

# 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).

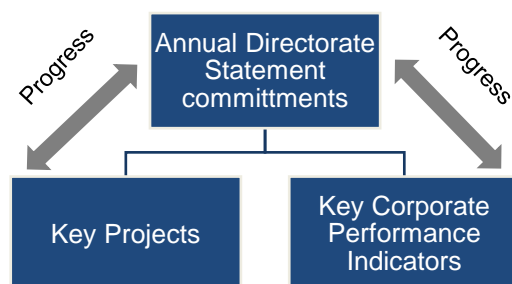


Fig 1.1 measuring corporate performance

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

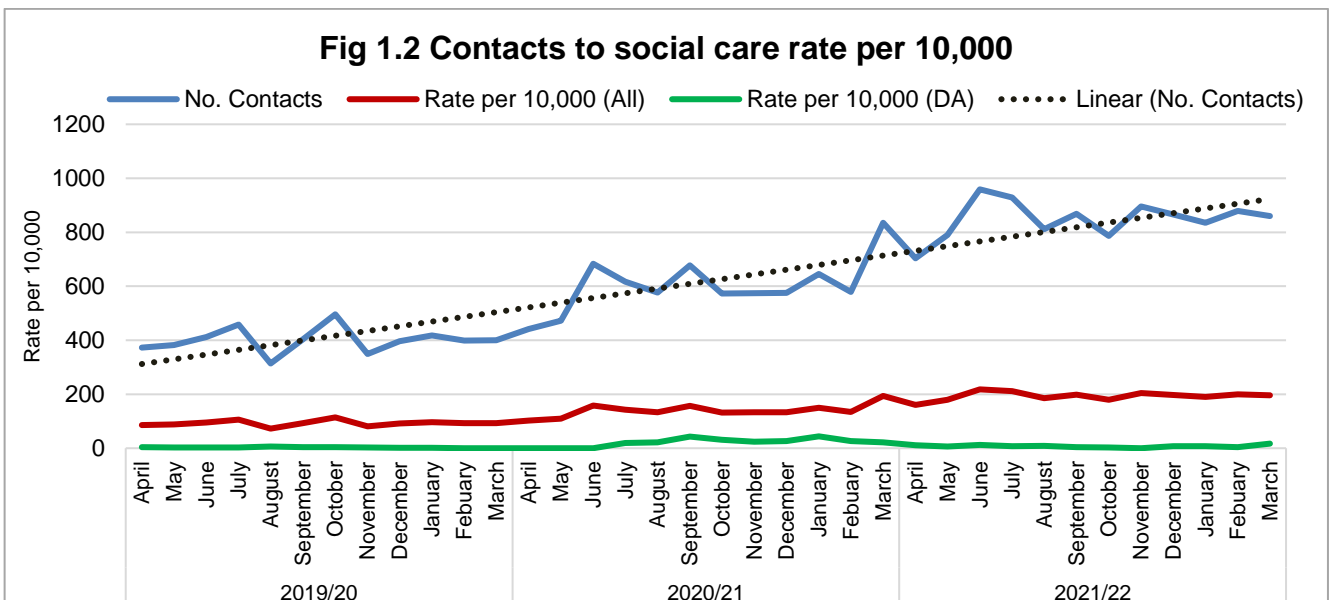
# KEY SERVICE MEASURES FOR SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARDING

## Contacts

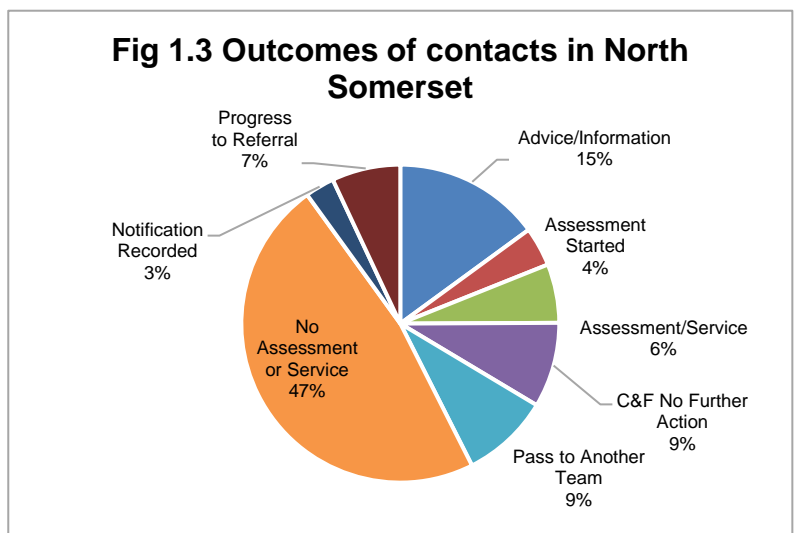
Where there is a need for advice and / or information or support from Children’s Services a contact is made. Since February 2021 we have operated a single ‘Front Door’ for all new contacts with the aim of ensuring children receive the Right Help at the Right Time.

