with the support of my twins, including MJJ services. I managed to trust CSC. Catherine style is calm she is happy she sat on the floor with me and my children. We did 5 to thrive together and it's stuck in my head to give my children 20 mins a day. I do this every day.

She helped me get the medication the babies needed from hospital as I am a single mum with twins. I took advice I had the opportunity to change and realised I needed

to, I took control they boosted my confidence and told me I am doing well. Linda is amazing at her job.

2. Court today agreed LA plan for Pearl and proceedings finalised. Some of the comments made in Court were lovely. CG said that the work was an example of very good social work practice. Judge Cronin commented that she was “delighted” to see the social work team and felt the outcome was a credit to the “enthusiastic determination of the team” She also acknowledged how hard Toni had worked with CSC.

3. Gilly helped an awful lot, it used to annoy me with how much at first x 3xs a week and when I have MH I didn't want people around me. She helped me manage J behaviour, especially when out and about, she helped go for walks and manage in the home and give me ways to do this. Gilly helped me when I moved, and the house was in disrepair because of housing. Robyn has been great and supportive SW, honest and helpful I can relate to her really well. Everyone thinks social is bad and if they hadn't walked into my life, my life would have been a mess not getting out of bed or tidying. It was CSC that made me realise this PND not acted on and I split up with E dad and I was heartbroken and in a bad place. I had hassle from dad's family. They helped me through this.

9. Adoption

9.1 The Adoption Services is now provided by Adoption West.

10. Lessons Learned

10.1 Monitoring and analysing representations, complaints and compliments provides an opportunity to learn and improve both in relation to the individual case and in some circumstances across teams or services. Consequently, the complaints process is important in improving team and departmental performance and should be an important part of the quality assurance process within the Department.

10.2 Where failure to follow good practice and procedures is highlighted in individual complaints, Service Leaders have been instructed to make the necessary improvements.

10.3 Council officers can deal with representations on a regular basis. Not all are necessarily reported to the Complaints Officer. On review of the complaints during the period 2020-21, issues relating to communication are a common theme that can be broken down into key areas:

- Whilst practitioner workloads are noted, in terms of good practice, where possible the importance of maintaining appointments and returning calls should be prioritised. This will prevent complaints where the complainant feels their needs have not been considered fully despite action being taken
- Some communication complaints are based around the accuracy of report writing. Clear instructions with regards to the nature of the Council's interventions must be given. This will inform parents of their rights and manage expectations.

- Sensitivity of work remains a priority. Service leads have developed measures through the process of staff supervision. This has highlighted the need for additional training and support in some areas.
- 10.4 Overall the statistics show that the complaints process for children is robust, managed with required levels of sensitivity by the members of staff involved. Service Leaders should continue to inform the complaints lead of complaints and compliments to ensure data is captured and logged as a matter of best practice. This will ensure the data recorded provides an accurate reflection of the service as perceived by the service user.
- 10.5 The nature of complaints is varied with some being more complex than others. Responses must be full and clear to avoid the need to respond again to a matter previously investigated. In such instances it is important there is a recognition that the response provided previously may not have been as comprehensive or as clear as it could have been. Due to the nature of the service, some complaints may also be a manifestation of a vexatious complaint. It is important that a full record is kept so that a fair and proper assessment of the quality of the complaint can be made under the Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy.
- 10.6 In 2020 - 21 some complaints have been dealt with directly by Team Leaders and the then Interim Assistant Director for Children's Support and Safeguarding. It is not necessary that all complaints should come through the Complaints Officer, although such responses should be forwarded to the Complaints Officer to the necessary details are recorded and any findings record an accurate and true picture of service provision and where improvements may be needed.
- 10.7 Service Leaders should reinforce the importance of capturing verbal complaints. Staff should be further encouraged to record and analyse comments or concerns they are made aware of as many young people will not wish to engage in a 'formal procedure'.
- 10.8 The Council still receives only a small proportion of complaints directly from children. Most of complaints are from family members, parents or friends. This represents a challenge departmentally in keeping the child's interests central to the complaint. The guidance set out clear definitions for who may complain.

11. Report Summary and Suggestions

- 12.1 In conclusion, most complaints were resolved at the pre and Stage 1 points. Stage 1 responses often utilise a number of resources putting additional demands on staff time. A concerted effort is needed to recognise the importance of an early resolution. By listening to complainants and their experiences, managers and Team Leaders can help to prevent or resolve mistakes earlier and learn new ways to improve and prevent problems from happening in the future. This in turn will lead to an improvement in services.

Recommendation: when complaints are made, the local manager should arrange a face-to-face meeting or a telephone conversation with the complainant as soon as practically possible to, where possible, resolve the concerns and prevent escalation.

- 12.2 The Casetracker database was not designed to deal with social care complaints. Engagement to review the use of this system and its functionality is currently being

undertaken. This way the database can be used by Team managers and Heads of Service regularly to review complaints and complements and to better understand the frequency and nature of concerns to inform service improvements.

- 12.3 The Complaints Officer can provide support and assistance to Heads of Service, Team Leaders as well as Business Support Staff.

North Somerset Council

Report to the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 16 June 2022

Subject of Report: Ofsted's inspection of Adoption West

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services

Key Decision: No

Reason:

It does not meet the criteria for a key decision.

Recommendations

- i) That the Panel notes the outcome of Ofsted's inspection of Adoption West.
- ii) That the Panel highlights any risks or areas for further scrutiny.
- iii) That the Panel considers feedback it would wish to give to Adoption West via the current joint scrutiny arrangements.

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 Adoption West is the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) commissioned to deliver adoption services by six local authorities: Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. The agency is a company limited by guarantee and is registered with Ofsted as a voluntary adoption agency. The local authorities make up the controlling committee of company members with ultimate responsibility for organisational performance and appointment and dismissal of directors.
- 1.2 The service operates from three hubs in Wiltshire, Bristol and Gloucestershire. Each hub comprises a multidisciplinary team of recruitment, assessment, family finding and support staff. The adoption panel is made up of a single central list and operates three panels with three chairs, linked to the three hub offices. The agency was first registered with Ofsted in March 2019. This was the agency's first inspection and it took place between January 24th and 28th with the report being published on March 15th.
- 1.3 The overall outcome of the inspection is that Adoption West provides effective services that meet the requirements for 'good.' The sub judgement of how well children, young people and adults are helped and protected is 'good.' The second

sub judgement of the effectiveness of leaders and managers is that it 'requires improvement to be good'.

2. Policy

- 2.1 The development of Regional Adoption Agency proposals was part of the national regionalising adoption agenda as set out in 'Regionalising Adoption' (July 2015). They were further developed in 'Adoption; A Vision for Change' (March 2016) and informed by the Education and Adoption Act 2016.

3. Details

- 3.1 The inspection report is Appendix 1 below. It is a short report in which three and a half pages outline the inspectors' findings and a further page sets out the statutory requirement which needed to be met by February 28th 2022 and a further five recommendations. The requirement related to the need for the agency to ensure that the medical practitioners are suitably qualified to undertake the task of agency medical adviser.

4. Consultation

None.

5. Financial Implications

None.

6. Costs

None.

7. Funding

None.

8. Legal Powers and Implications

- 8.1 The Education and Adoption Act 2016 amended the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to include:

1) The Secretary of State may give directions requiring one or more local authorities in England to make arrangements for all or any of their functions within subsection (3) to be carried out on their behalf by—

- (a) one of those authorities, or
- (b) one or more other adoption agencies.

2) A direction under subsection (1) may, in particular—

- (a) specify who is to carry out the functions, or
- (b) require the local authority or authorities to determine who is to carry out the functions.

3) The functions mentioned in subsection (1) are functions in relation to—

- (a) the recruitment of persons as prospective adopters;
- (b) the assessment of prospective adopters' suitability to adopt a child;
- (c) the approval of prospective adopters as suitable to adopt a child;
- (d) decisions as to whether a particular child should be placed for

adoption with a particular prospective adopter;
(e) the provision of adoption support services.

4) The Secretary of State may give a direction requiring a local authority in England to terminate arrangements made in accordance with a direction under subsection (1).

5) A direction under this section may make different provision for different purposes.

6) The Secretary of State may by regulations amend subsection (3).

9. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

9.1 Adoption West is a company owned by six local authorities. While their geographical patch is large many of the workers had adopted a hybrid model of working from home for parts of the week even before the pandemic. They work from hubs supplied by three of the local authorities and so benefit from the policies of those authorities in relation to the quality of the buildings, heating etc.

10. Risk Management

Not applicable.

11. Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No.

12. Corporate Implications

None.

13. Options Considered

Not applicable.

Author:

Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services

Background Papers:

Appendix 1

[Ofsted | Adoption West](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 16TH JUNE 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: BECKY HOPKINS – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S FAMILY SUPPORT & SAFEGUARDING

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel is asked to note the performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management reports to help members evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners are achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people's services, and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.

This report presents the following standard items:

- any recent Ofsted inspections of council services
- an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 4 2021/22, that fall under the remit of the Panel.
- an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council.

2. POLICY

The council's Performance Management Framework includes a requirement for quarterly reporting of our performance position so that members and officers can monitor progress against our key plans and objectives and take appropriate action where progress is below target or needs additional focus.

3. DETAILS

INSPECTION AND IMPROVEMENT

No recent inspections.

For all North Somerset schools (as of March 2022):

Primary schools

- 16% Outstanding (10)
- 74% Good (46)
- 6% Requires Improvement (4)
- 3% Inadequate (2)
- 3% not yet inspected (2)

Secondary schools

- 36% Outstanding (4)
- 27% Good (3)
- 36% Requires Improvement (4)
- 0% Inadequate (0)
- 0% not yet inspected (0)

Special schools and PRUs

- 100% Good (4)

KEY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each year the Directorates within North Somerset Council produce an Annual Directorate Statement (ADS). This in effect translates the commitments in the North Somerset Corporate Plan into a series of Directorate level commitments. These commitments are then measured by a combination of Key Projects and Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs). North Somerset Council Scrutiny Panels are then updated quarterly with all KCPIs related to their area of work (fig 1.1 and table 1.1).

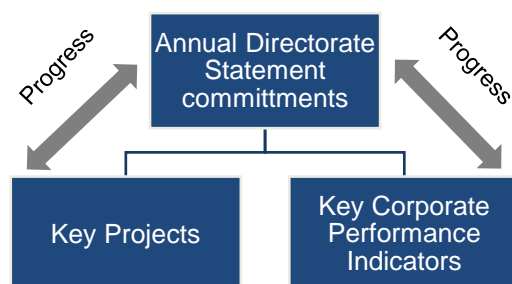


Fig 1.1 measuring corporate performance

Table 1.1 shows the Quarter 4 position of all KCPIs related to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

Table 1.1	Year-End 2020/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	National benchmarking
Rate of children / families subject to an Early Help plans per 10,000 at the end of the month	218.9 per 10,000	122.9 per 10,000	106.7 per 10,000	121.0 per 10,000	107.3 per 10,000	Local measure
The percentage of early help children stepped up to Children's Social Care in quarter	5%	4.0%	3.5%	4.0%	16.0%	Local measure
The percentage of families disengaging with Early Help (families withdrawn consent/engagement)	11.2%	7.25%	10.0%	7.0%	23.0%	Local measure
The number of children and young people subject to s20 voluntary accommodation	39	48	41	46	38	Local measure
The number of 12- to 17-year-old young people becoming looked after	7	5	13	4	4	Local measure
The average duration of care for 12- to 17-year-old young people (at the end of the month)	1,560 days	1,714 days	1,576 days	1,598 days	1,560 days	Local measure
Rate of new referrals to Children's social care per 10,000 in the last month	14.2 per 10,000	16.0 per 10,000	16.0 per 10,000	13.0 per 10,000	12.2 per 10,000	England, 38.7 per 10,000 South West, 36.2 per 10,000
Percentage of re-referrals to Children's social care within 12 months of the previous referral in the last month	22.6%	11.4%	7.0%	18.0%	17.0%	England, 22.6% South West, 21.0%
Assessment timeliness % completed within 45 working days in the last month	87.2%	88.5%	88.0	74.0%	93.0%	England, 83.8% South West, 82.6%
Assessment Timeliness % completed within 20 working days in the last month	12.8%	13.1%	27.0%	17.0%	19.0%	Local measure

Table 1.1	Year-End 2020/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	National benchmarking
Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 at the end of the month	167.0 per 10,000	170.4 per 10,000	167.7 per 10,000	174.8 per 10,000	186.4 per 10,000	England, 323.7 per 10,000 South West, 296.9 per 10,000
Rate of children with Child Protection plans per 10,000 open at the end of the month	21.3 per 10,000	16.7 per 10,000	13.7 per 10,000	18.26 per 10,000	26.5 per 10,000	England, 42.8 per 10,000 South West, 37.7 per 10,000
Child protection plans for a second or subsequent time as a % of new child protection plans - 12 month rolling	24.8%	25.0%	27.0%	21.0%	33.3%	England, 21.9% South West, 24.4%
The rate of children in care at month end (per 10,000)	48.9 per 10,000	47.6 per 10,000	44.0 per 10,000	43.8 per 10,000	45.4 per 10,000	England, 67.0 per 10,000 South West, 57.0 per 10,000
Number of Children in In-house Foster Care (Inc. connected carers & Reg 24) at end of the month	100 (46%)	107	106	115	124	England, 36,070 (45%)
Number of young people living in independent accommodation at end of the month	9 (4%)	4	3	0	1	Local measure
Percentage of children in care with 3+ placement moves in the current financial year	11.3%	2.3%	10.80%	13.0%	12.0%	England, 11% South West, 12%