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.

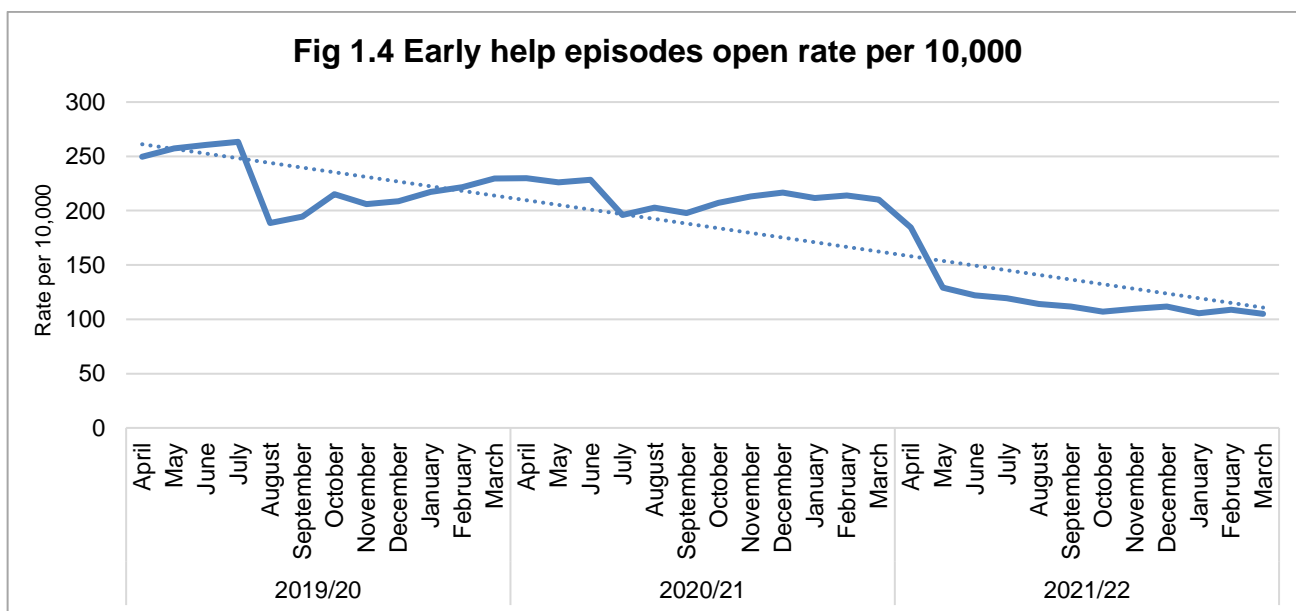
## Family Wellbeing (Early Help)

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.