Table 1.1	Year-End 2020/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	National benchmarking
Stability of long-term placements	72.6%	68.5%	70.0%	73.0%	70.0%	England, 68% South West, 68%
% of care leavers who are EET (in education, employment or training) (aged 19 to 21 years) (at the end of the month)	39.8%	42.3%	52.0%	59.0%	58.2%	England, 53% South West, 53%
% of care leavers, 19-21 years of age with positive outcomes in housing at end of the month	92.8%	88.0%	91.0%	96.0%	94.8%	England, 85% South West, 85%
The percentage of care leavers who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) who are education/work ready (aged 19 to 21 years) (at the end of the month)	54.0%	33.0%	23.0%	20.0%	48.8%	Local measure

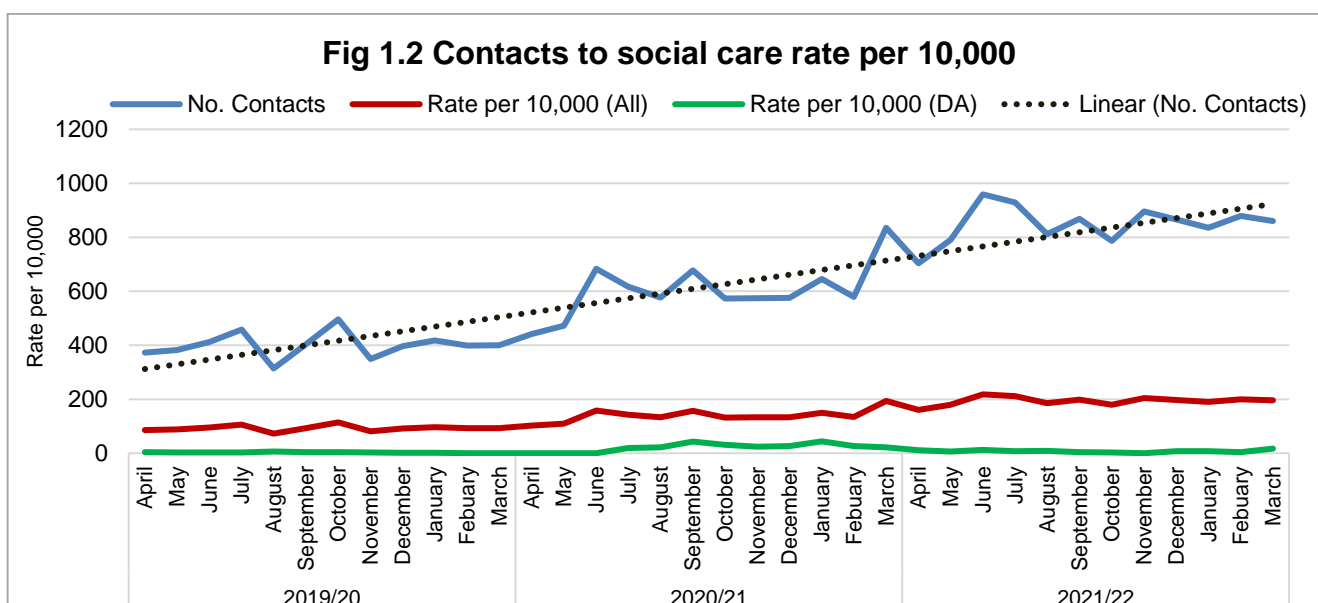
KEY SERVICE MEASURES FOR SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARDING

Contacts

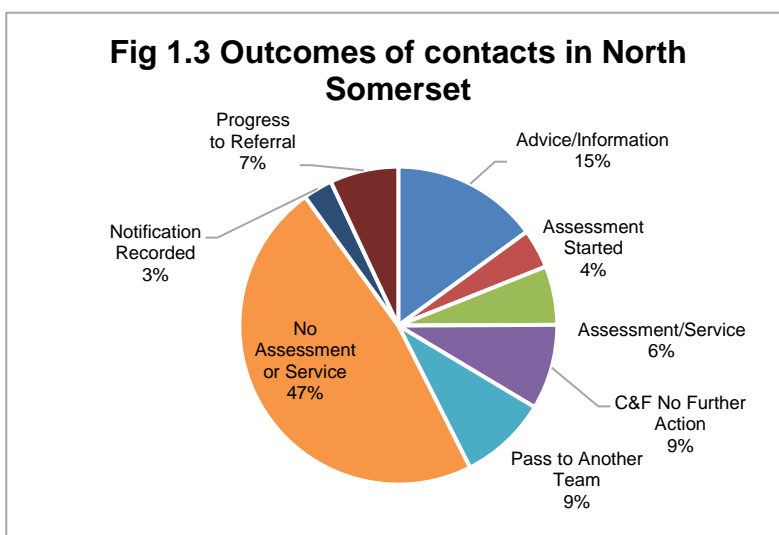
Where there is a need for advice and / or information or support from Children’s Services a contact is made. Since February 2021 we have operated a single ‘Front Door’ for all new contacts with the aim of ensuring children receive the Right Help at the Right Time.

Since Quarter 1 of 2020/21 there has been an increase in the number of contacts received. During Q4 2021/22, the average rate of contacts per 10,000 children was 195 compared to a rate of 159 contacts during the same time last year. This may have a direct link with the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a peak of 445 Domestic Abuse (DA) contacts during Quarter 1 2020/21, we saw a significant reduction in numbers during Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 2021/22 with 86 and 41 DA contacts respectively. However, at the end of Quarter 4 there has been an increase in DA contacts with 118 recorded.



Outcomes for contacts to Family Support and Safeguarding vary (fig 1.3), but as at the end of Quarter 4 the main outcomes were: No Assessment or Service (47%), Advice/information (15%), No Further Action (9%), Pass to Another Team (9%) and Progress to referral (7%).



In June 2022 the service will be undertaking regular Quality Assurance activity to provide assurance that decision making at the Front Door is appropriate to identified needs and work is ongoing with partners in relation to the number of contacts made where the outcome is No Assessment or Service. A new Request for Support Form was launched in May 2022 to ensure good quality information is provided to support decision making.

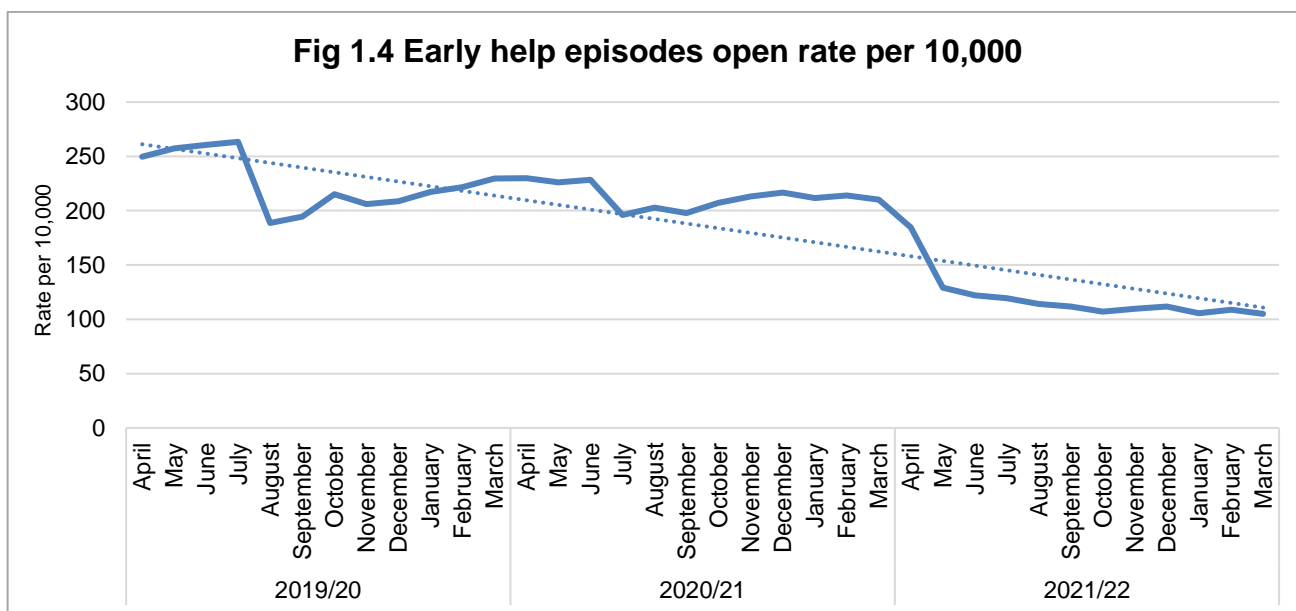
Family Wellbeing (Early Help)

Across the partnership in North Somerset, we work together, share information, and put the child and their family at the centre, providing effective support to help them solve problems and find solutions at an early stage to prevent problems escalating.

All children and young people receive universal services, such as, maternity services at birth, health visiting, school nursing and family support delivered from our family hubs, schools and youth offending service. Universal services seek, together with parents and families, to meet all the needs of children and young people so that they are happy, healthy, and able to learn and develop securely.

The needs of children and their families change over time depending on their circumstances and it is our aim to offer a service which can respond to these changing needs and ensure children are happy, healthy, safe and can achieve their potential. In North Somerset, we want to offer help and support to these children and their families at the earliest opportunity. There may be times when the needs of the family are such that intensive early help or specialist statutory intervention is required.

The need for early help may occur at any point in a child or young person’s life and in response to this we have extended our Family Wellbeing service to offer intervention and support from age 0-18. The team works with children, young people and their family to identify strengths and needs and to find practical and achievable solutions.

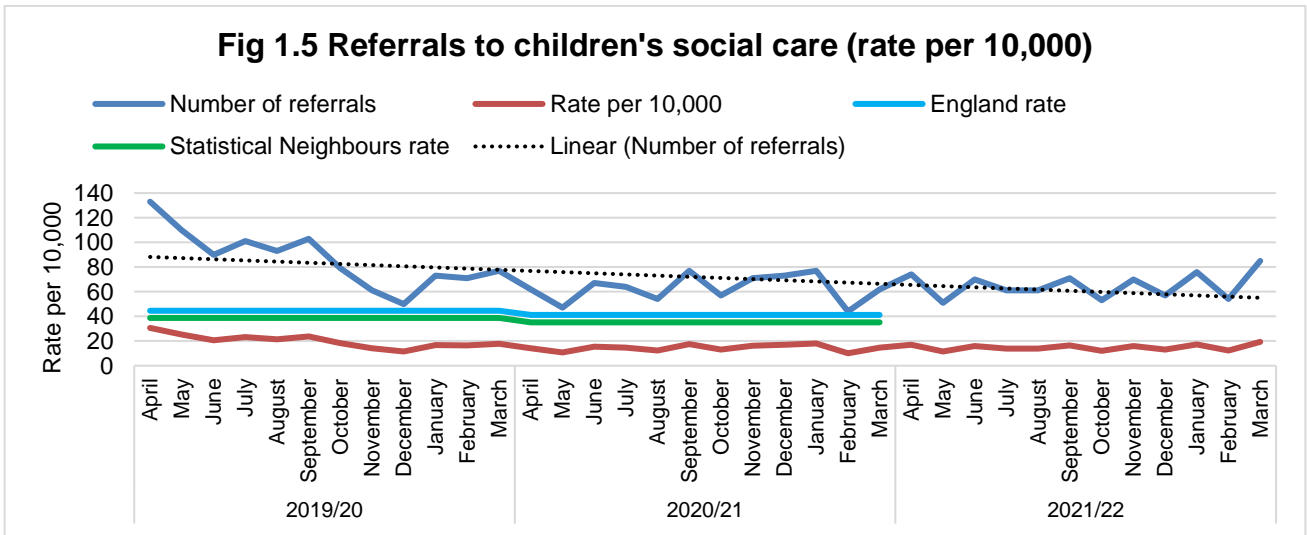


At the end of Quarter 4 there were 459 Early Help episodes open, rate 107 per 10,000, which is a very similar to the previous 2 Quarters. The decline over time in the number of early help episodes is due to system changes and a consequent impact on reporting rather than a reduction in demand. Demand for Family Wellbeing services continues to increase. The above data does not included families who access parenting courses.

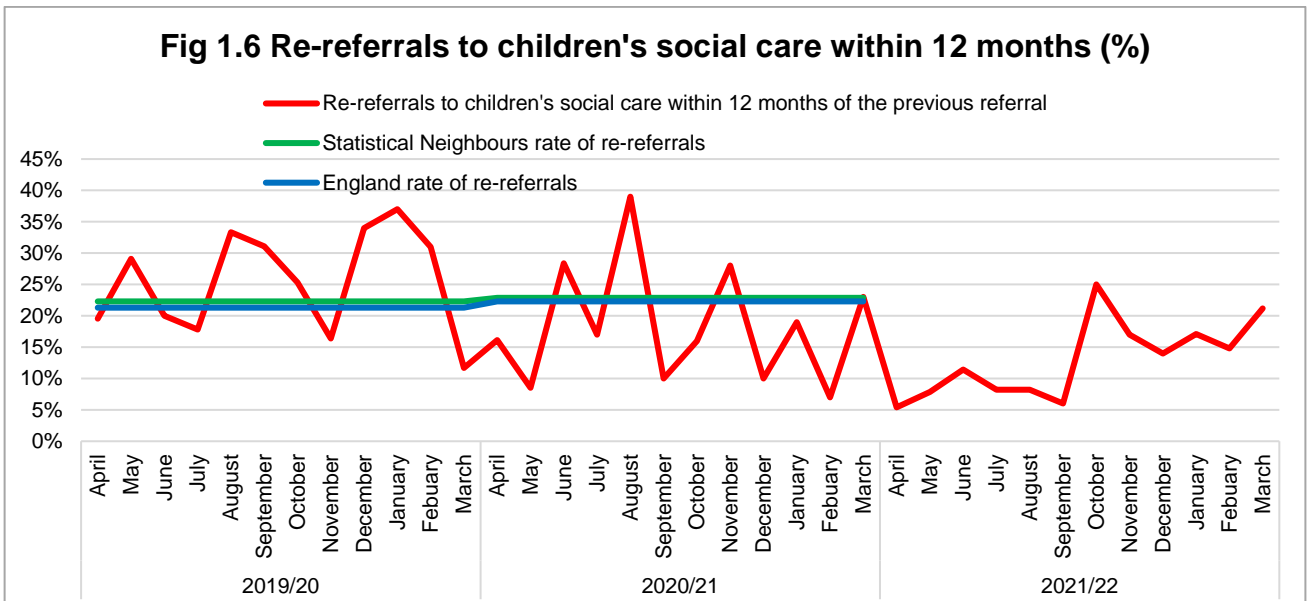
Referrals

If a contact is made where the assessed level of need is that statutory intervention is required, a referral is made to one of our Family Support and Safeguarding teams. The number and rate of referrals varies by month. The 2021/22 annual average reported 65 referrals which compared to the annual average reported for 2020/21 was 62, showing a similar trend. This is shown in the trend line in fig 1.5.

The North Somerset referral rates continue to remain lower than both our statistical neighbours and the national rate (fig 1.5). During Quarter 4 2021/22, the average rate of referrals was 16.6 per 10,000 children which is above the average referral rate when looking at the previous three quarters: Quarter 3, 13.9, Quarter 2, 14.9 and Quarter 1, 13.6.



Re-referrals is a measure of where children with a previous referral in the last 12 months are re-referred into Family Support and Safeguarding. During Quarter 4 2021/22, the average rate of re-referrals was 18% which compares to 16% for the same period in 2020/21 (fig 1.6) and is significantly lower than the statistical neighbours and national average. This indicates that intervention with children and their families is successful and that identified changes which are needed are made and sustained.

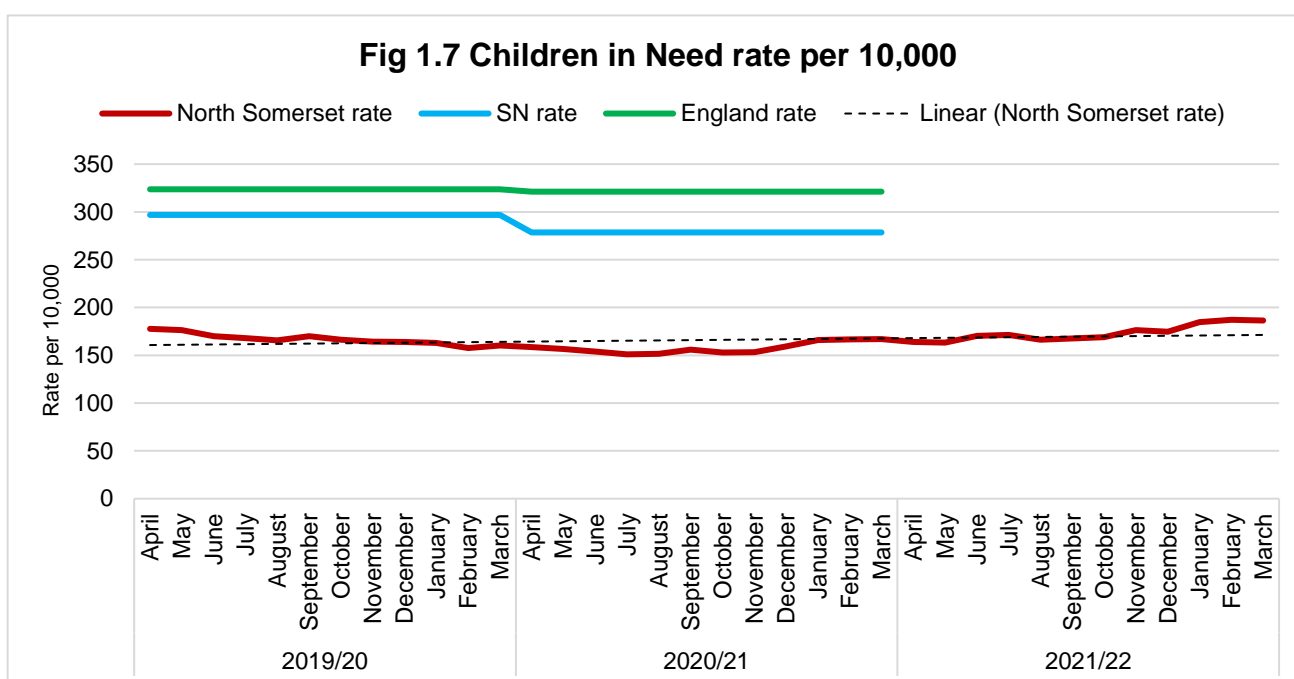


Children in Need

A child can be considered in need if:

- there is a need for statutory services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development
- there is a need for statutory services to prevent significant or further harm to health or development

At the end of Quarter 4 2021/22, the rate was 187 children in need per 10,000 children which is higher in comparison to the same time last year when the rate was 167. From July 2020 onwards we have started to see the rate increase slightly overall. This correlates with coming out of lockdown and children returning to school and having more contact with people outside their families. Our aim is also to work with more children and their families at a child in need level, avoiding escalation to child protection where appropriate. Even with this increase the rate for children on a Child in Need plan in North Somerset is below that of statistical neighbours and England averages (fig 1.7).



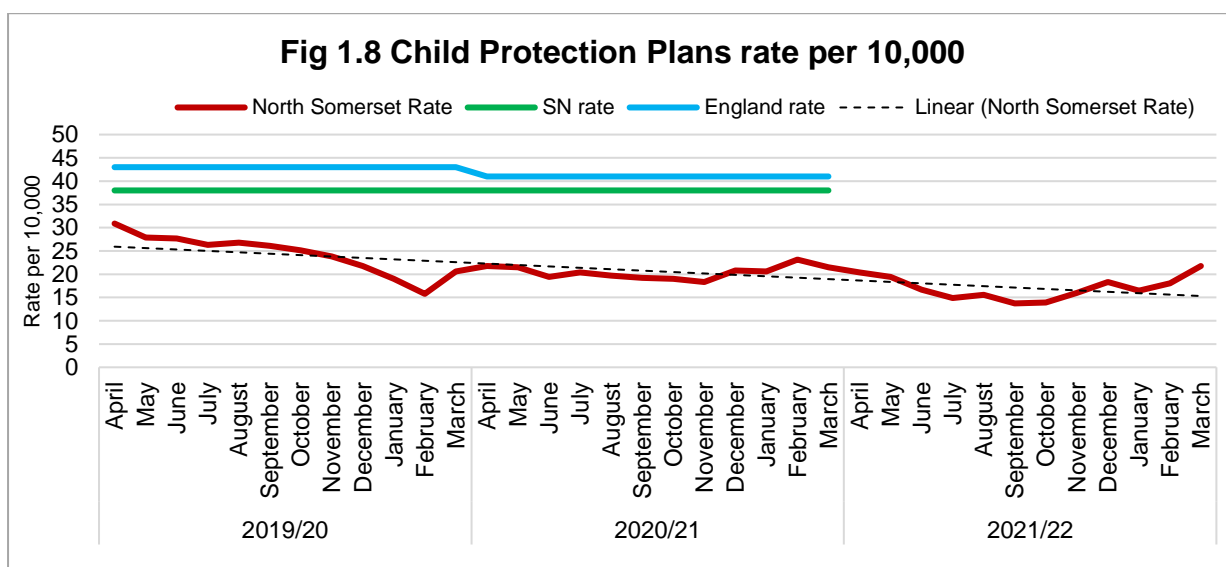
The categories of need that children in care are mostly likely to experience (in descending order) are:

- Abuse or neglect 37%
- Family in acute stress 23%
- Family dysfunction 23%
- Child's disability or illness 12%
- Absent parenting 4%
- Parent illness or disability 1%

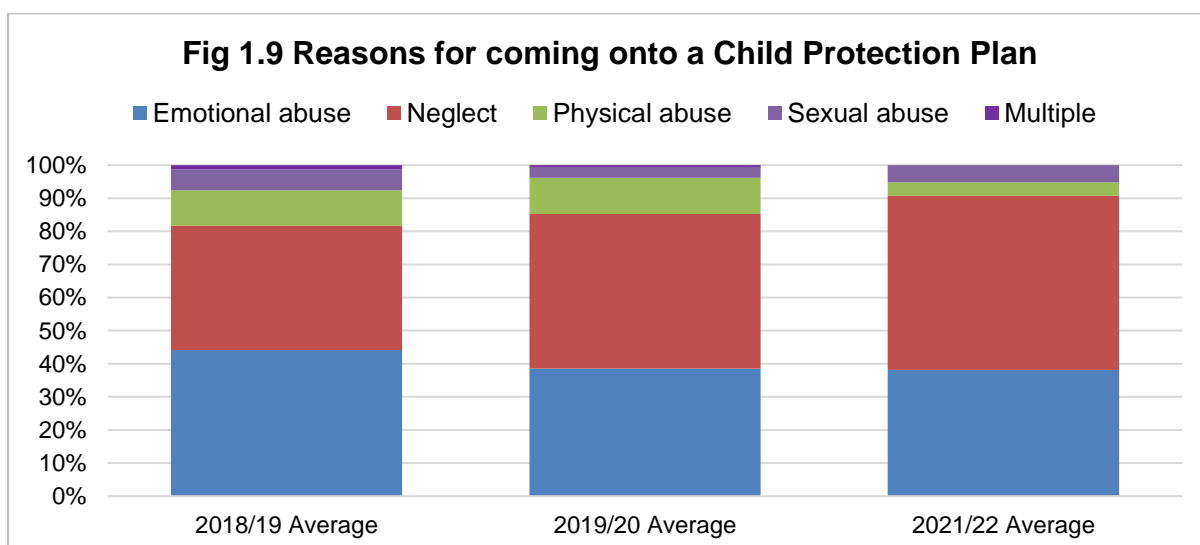
Child Protection Plans

Some children are in need of statutory intervention because they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. In these cases, a child protection conference is held. If the child protection conference decides that the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, the local authority and partner agencies working with the child and their family will develop a child protection plan. The child protection plan sets out how the child can be kept safe, the strengths, the concerns and what needs to change and in what timescales.

Over the past three years there has been a continual, overall downward trend (linear) in the rate of children subject to a child protection plan and the rate is significantly lower than the national rate and the rate of our statistical neighbours (fig 1.8). At the end of Quarter 4 2021/22, there were 95 children subject to a child protection plan which is a slight increase on previous quarters and will be monitored.



The principal reasons for children being subject of a child protection plan continue to be neglect and emotional abuse, followed by physical abuse and then sexual abuse.

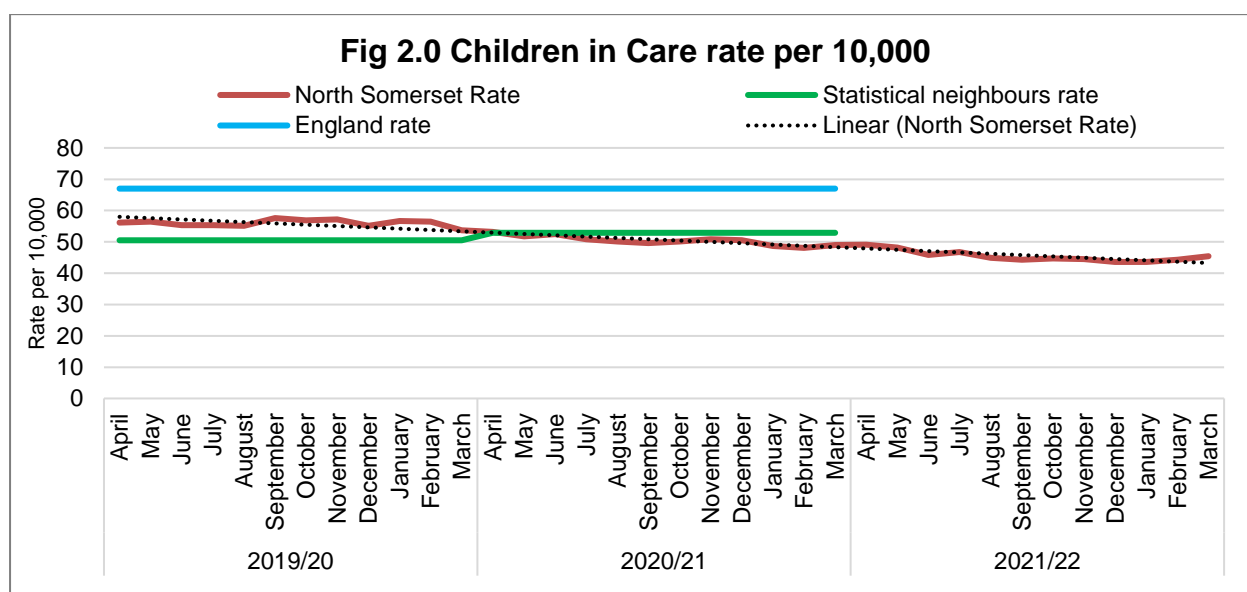


Children in Care

In some situations, it is necessary for children for their own safety and wellbeing to enter our care. This will be either through a voluntary arrangement with the parents under Section 20 of the Children Act where parental responsibility remains fully with the parent or through a court order, which gives the local authority a share of parental responsibility. In statutory terms these children are referred to as 'looked after' but we prefer to refer to them as children in our care. Young people cease to be looked after on reaching their eighteenth birthday, if they have not ceased to be looked after earlier. Senior managers oversee all requests for a child to become looked after. Every child's care plan is reviewed regularly to ensure their plan meets their needs is being progressed and that permanency is secured at the earliest opportunity.

At the end of Quarter 4 2021/22, there were 199 children in care. This gives a rate of 45 per 10,000 children. This is a slight increase on the previous quarter (191 children) but still lower than same time last year (214 children). This rate is below both the national rate at 67 and our statistical neighbour rate at 53.

It is noted that of the of the 199 children 18 were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. This compares to 12 children at the end of 2020/21.



The reasons for a child entering our care has remained consistent in recent years (table 1.2), with 'abuse or neglect' being the main reasons followed by 'family in acute stress', 'family dysfunction' and 'absent parenting (and other)'. A new category of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child/Young Person was introduced at the beginning of Quarter 4.

(table 1.2)	Abuse or Neglect	Disability	Parent Illness or Disability	Family in Acute Stress	Family Dysfunction	Absent Parenting and other	UASC Child/Young Person
2019/20	39.6%	3.5%	3.7%	29.7%	16.3%	7.2%	-
2020/21	41.0%	3.0%	3.0%	28.0%	17.0%	8.0%	-
2021/22	49.0%	2.0%	2.0%	18.0%	18.0%	10.0%	1.0%

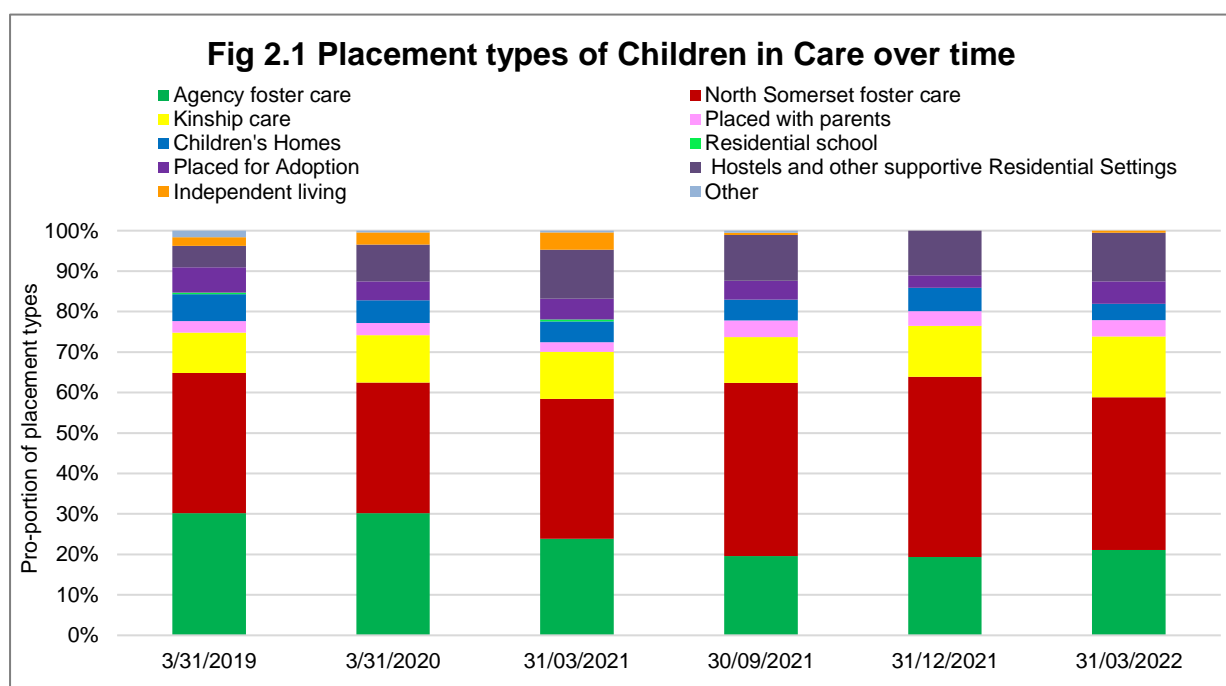
Placement types of Children in Care

Nearly three quarters (74% at the end of Q4 2021/22) of North Somerset’s children in care live in foster care. This is higher than the most recent national comparator (71%). Other placement types include children’s homes, supportive residential placements, independent living and adoptive placements.

Fig 2.1 provides snapshot figures of where our children in care have been placed at the end of Quarter 4 in 2021/22, compared to the previous quarters in 2021/22 and the year-endings for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

At the end of March 2022, out of the 74% children in care placed in foster care, 38% were placed within North Somerset foster care, 21% within agency foster care and 15% within kinship care. Although the percentage of children placed within NS foster care has declined slightly since last quarter, the overall NS Foster care including kinship care is still 6% better than when compared to same time last year and also 9% higher than England average.

	Mar-2019	Mar-2020	Mar-2021	Jun-2021	Sep-2021	Dec-2021	Mar-2022	England 31/03/2021
Agency foster care	30%	30%	24%	23%	20%	19%	21%	27%
North Somerset foster care	35%	32%	35%	41%	43%	45%	38%	44%
Kinship care	10%	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%	15%	



At the end of Quarter 4 2021/22, 68% of all Children in Care were placed inside North Somerset (up from 64% same time last year) and 26% were placed outside local boundary (down from 31% same time last year). The figures are also better than the England averages of 57% placed inside LA boundary and 40% placed outside. This excludes children placed for adoption.

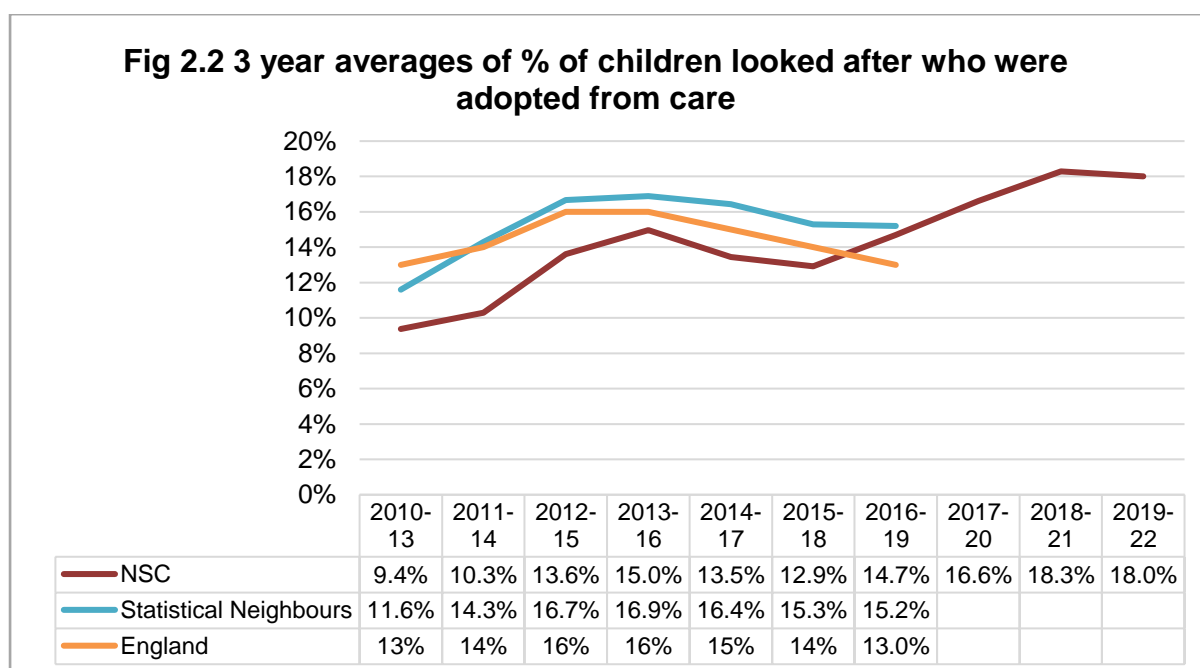
Adoption

As at the end of Q4 2021/22 in North Somerset, a cumulative of 13 children have been adopted from care since the start of the reporting year (1st April 2021). This compares to 15 children adopted during the previous year 2020/21, 19 children adopted during 2019/20 and 13 children the year before that 2018/19.

Nationally, the number of children looked after who were adopted has been falling since 2015 and it fell a further 18% during 2021. According to government data is likely a result of the impact on court proceedings during the pandemic, where cases progressed more slowly or were paused. In North Somerset the overall reduction in the number of children in care in recent years will also be a factor here.

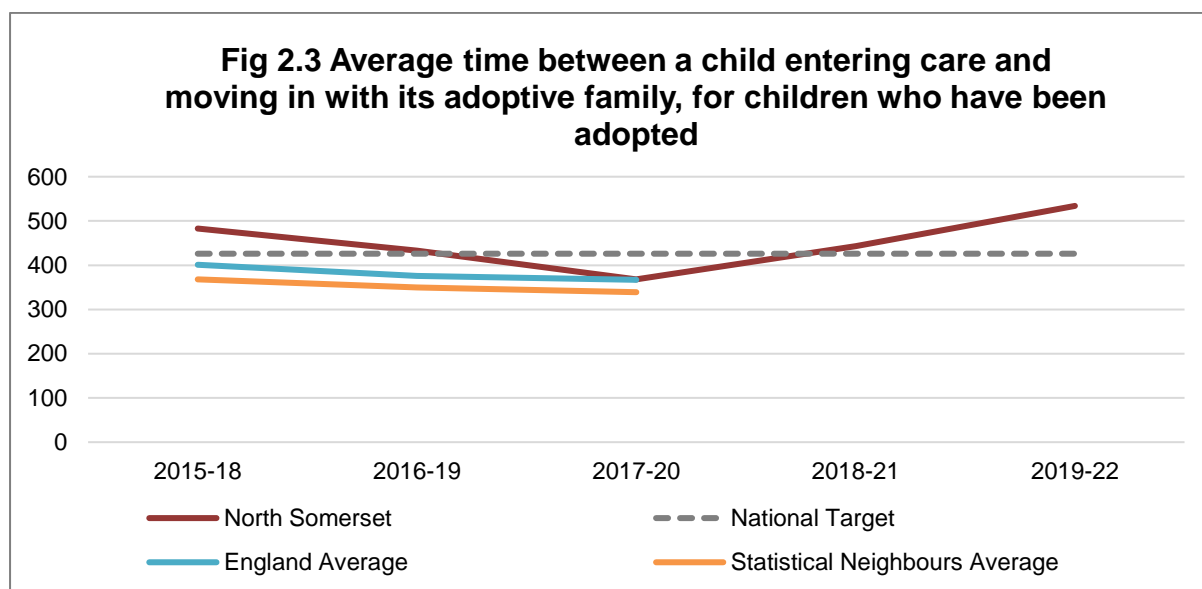
The average age of a child at adoption for North Somerset during 2021/22 was 2 years old. This is a decrease from 3 years old during 2020/21 and a further decrease from 3 years and 6 months during 2019/20. Nationally, the average age at adoption during 2021 was 3 years and 3 months.

The current 3 year rolling average of percentage of children adopted from care is 18% which is higher than the latest available figures for both England (13%) and statistical neighbours (15.2%).



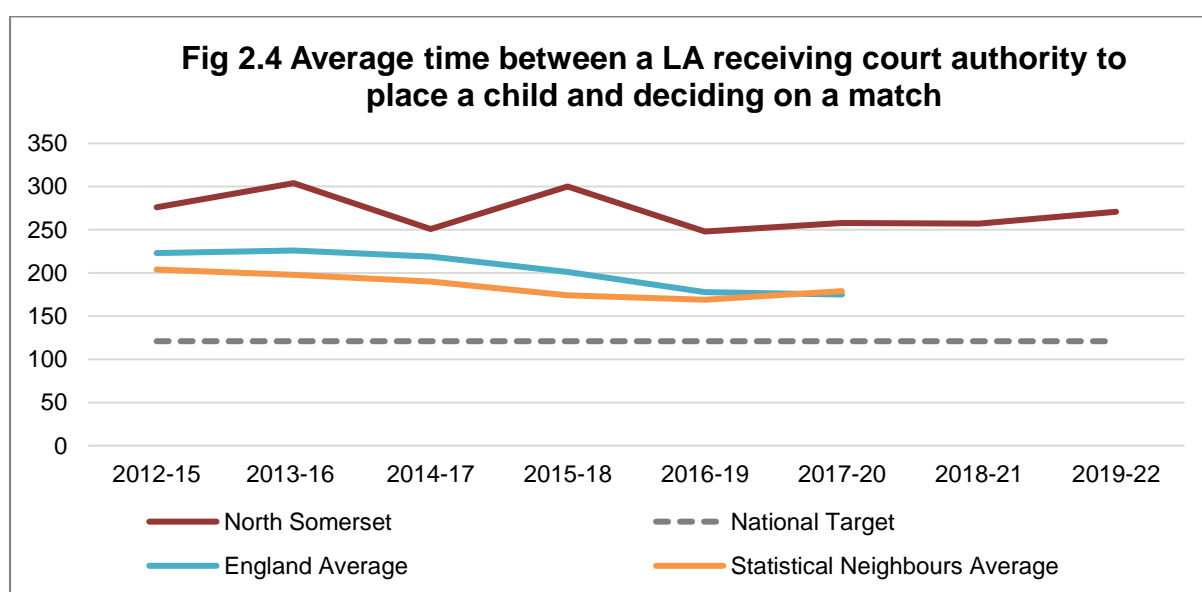
The current 3 year rolling average (2019-22) for the time between children entering care and being placed with their adoptive family stands at 534 days which is an increase on previous years.

The current average is also above the latest published figures for statistical neighbours (339 days) and national average (367 days), however, it should be noted that benchmarking data is not yet available beyond 2017-20 and does not include the Covid-19 period and impact which did cause delays in adoption.



The time between the Local Authority receiving court authority to place a child and matching is currently higher than both statistical neighbours and England averages however, as above, the comparator data is only available until 2020.

The current rolling 3 year average for 2019-22 is 271 days which is above the latest published figures for statistical neighbours (179 days) and national figures (175 days).



Foster Carers

North Somerset Council has 86 registered foster carers.

As of the end of Quarter 4 there were:

- 60 registered households known as mainstream foster carers who are recruited and assessed by the council
- 20 kinship carers that are friends or family of the children in care
- 4 supported lodgings households that provide support for a small number of older young people.
- 2 short term respite carers (Family link scheme) providing short term respite care for a number of children in need

Care Leavers

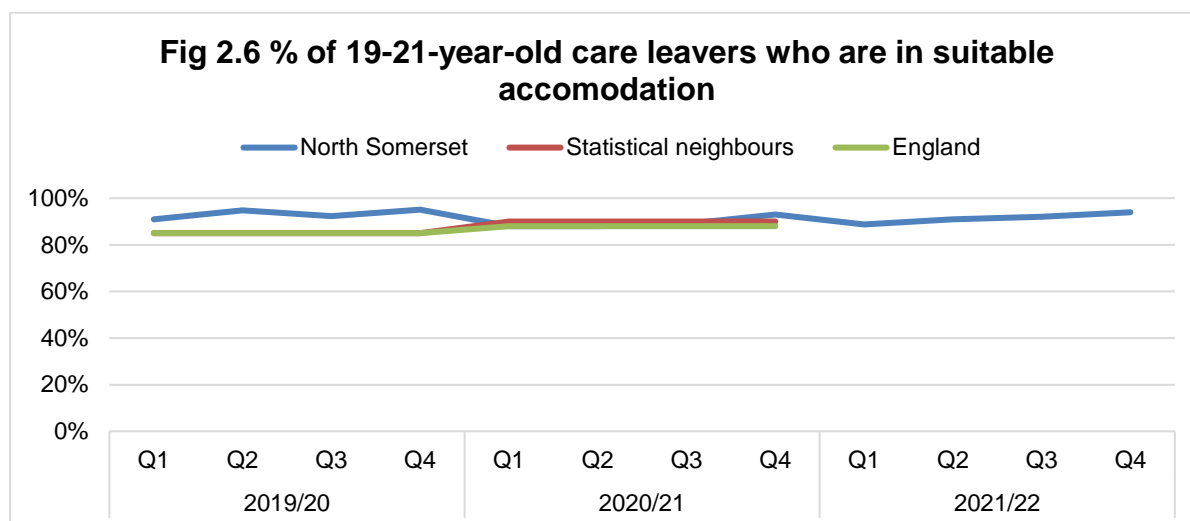
The council has responsibility to continue to help and support young people that were previously in our care. Key areas of support are in housing and accommodation and employment and education.

The percentage of 19-21 year-old care leavers who were in education, employment and/or training (EET) in North Somerset at the end of Quarter 4 2021/22 was 61%. This is higher than the same time last year at 39% and higher than that of our statistical neighbours at 52% and England data at 52%.



There are varying reasons for young people not being in education training or employment (NEET) including: emotional and mental health needs, young parents caring for children, in custody and, previously unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have not been given leave to remain in the UK post-18. There is targeted work being undertaken through our children's improvement plan to address this. This includes working across the partnership to consider what further steps we can take to both prepare our young people for employment and support them into education, employment, or training (EET).

The percentage of 19-21 year old care leavers who were in suitable accommodation at the end of Quarter 4 2021/22 in North Somerset was 94% which is similar to the same time last year at 93%. This compares favourably against the most recent statistical neighbour and national averages of 88% and 90% (fig 2.3).



Contextual safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, children’s experiences of significant harm outside their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can present risks and may feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers can have little influence over these relationships and children’s experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

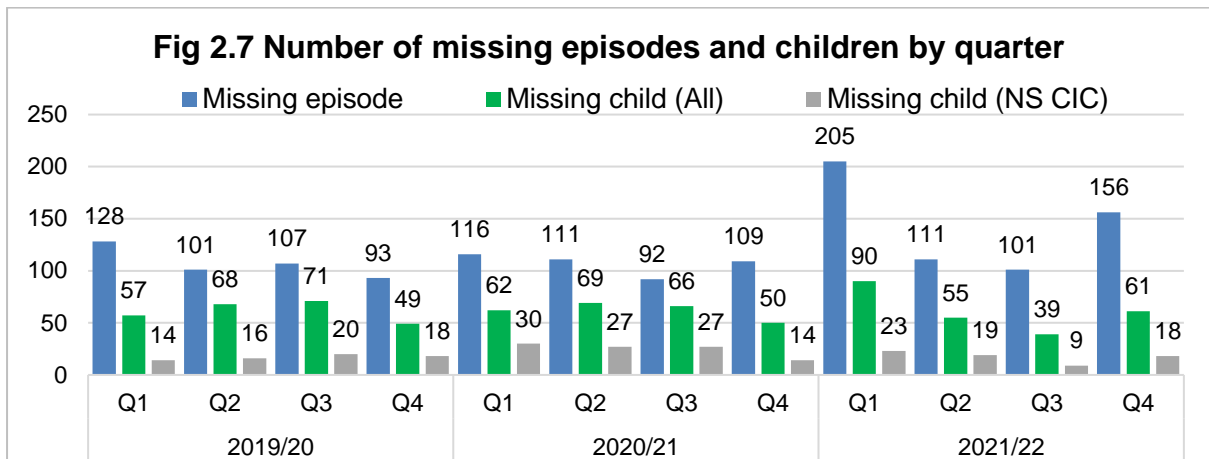
Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors. Work in this area, which includes children who go missing and children who are vulnerable to or at risk of exploitation, is another key area of our children’s improvement plan across the partnership.

Missing Children

During Quarter 4 2021/22, there were 156 episodes of children going missing which related to 61 individual children who went missing (39% out of all missing episodes).

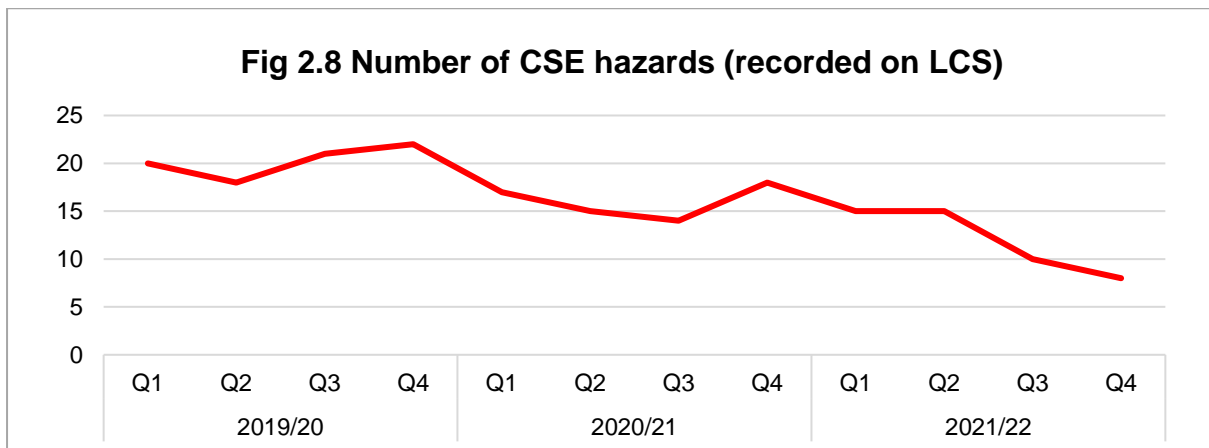
From the overall number of 156 missing episodes 69 were for children in care (45% out of all missing episodes) which relates to 18 individual children (8% out of the Children in Care cohort during Q4).

The majority of the 69 missing episodes were made up from just 2 individual children in care who had 43 missing episodes between them. Out of the 18 children who went missing, 4 were UASC children



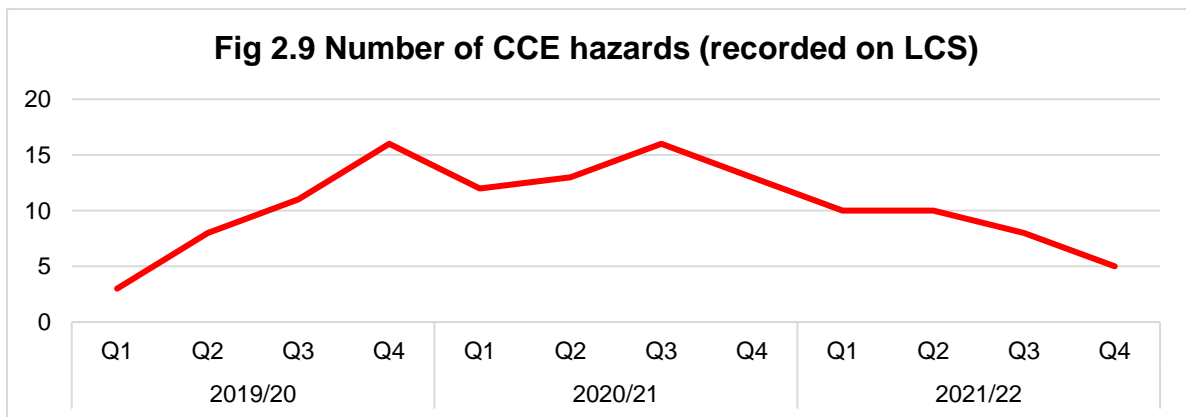
Child Sexual Exploitation

Fig. 2.8 shows the number of open sexual exploitation hazards on the children's recording system (LCS) at the end of each quarter. At the end of Quarter 4 2021/22 there were 8 open child sexual exploitation hazards. This compares to 18 open hazards same time last year.



Child Criminal Exploitation

Fig. 2.9 shows the number of open criminal exploitation hazards on the children's recording system (LCS) at the end of each quarter. At the end of Quarter 4 2021/22 there were 5 open child criminal exploitation hazards. This compares to 13 open hazards same time last year.



A child exploitation needs assessment is currently being completed. This will support a more accurate picture of exploitation activity in North Somerset and will inform an Exploitation Strategy which will be completed by the North Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership sub-group for exploitation and missing.

To note:

Glossary

- **EET:** In education, employment or training
- **NEET** - Not in Education, employment or training
- **CSE** – Child Sexual Exploitation
- **CCE** - Child Criminal Exploitation
- **UASC** – Unaccompanied asylum-seeking child
- **S20** Under **section 20 of the Children Act 1989**, children and young people can be accommodated with the consent of those with parental responsibility. If the young person is 16 or 17 years old, they do not need the consent of those with parental responsibility in order to be accommodated by the local authority.
- **Each reporting year runs from 1st April to 31st March**

List of statistical neighbours (from LAIT, updated March 2021)

- Worcestershire
- South Gloucestershire
- West Sussex
- Hampshire
- East Sussex
- Gloucestershire
- Essex
- Dorset
- Leicestershire
- Warwickshire

Useful links

- [North Somerset Children's Safeguarding Board](#)
- [North Somerset's threshold guidance](#)
- [Children's Act 1989](#)
- [Census 2011](#)
- [Business Intelligence](#)

4. CONSULTATION

Directors have been fully consulted over the content of this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications as a consequence of this report.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

N/A

9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The equality objectives (part of the Corporate Performance Management Framework) are regularly monitored and are reported to the Corporate Management Team and the Council's Equality Scheme Implementation Group.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

It is important that we are aware of the areas in which we are performing well and where further action is needed to address any concerns.

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

AUTHORS

Hannah Batts
Business Intelligence Service
01275 884733
hannah.batts@n-somerset.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Support and Safeguarding Team quarterly reports (2019/20 to 2021/22)
- P&C Annual Directorate Statement
- North Somerset Council Corporate Plan

This page is intentionally left blank

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 16TH JUNE 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: MONTH 12 CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUDGET MONITOR

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. That the Panel notes the 2021/22 final spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report summarises and discusses the 2021/22 spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information.
- 1.2. The report also makes reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget and on-going financial risks.

2. POLICY

- 2.1. The Council's budget monitoring is an integral feature of its overall financial processes, ensuring that resources are planned, aligned and managed effectively to achieve successful delivery of its aims and objectives. Revenue and capital budgets are set within the context of the council's medium term financial planning process, which supports the Corporate Plan.

3. DETAILS

Overall position (Summary)

- 3.1. The overall position is one of a £1,289k underspend (4.7% of the net budget).
- 3.2. The underspend is mainly due to the spend on placements for children looked after being significantly less than the budget. This is representative of the fact that the budget was set when children looked after numbers were significantly higher than they are now, and, in addition, an allowance was made in the expectation that numbers would begin to rise once lockdown measures were eased; this has not yet materialised.
- 3.3. Furthermore, work on reducing costs by “stepping down” young people to more appropriate and cost-effective placements is proving extremely productive. As a result of all these factors, the spend is c. £1.5m less than the budget.
- 3.4. There are further mitigations from reduced staffing costs through staff turnover, contribution to overheads from a number of grants from central government, as well as reduced costs in the Adoption (Regional) service in relation to inter-agency fees.
- 3.5. The main offsetting cost pressure is on support to families with disabled children. The growth applied in this area in the 2021/22 budget has not been sufficient to close the gap between the budget and demand in the current year, although this is being addressed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and budget for 2022/23. Other cost pressures are on section 17 support (placement prevention), community related support for placements, systems improvement and the SEND element of the education support services contract.
- 3.6. The main areas of variance are shown in the table below and the key items are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs:

Budget Area	P12 Variance £000
Placements for Children Looked After	(1,539)
Placements for Children Looked After (community support)	280
Support Services for Families with Children with Disabilities	405
Creation of Directorate Reserves for improvement activity	210
Support Services for Education Contract	128
Systems Improvement	119
Section 17 Support (community support)	107
Adoption (Regional)	(158)
Grants Contribution to Overheads	(290)
Staffing	(682)
Other	131
TOTAL	(1,289)

- 3.7. The deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant has grown from £7.150m at the beginning of the year to £13.447m at the end of 2021/22. The main overspend relates to out of area placements, top-up funding and bespoke education packages.

Placements - £1,539k Favourable Variance to Budget

- 3.8. Children's placements underspent by c. £400k in 2020/21 and the adjustments made to the budget for 2021/22 were as follows:

Item	£000s
Growth to reflect previous demand position	760
Growth to reflect increases in future demand	400
Growth to reflect unit cost inflation	246
Savings plans (residential step down)	(1,165)
Savings plans (increase in-house foster carers)	(100)
Savings plans (income from CCG)	(40)
TOTAL net growth	101

- 3.9 The spend for 2021/22 is a decrease of £1,528k (16.3%) when compared with the previous year, following an 8% decrease in the previous year – overall spending has fallen by an unprecedented 23% in the last two years. The 2021/22 spend also represents an overall underspend against budget of £1,539k (16.4%) as illustrated in the table below.

	2020/21 Spend	2021/22 Budget	2021/22 Spend	2021/22 Numbers	Year on Year Change	Variance from Budget
	£000	£000	£000	FYE	£000	£000
In-house Foster Care	1,204	1,598	1,221	80	17	(377)
Independent Foster Care	2,198	2,489	1,841	43	(357)	(648)
Residential	2,489	2,488	2,568	13	78	80
Supported Living	2,116	466	526	3	(1,590)	61
Housing With Support	0	588	412	14	412	(175)
Other	1,348	1,739	1,259	123	(89)	(480)
TOTAL	9,355	9,366	7,827	276	(1,528)	(1,539)
					-16.3%	-16.4%

- 3.10. The biggest reduction in spend is in supported living placements and this reflects the MTFP savings plans in relation to changed commissioning arrangements for children aged 16+ approaching leaving care to commission more cost-effective placements, primarily in housing with support. Cost benefits of c. £960k have been realised to date against a target of £1.2m.
- 3.11. It is worth noting that despite the extremely positive progress made to date, the final position shows a £200k shortfall on the target, when looking at the specific cohort originally targeted for step down, but other factors are ensuring that the spend is significantly less than the budget. There is also a reduction in independent foster care placements, with offsetting increases in residential and in-house foster care.
- 3.12. A more detailed analysis of the activity and unit costs in relation to children's placements is shown at Appendix 2.

- 3.13. Spending also largely reflects the total number of children looked after, which, as illustrated in Appendix 3, peaked at about 220 to 225 during 2020/21 and averaged 200 in 2021/22. There remains some uncertainty on the numbers and the reductions may not be sustained.
- 3.14. Estimates for future years' expenditure in relation to placements for children looked after and families with disabled children (see below) were a key focus of the 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process.

Placements Support - £280k Adverse

- 3.15. The main spend relates to additional community related support provided to existing placements, and mainly in foster care. The type of support provided includes therapy and mentoring, enabling activities, transport, clothing and equipment. This additional support ensures placement stability.

Section 17 Support - £107k Adverse

- 3.16. The main spend relates to community support provided to young people and families, including where there has been a reunification from care. This primarily involves edge of care prevention work, and in other instances the support is also substituting short break and day care provisions for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The support provided acts as a catalyst in preventing children coming into care and is more appropriate and value for money than a placement.

Disabled Children's Support Packages - £405k Adverse

- 3.17. A breakdown of the financial position highlighting the key budgets is detailed below:

Budget Area	Budget	Out-turn	Variance		20/21 Outturn	Year on Year Change
	£000	£000	£000		£000	£000
Complex Care Packages	434	896	462		601	295
Direct Payments	543	580	37		829	(249)
Disabled Children Support (Respite)	226	132	(94)		138	(6)
Total	1,202	1,607	405		1,568	40

- 3.18. The budget over spent by c. £400k in 2020/21 and the adjustments made to the budget for 2021/22 were as follows:

Item	£000s
Growth to reflect previous increases in demand	475
Savings plans (income from the CCG)	(110)
TOTAL net growth	365

- 3.19. The net budget growth has not been sufficient to meet the increased in-year demand, and overall the overspend against budget is £405k. Spend has increased by £40k compared to 2020/21, although worthy of note is that the 2020/21 budget included one-off Covid grant funding of £330k to mitigate additional costs as a direct result of the pandemic.
- 3.20. In addition to the target to increase income from contributions from the CCG noted above, there are further cost reduction opportunities during 2022/23 from reviewing and commissioning more cost-effective care agency rates.

Systems Improvement - £119k Adverse

- 3.21. One of the priorities in the Children’s Improvement Plan is to improve effective use of management information systems to develop and support high quality social care practice. One-off funding was provided during 2020/21 and there was a cost pressure of £119k in 2021/22. Ongoing funding has been provided as part of the 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process.

Somerset Education Services Contract - £128k Adverse

- 3.22. Part of the overspend relates to an unbudgeted increase in the contract value from September 2021. The main change is that the contract will now provide for 28 EHCP assessments per month, an increase of 3 per month from the current 25 to manage the ongoing increase in demand for assessments. During the interim period, April to August, one-off locum resource has been procured to manage demand.
- 3.23. The 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process includes growth to address this underlying pressure.

MITIGATION

Staffing - £682k Favourable

- 3.24. The main areas under spending are Family Wellbeing and Family Support and Safeguarding locality teams due to vacancies. A number of vacancies have been recruited to part way through the year by newly qualified social workers as part of a recruitment initiative. It is also worthy of note that agency spend has reduced overall over the last few years with the spend in 2021/22 representing a 36% reduction when compared with 2017/18 as shown below:

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
£1,158,238	£846,913	£377,532	£704,287	£739,356

Grants - contribution to staffing and overheads - £290k Favourable

- 3.25. These are contributions from various central government grants received in year, after accounting for direct costs of services.

Adoption (Regional) - £158k Favourable

- 3.26. North Somerset is part of the regional adoption agency (RAA) Adoption West which has been operational since March 2019.
- 3.27. The main variance an under spend on inter-agency fees. The interagency fee is a nationally agreed mechanism for covering the costs incurred in the preparation, approval and matching of prospective adopters, and the support provided during the first 12 months of a placement. This includes placements made by other local authorities, regional adoption agencies and voluntary adoption agencies.

SAVINGS

- 3.28. Targeted savings in 2021/22 are largely centred around reductions in children's placements (Step Down Programme) and generating additional contributions from the CCG in relation to children with complex needs. As already described above, the new housing with support arrangements to provide more cost effective and local support to children looked after has already provided significant savings to date. Whilst the work on increasing CCG contributions is progressing, further work is required to fully quantify the savings.
- 3.29. Analysis in relation to the Edge of Care Social Impact Bond (SIB) shows a significant reduction in the number of over 10s entering care under section 20. The reduction seen in 2020/21 was sustained in 2021/22 with 27 children in the cohort entering care in 2021/22, compared with 46 in 2016/17 prior to the Edge of Care Service starting. The SIB contract has now been extended until May 2023.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING

- 3.30. The Council has completed its medium term financial planning for 2022/23. One of the principles that has continued to be followed is to close the gap between the budget and the spend, particularly in those areas where demand is most difficult to manage.
- 3.31. Additional growth of £460k has been provided to close the existing gap in relation to supporting families with disabled children. Other new investment of £1.1m is being included within the budget to support the council's improvement plan for social care and children with special educational needs and disabilities. The budget for placements has been reviewed and subsequently reduced by £960k to reflect the current underspend resulting from a reduction in the number of children looked after.

EDUCATION – DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (£13.447m deficit)

- 3.32. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced grant, which must be used in support of the schools' budget. The majority of the funding is for academies and is paid direct to them by the DfE, using the formula agreed by the Strategic Schools Forum (SSF) for funding all schools in North Somerset, whether they be maintained or not.

- 3.33. The DSG is split into four blocks as follows and local authorities may only transfer limited amounts of funding from the schools' block to other blocks (usually the High Needs Block) with approval from the SSF and the Secretary of State.

	2021/22
	£
Schools Block	141,092,716
High Needs Block	28,552,328
Early Years Block	11,813,242
Central Services Block	1,793,442
TOTAL DSG	183,251,728

- 3.34. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year there was a deficit of £7.150m and during 2021/22 the deficit has increased to £13.447m (in 2020/21 £278k was an underspend from the Schools Block, this has now been adjusted and is excluded from the 2021/22 balance of £13.447m).
- 3.35. The deficit balance is transferred to an unusable reserve rather than impact on the council's general fund balance. The DfE has made it clear that councils are not expected to use general funding to support the DSG, but there is an expectation that Councils have deficit management plans. The deficit relates to spending on the High Needs Block, which funds education for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and reflects the 108% increase in the number of children with the EHCPs from 2016 to 2021 and a 23% increase in the last year.
- 3.36. The table below shows the deficit balance to carry forward to 2022/23.

Dedicated Schools Grant Balance

Area	£000s	£000s
Brought Forward deficit		7,150
In-year variances:		
- Out of Authority Placements	2,446	
- Top-up Funding	2,133	
- Bespoke Education Packages	1,097	
- Schools Block Contingencies and Growth Funding	278	
- Delegated Place Funding	188	
- SEN Equipment and Other Costs	116	
- SEND Inclusion Project	73	
- Other	(34)	
Sum of in-year variances		6,297
Deficit to carry forward		13,447

- 3.37. The main area of overspend is out of area placements arising from an increase in demand for special schools' placements and a lack of local supply. As shown in the table below,

spend has increased by £1,375k (22.4%) this year, compared to last. This is driven by a combination of an increase in the average unit cost from £51,693 to £53,205 and an increase in numbers of 22 FTE. In addition, the 2020/21 overspend was £1,508k but due to other pressures in the High Needs Block and the requirement to set a balanced budget, the 2021/22 budget has only increased by £436k. Overall this has resulted in a £2,446k overspend.

	2020/21	2021/22	Change
FTE	119	141	22
Budget	4,625,234	5,061,649	436,415
Spend	6,133,309	7,508,123	1,374,814
Variance	1,508,075	2,446,474	938,399

- 3.38. Top-up Funding has overspent by £2,133k, mainly in special maintained schools due to an unbudgeted increase in the number of children. It is worth noting that placements in maintained special schools are largely more cost effective than placements in independent non-maintained special schools, so increasing place numbers here mitigates higher increases if placements were made out of area.
- 3.39. Reducing the increase in spending the high needs block is an issue for local authorities across the country and have been recognised by the Department for Education. In previous years, the overspend was partially mitigated by a significant transfer of funding from the schools' block to the high needs block. However, for 2021/22, this has been reduced to just 0.5% of the DSG (c.£675k).
- 3.40. Recent modelling, which takes into account forecasts for the increasing number of young people requiring specialist provision, indicates that, in the absence of a further exceptional funding injection from the government, there is little prospect of reducing the overall deficit, although it is possible that the in-year deficit could reduce by 2024/25.
- 3.41. Officers discussed our DSG Management Plan with officials from the Department for Education at the end of July 2020 and again in September 2021. They raised no concerns about our approach, although they are keen to monitor progress against the five key themes of our plan, which are as follows:
- Identifying SEND earlier
 - Supporting increased inclusion in mainstream schools
 - Early Help - right support, right time, right place
 - Developing local provision
 - Evaluating outcomes and improving the value of high-cost placements
- 3.42. On 17 February, the Council received notification that we are invited to take part in the "safety valve" intervention programme with the DfE in 2022/23. The aim of the programme is to agree a package of reform to the high needs system in order to address the DSG deficit. The programme requires local authorities to develop substantial plans for reforms with support and challenge from the DfE to place the DSG and the high needs system as a whole on a sustainable footing.

AUTHORS

Sindy Dube, Principal Accountant (Children's Services)

sindy.dube@n-somerset.gov.uk

01275 888753

Katherine Sokol, Finance Business Partner (Adults and Children's Services)

katherine.sokol@n-somerset.gov.uk

01934 634613

Appendix 1 - Children's Services Year End position

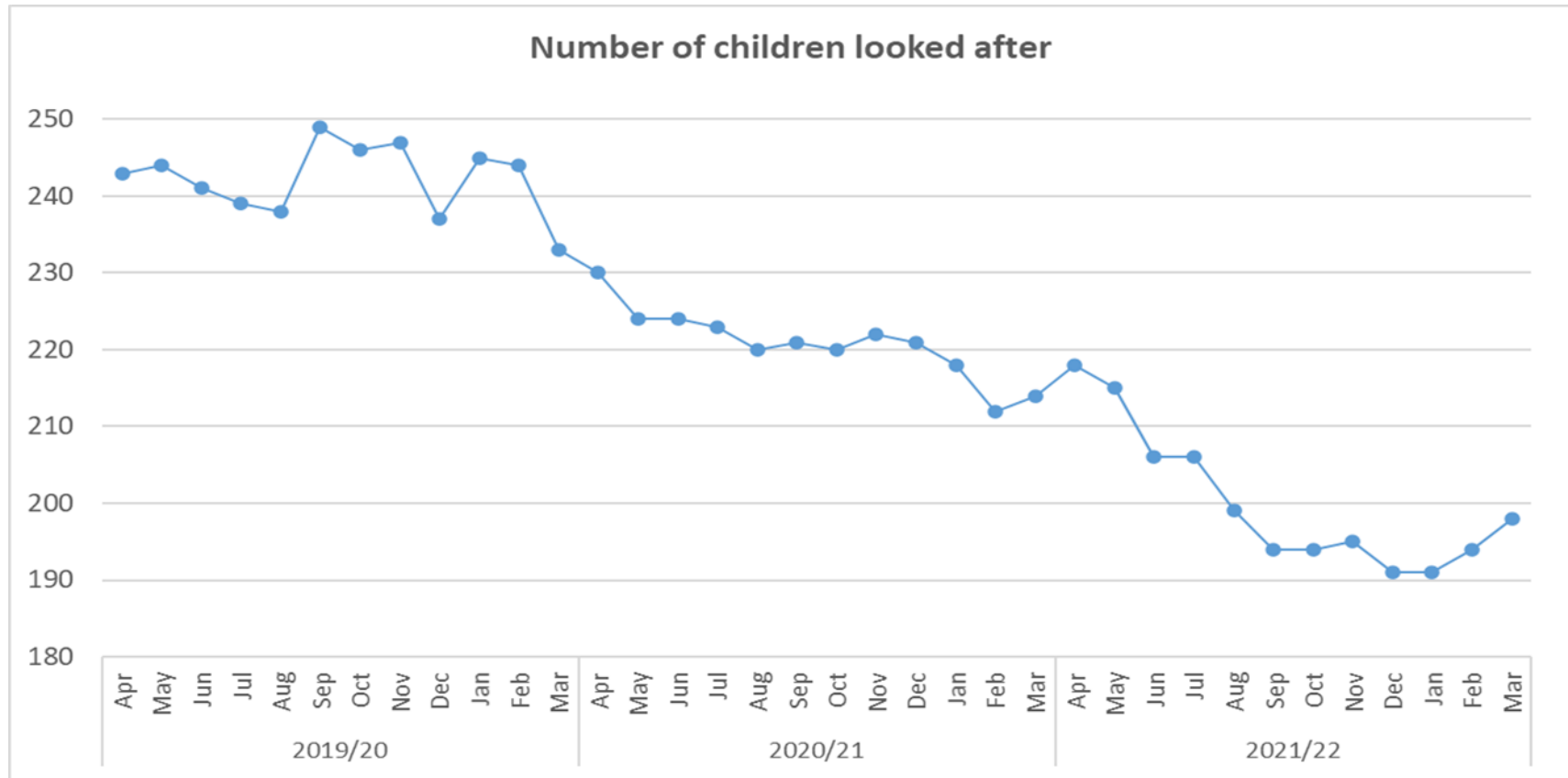
CHILDREN S - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE	REVISED BUDGET				OUT-TURN				OUT-TURN VARIANCE			
	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £
Coporate Parenting	12,997,485	(573,072)	0	12,424,413	12,701,588	(1,993,275)	217,566	10,925,878	(295,897)	(1,420,203)	217,566	(1,498,535)
Front Door	608,994	(20,800)	0	588,194	586,612	(20,800)	1,397	567,209	(22,382)	0	1,397	(20,985)
Family Wellbeing	5,280,419	(2,786,082)	(112,647)	2,381,690	5,443,775	(3,365,505)	54,883	2,133,153	163,356	(579,423)	167,530	(248,537)
Children With Disabilities	1,862,666	(504,680)	0	1,357,986	2,439,025	(737,233)	1,239	1,703,030	576,359	(232,553)	1,239	345,044
Children With Disabilities Occupational Therapy	219,475	0	0	219,475	199,911	0	273	200,184	(19,564)	0	273	(19,291)
Family Support and Safeguarding	3,471,926	(296,110)	170,000	3,345,816	3,376,894	(476,600)	329,698	3,229,993	(95,032)	(180,490)	159,698	(115,824)
Quality Assurance and Safeguarding	424,550	(30,717)	0	393,833	347,195	(41,453)	50,392	356,134	(77,355)	(10,736)	50,392	(37,699)
Adoption	738,950	(27,000)	0	711,950	634,151	(80,214)	0	553,936	(104,799)	(53,214)	0	(158,014)
Social Work Development	281,822	(90,540)	0	191,282	252,287	(95,420)	8,480	165,347	(29,535)	(4,880)	8,480	(25,935)
Contracts and Commissioning	576,523	0	0	576,523	557,051	(809)	1,362	557,605	(19,472)	(809)	1,362	(18,919)
Youth Justice Service	1,645,311	(1,044,204)	(322,816)	278,291	1,606,448	(1,278,744)	(32,023)	295,681	(38,863)	(234,540)	290,793	17,390
Children's Support and Safeguarding Assistant Director	28,108,121	(5,373,205)	(265,463)	22,469,453	28,144,936	(8,090,052)	633,266	20,688,150	36,816	(2,716,848)	898,729	(1,781,303)
Education Inclusion Service and Virtual School	2,086,976	(555,781)	(139,563)	1,391,632	2,274,906	(574,028)	(126,114)	1,574,765	187,930	(18,247)	13,449	183,133
Music Service and Education Hub	1,021,311	(1,021,311)	0	0	837,352	(998,187)	160,836	0	(183,959)	23,124	160,836	(0)
Early Years	521,033	(186,594)	0	334,439	445,943	(139,519)	1,069	307,494	(75,090)	47,075	1,069	(26,945)
Strategic Planning and Governance	1,809,321	(1,382,850)	3,892	430,363	1,470,693	(1,181,258)	34,367	323,802	(338,628)	201,592	30,475	(106,560)
Education Support Services	1,788,834	(568,456)	0	1,220,378	1,746,987	(592,488)	25,052	1,179,551	(41,847)	(24,032)	25,052	(40,826)
Education Partnerships Assistant Director	7,227,475	(3,714,992)	(135,671)	3,376,812	6,775,882	(3,485,479)	95,210	3,385,612	(451,593)	229,513	230,881	8,800
Children's Services Directorate	879,543	0	(45,811)	833,732	1,142,015	0	196,811	1,338,826	262,472	0	242,622	505,093
CYPS Support Services	1,766,285	(983,685)	0	782,600	1,723,800	(958,034)	(4,464)	761,302	(42,485)	25,651	(4,464)	(21,298)
Children's Services Directorate	2,645,828	(983,685)	(45,811)	1,616,332	2,865,815	(958,034)	192,347	2,100,128	219,986	25,651	238,158	483,795
S106 Accounting Adjustments - Children's	0	0	0	0	1,277	(654)	(622)	0	1,277	(654)	(622)	0
CHILDREN S - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE TOTAL	37,981,424	(10,071,882)	(446,945)	27,462,597	37,787,909	(12,534,220)	920,200	26,173,889	(193,515)	(2,462,338)	1,367,145	(1,288,708)

Appendix 2 – Children’s Placements Activity and Unit Cost Data

	2020/21 budget	2020/21 actuals	2020/21 variance from budget	2021/22 budget	budget change 2020/21 to 2021/22	2021/22 forecast this period	Change on 2020/21	Variance to budget
In-house								
- FYEs	83.00	74.16	(8.84)	87.00	4.00	80.17	6.01	(6.83)
- Average Unit Cost	17,859	16,235	(1,623)	18,363	505	15,229	(1,006)	(3,134)
- TOTAL COST	1,482,263	1,204,017	(278,245)	1,597,607	115,344	1,220,926	16,909	(376,681)
IFA								
- FYEs	63.00	51.75	(11.25)	58.00	(5.00)	43.08	(8.67)	(14.92)
- Average Unit Cost	44,340	42,466	(1,874)	42,907	(1,433)	42,726	260	(181)
- TOTAL COST	2,793,394	2,197,614	(595,780)	2,488,604	(304,790)	1,840,632	(356,982)	(647,972)
Residential								
- FYEs	11.00	11.99	0.99	12.00	1.00	12.81	0.82	0.81
- Average Unit Cost	251,590	207,623	(43,967)	207,309	(44,281)	200,457	(7,166)	(6,852)
- TOTAL COST	2,767,491	2,489,397	(278,094)	2,487,706	(279,785)	2,567,853	78,457	80,147
Supported Living								
- FYEs	5.00	10.32	5.32	2.27	(2.73)	3.12	(7.20)	0.85
- Average Unit Cost	241,932	205,013	(36,918)	205,000	(36,932)	168,658	(36,355)	(36,342)
- TOTAL COST	1,209,659	2,115,739	906,080	465,564	(744,095)	526,213	(1,589,526)	60,649
Housing with Support								
- FYEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.49	20.49	14.25	14.25	(6.24)
- Average Unit Cost	0	0	0	28,679	28,679	28,931	28,931	252
- TOTAL COST	0	0	0	587,600	587,600	412,263	412,263	(175,337)
Other Areas								
- FYEs	109.25	117.54	8.29	115.49	6.24	122.51	4.97	7.02
- Average Unit Cost	14,051	11,473	(2,579)	15,060	1,008	10,278	(1,194)	(4,781)
- TOTAL COST	1,535,099	1,348,488	(186,611)	1,739,174	204,075	1,259,182	(89,306)	(479,992)
Contingency	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL								
- FYEs	271.25	265.76	(5.49)	295.25	24.00	275.94	10.18	(19.31)
- Average Unit Cost	36,084	35,202	(883)	31,724	(4,361)	28,365	(6,837)	(3,359)
- TOTAL COST	9,787,906	9,355,255	(432,650)	9,366,255	(421,651)	7,827,069	(1,528,186)	(1,539,185)

NB - The cohort of children that are included in the Cost and Volume data are not exactly the same cohort as those children who are “looked after” (the number of these amounting to 198 at the end of March 2022). The main difference is that we include in the cost and volume analysis those children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order; these children are not “looked after”, but the guardians are in receipt of an allowance. On average, these children number around 96.

Appendix 3 – Number of Children Looked After



Children and Young People’s Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme June 2022

(to be updated following each Panel meeting)

The Panel will consider issues of significant public concern, areas of poor performance and areas where Members think the Council could provide better value for money. This is a “live” document and is subject to change as priorities or circumstances change.

1(A) ACTIVE PROJECTS (i.e. within the current Municipal Year) – limited ideally to two items at any one time

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Progress since Last Panel meeting	Contact
-------	---------------------	--	----------	-----------------------------------	---------

<p>CYPS Working Group – Careleavers Not in Education, Employment or Training</p>	<p>This group involves building on the work with partners around North Somerset Care Leavers who are not in education, employment or training</p>	<p>The Working Group focusses on understanding the barriers along with the opportunities. The Group to construct an appreciative enquiry sort of approach, bringing in the learning from across council services as well as partner agencies and the Corporate Parenting Panel</p>	<p>Members – Wendy Griggs, Ann Harley, Caroline Cherry, Ruth Jacobs</p> <p>Officers – Paul Johnson, Wendy Packer, Bethany Swan, Jaida Aldred</p>	<p>Meetings since the last CYPS Panel (10 March 2022):</p> <p><u>Thursday 17 March 2022</u></p> <p>Members were provided with informative data on North Somerset Care Leavers</p> <p>It was agreed that in order to aid understanding of the issues the working group members be provided with:-</p> <p>Data and descriptors for those young people who are pregnant or disabled in accessing education, training and employment;</p> <p>2021 year end data of care leavers who were NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) who are education/work ready aged 19-21</p> <p>Qualitative data on what worked (including RREBBOT data)</p>
--	---	--	--	--

				<p>Details of the South West region survey in relation to care leavers</p> <p><u>Thursday 28 April 2022</u></p> <p>A discussion took place on:</p> <p>Information on the various opportunities available to young people in North Somerset.</p> <p>Local and national picture on availabilities and opportunities.</p> <p>Constraints in offers from education and business.</p> <p>Barriers to organisations assisting in delivering these opportunities.</p> <p>Best practice examples from other local authorities who are making successful improvements in this area.</p>	
--	--	--	--	---	--

				<p>Members to consider avenues that can be taken to help further develop these opportunities</p> <p><u>Thursday 9 June 2022</u></p> <p>To focus on the Young person's Voice</p> <p>Members to receive a few 'case studies' of the experiences of some young people who are now NEET, what led them to this situation, what were the barriers to them. Could the Young Director (BS) talk to some and bring this first-hand experience back to the panel?</p> <p>Encourage some young people to engage with members</p>	
--	--	--	--	---	--

<p>CYPS Working Group - Accelerated Progress Plan (APP)</p>	<p>The working group to identify and recommend further effective delivery of the Council SEND Improvement plan in relation to the experiences of Parents and Carers.</p>	<p>Scrutinise parents and carers experiences with SEND services in North Somerset and their partners.</p>	<p>Members: Wendy Griggs, Ann Harley, Caroline Cherry, Ruth Jacobs</p> <p>Representative from the parents Carers forum to be invited as appropriate Representatives from Partner agencies to be invited as appropriate Parents/ carers will be invited to contribute</p> <p>Officers Pip Hesketh Other officers who work in the SEND arena to be invited as appropriate</p>	<p><u>Thursday 24 March 2022</u></p> <p>The value of a range of methods to access feedback from parents and carers was discussed including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Carer Survey • Accessing Co-ordinators in schools, • Children’s centres • Newsletter • Website • Distribution of a list of ‘Top 5’ questions each month to families via Family Wellbeing ECHP Portal. <p>It was agreed to liaise with headteachers to arrange a visit to meet with parents and children with SEND to discuss their experiences (5 May 2022)</p>	
---	--	---	---	--	--

				<p><u>Wednesday 1 June 2022</u></p> <p>Feedback from meeting with parents and children with SEND</p> <p><u>Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 12 July 2022</u></p> <p>Analysis of responses . consideration of elements of the APP which relate to parents/ carers experiences</p>	
--	--	--	--	---	--

Joint CAMHS (CYPS/ HOSP) Working Group	1. To understand the parity of funding issues for children's mental health services across North Somerset (when compared with South Gloucestershire and Bristol) 2. To understand the CAMHS access issues and to engage with the plan to redesign the referral pathway	Working Group: CYPS Councillors: Ciarán Cronnelly Wendy Griggs, Caroline Cherry, Huw James, Ann Harley, Ruth Jacobs, Steve Hogg, HOSP Councillor: Sandra Hearne NHS representatives North Somerset Parent Carers Working Group Representatives from Head of Youth Justice, Youth Offending and Prevention Services, Service Leader Resource Service, Head of Service, Family Support & Safeguarding, Health Improvement Advanced Specialist, Public Health, Scrutiny Support officers	Varied, depending on work strand	Update report to CYPS Panel meeting 16 June 2022	Cllr Ciarán Cronnelly
CYPS Working Group – Front Door	The CYPS Panel already had a Task and Finish Group looking at the Front Door (Children's Improvement Focus Group) which linked to the Ofsted	Focus Group members: Councillors Wendy Griggs, Caroline Cherry, Steve Hogg, Lisa Pilgrim, Huw James, Nicola Holland	Varied, depending on work strand	<u>Thursday 7 April 2022</u> Receive data/ information from the many partner agencies that use the Front	

	<p>Improvement Plan – while members had envisaged being able to talk with parents about how the service had improved since the re-alignment work, it was agreed that the better way of triangulating what was being reported about how well the improvements were landing would be for the Task and Finish Group to hear from partner agency representatives</p>	<p>Officers: Becky Hopkins, Dawn Newton</p>		<p>Door. Presentation on a number of cases studies showing the different pathways into the Front Door and beyond</p> <p><u>Date of Next meeting:</u> <u>Thursday 30 June 2022:</u></p> <p>Gain the voice of service users eg schools children centres, social workers, police Families</p>	
--	--	---	--	--	--

School Organisation Scrutiny Steering Group	<p>1. In-depth investigations of proposed school changes 2. Pupil Projections – methodology as applied generally and in particular in respect of new builds, including affordable housing 3. Admission Arrangements</p> <p>Note: The School Organisation Group is a standing sub-group of the CYPS Policy and Scrutiny Panel and not a task and finish scrutiny working group.</p>	<p>Steering Group</p> <p>Corporate Aim: Promoting lifelong learning opportunities</p> <p>Key issues for the public</p> <p>New National Code</p> <p>To include Education Transformation (see below)</p>	<p>Varied, depending on work strand</p> <p>Ongoing - to meet as required.</p> <p>Regular reporting to Panel</p>		<p>Cllr Wendy Griggs/ Sally Varley</p>
---	--	--	--	--	---

1(B) SCHEDULED PROJECTS (i.e. projects identified in the Strategic Work Plan that: may continue after the completion of the above or may be phased for commencement beyond the current Municipal Year). There is also the potential for these to be re-prioritised and escalated to 1(A) above for immediate action.

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Contact
Draft Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	The Childcare Act 2006 (Sections 6, 8-11 &13) require local authorities to assess the	Reports to Panel		Jenie Eastman

	local childcare market and to secure sufficient childcare for working parents. Childcare will only be deemed sufficient if it meets the needs of the community in general and in particular those families on lower incomes and those with disabled children. The term childcare includes provision for under 5's and for out of school care for 5 to 11-year olds.			
Adoption West – Implemented April 2019		Panel receives reports on progress of implementation		Shelley Caldwell
Education Commissioning Strategy	Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 provides Local Authorities (LAs) with a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in their areas.	Regular updates to Panel and School Organisation Scrutiny Steering Group		Sally Varley
North Somerset Fostering Strategy		Panel receives updates on progress		
Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officers' (ISROS') Annual Report		Panel receives annual reports		

Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements		Panel receives updates		
Turning the Tide Edge of Care Service		Panel receives updates on progress		
Children's Services Budget Monitor	Forecast spend against budget for Children's Services highlighting key variances, movement and contextual information making reference to principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the Budget	Regular Reports to Panel		Katherine Sokol

<p>Performance Monitoring</p>	<p>The Children and Young People’s Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management reports to help members evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners are achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people’s services, and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.</p> <p>This report presents the following standard items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any recent Ofsted inspections of council services • an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 1 2020/21, that fall under the remit of the Panel. 	<p>Regular Reports to Panel</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council. 			

Annual Directorate Statements (ADS)	<p>Each year the Directorates within North Somerset produce an Annual Directorate Statement translating the commitments in North Somerset's Corporate Plan into a series of Directorate level commitments.</p> <p>On an annual basis, the Panel to decide which, if any, of the People and Communities commitments for Children's Services should be subject of further detailed reports at future meetings</p>	Annually		
Home to School Transport				

SECTION TWO – proposed projects (listed in priority order). These must be agreed at Panel and will be referred for discussion at Chairs and Vice Chairs – for inclusion to the Strategic Work Plan:

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Proposed method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Contact
-------	---------------------	---	----------	---------

Youth Services and Youth Engagement Working group including the Youth Champions and any other interested CYPS Panel members.	To encourage the engagement of young people in the work of the CYPS Panel.	Working Group	Membership of working group and scope to be confirmed.	Cllr Huw James
--	--	---------------	--	----------------

SECTION THREE – planned Briefings and Workshops. Outcomes may, with Chairman’s agreement, generate Panel agenda items (for inclusion in S4 below) or, with Panel agreement, be escalated to S2 above:

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Date	Outcome	Progress	Contact
Children’s Services Performance Data and Direction of Travel (including RAG rating)	Agreed at Informal Panel Meeting 30 June 2021	Autumn 2021 TBC			Carolann James

SECTION FOUR - agenda reports to the Panel meetings as agreed by the Chairman. This section primarily provides for the forward planning of agendas for the coming year and a useful record of panel meeting activity. When considering reports at meetings, outcomes may include proposing a workstream, escalating it to S2 above for potential inclusion on the STRATEGIC WORK PLAN.

Panel Meeting 3 (10 March 2022)

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcome (actions)	Progress	Contact
Family Support and Safeguarding Update	To update panel members on family support and safeguarding.	Members receive an update and evaluation of the current position in the Family Support & Safeguarding Service so they have a full understanding of the strengths and ongoing areas for development.		Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding
Children's Improvement Focus Group – Front Door – Forward Plan	To update panel members and for discussion	Members to receive an update on the Children's Improvement Focus Group – Front Door and for discussion.		Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair, CYPS Panel
CYPS Working Group – Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) – Terms of Reference and Forward Plan	To update panel members and for discussion	Members to receive an update on the CYPS Working Group – APP terms of reference and forward plan for discussion		Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair, CYPS Panel
Q3 Performance Monitoring Report	The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management reports to help members evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners are achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people's services, and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.	To note the performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for improvement and good performance.		Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding

<p>CYPS Working Group – Care leavers NEET – Terms of Reference and Forward Plan</p>	<p>To update panel members and for discussion</p>	<p>Members to receive an update on the CYPS Working Group – Care Leavers NEET – Terms of Reference and Forward Plan for discussion</p>		<p>Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair, CYPS Panel</p>
<p>Joint CAMHS (CYPS & HOSP) Working Group – Overview of Findings</p>	<p>To update Panel members on the findings from the CAMHS Working Group</p>	<p>HOSP/CYPS appreciates the collaboration and transparency of all parties involved in the working group discussions about parity of funding for children’s and young people’s mental health services in North Somerset.</p> <p>HOSP/CYPS believes it’s clear that North Somerset children and young people do not receive parity of funding – and service – for mental health services when compared with Bristol and South Gloucestershire.</p> <p>HOSP/CYPS calls on the council, CCG and system partners to work together to begin to close the estimated £700k funding gap and to specifically improve services for eating disorders, learning disabilities, and primary & infant mental health services</p> <p>A progress report be provided to CYPS by no later than October 2022 outlining the steps that have been taken to improve parity from a funding and service delivery model perspective, and where gaps remain, what steps will be taken to improve these</p>		<p>Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly, Chair, HOSP, Member CYPS</p>

<p>Month 10 Children's Services Budget Monitor</p>	<p>This report summarises and discusses the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information as at month 10.</p> <p>The report also makes reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget.</p>	<p>That the Panel notes the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.</p>	<p>Sindy Dube, Principal Accountant (Children's Services)</p> <p>Katherine Sokol (Finance Business Partner, Adults and Childrens Services)</p>
--	--	---	--

Panel Meeting 1 (16 June 2022)

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcomes (Actions)	Progress	Contact
<p>Annual Directorate Statement – Children's Services</p>	<p>To outline the key commitments of each directorate for the year ahead to show how we will contribute to the Corporate Plan. Annual Directorate Statements are then used to inform Service Strategies, Team Plans and appraisals.</p>	<p>i) That the Panel notes the plans for 2022/23. ii) That the Panel consider the ADS when setting their Work Plan.</p>		<p>Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services</p>

Overview of Findings from CAMHS Working Group	To update Scrutiny Panels on Findings from CAMHS Working Group	<p>i) HOSP/CYPS calls on the council, CCG and system partners to work together to begin to close the estimated £700k funding gap and to specifically improve services for eating disorders, learning disabilities, and primary & infant mental health services</p> <p>ii) A progress report be provided to CYPS by no later than October 2022 outlining the steps that have been taken to improve parity from a funding and service delivery model perspective, and where gaps remain, what steps will be taken to improve these.</p>		Councillor Ciarán Cronnelly, Chairman, HOSP, Member CYPS Panel
Resetting the Education Agenda for North Somerset	To update the Panel on work to re-set the education agenda for North Somerset	Members to receive an update on resetting the education agenda in North Somerset.		Pip Hesketh, Assistant Director, Education Partnerships
Community of Practice SEND	To update the Panel on Community of Practice in North Somerset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with work programme • Ensure the Community is credited with its work • Build habits and new ways of working • Consider transferability to other areas of work 		<p>Councillor Catherine Gibbons Executive Member, Children's Services & Lifelong Learning</p> <p>Pip Hesketh, Assistant Director,</p>

				Education Partnerships
North Somerset's Annual Children's Social Care Complaints and Complements Report for 2020/21 Financial Year	The annual report for 2020/21 covers the Council's actions and responses to complaints and complements about Children's Social Care.	That the panel review and consider the content of the Annual Report on Children's Services Complaints and Complements and any further actions		Steve Devine Complaints & Directorate Governance Manager Sally Varley Head of Strategic Planning & Governance
Adoption West Update Report	To update the Panel on Ofsted's inspection of Adoption West.	i) That the Panel notes the outcome of Ofsted's inspection of Adoption West. ii) That the Panel highlights any risks or areas for further scrutiny. iii) That the Panel considers feedback it would wish to give to Adoption West via the current joint scrutiny arrangements.		Sheila Smith, Director of Children's Services Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding
Performance Monitoring Report	The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management reports to help members evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners are achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people's services, and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.	To note the performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for improvement and good performance		Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding

Month 12 Children's Services Budget Monitor	<p>This report summarises and discusses the 2021/22 spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information.</p> <p>The report also makes reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget and on-going financial risks.</p>	<p>That the Panel notes the 2021/22 final spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.</p>	<p>Sindy Dube, Principal Accountant (Children's Services)</p> <p>Katherine Sokol (Finance Business Partner, Adults and Childrens Services)</p>
--	---	--	--

SECTION 5 - Recommendations - Response from Executive Member

Area for investigation/ Recommendations	When were the recommendations to the Executive agreed?	Expect answer by (first panel meeting after recommendations were submitted)

SECTION 6 - Progress and follow-up on implementing Panel recommendations

Panel Recommendation	Date of Response	Actions – implementation progress