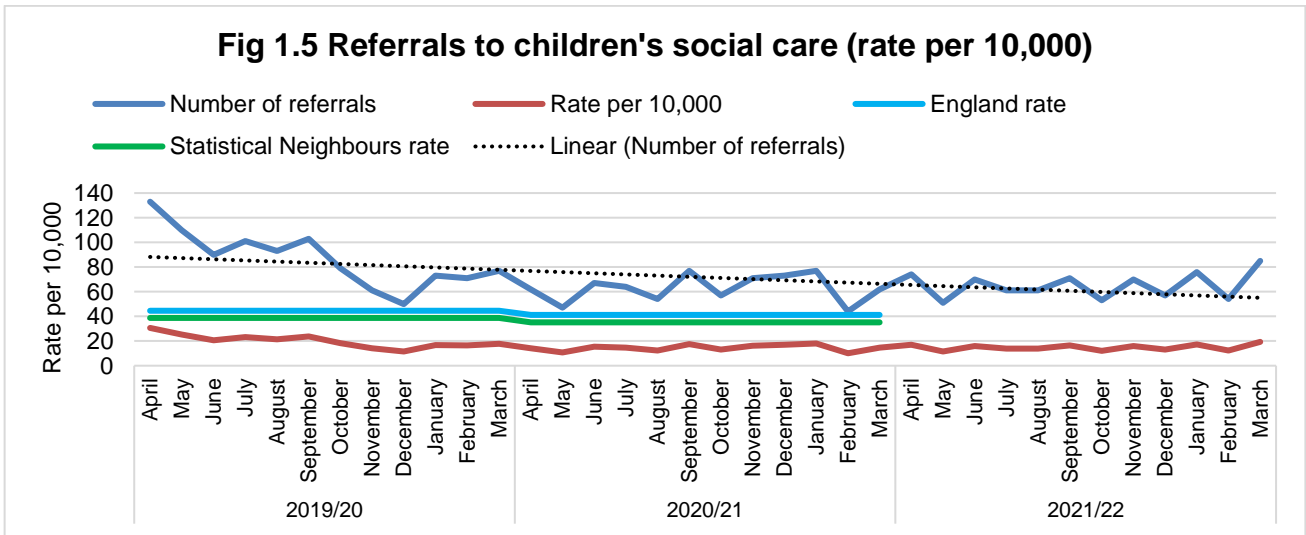


At the end of Quarter 4 there were 459 Early Help episodes open, rate 107 per 10,000, which is a very similar to the previous 2 Quarters. The decline over time in the number of early help episodes is due to system changes and a consequent impact on reporting rather than a reduction in demand. Demand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

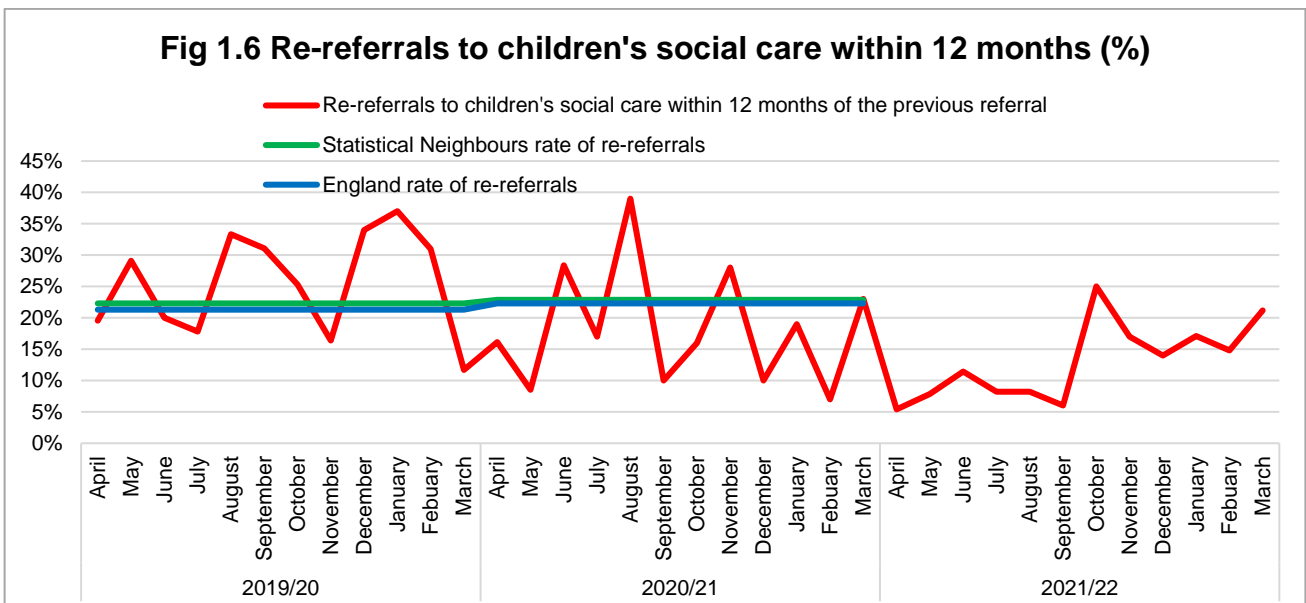
## Referrals

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.



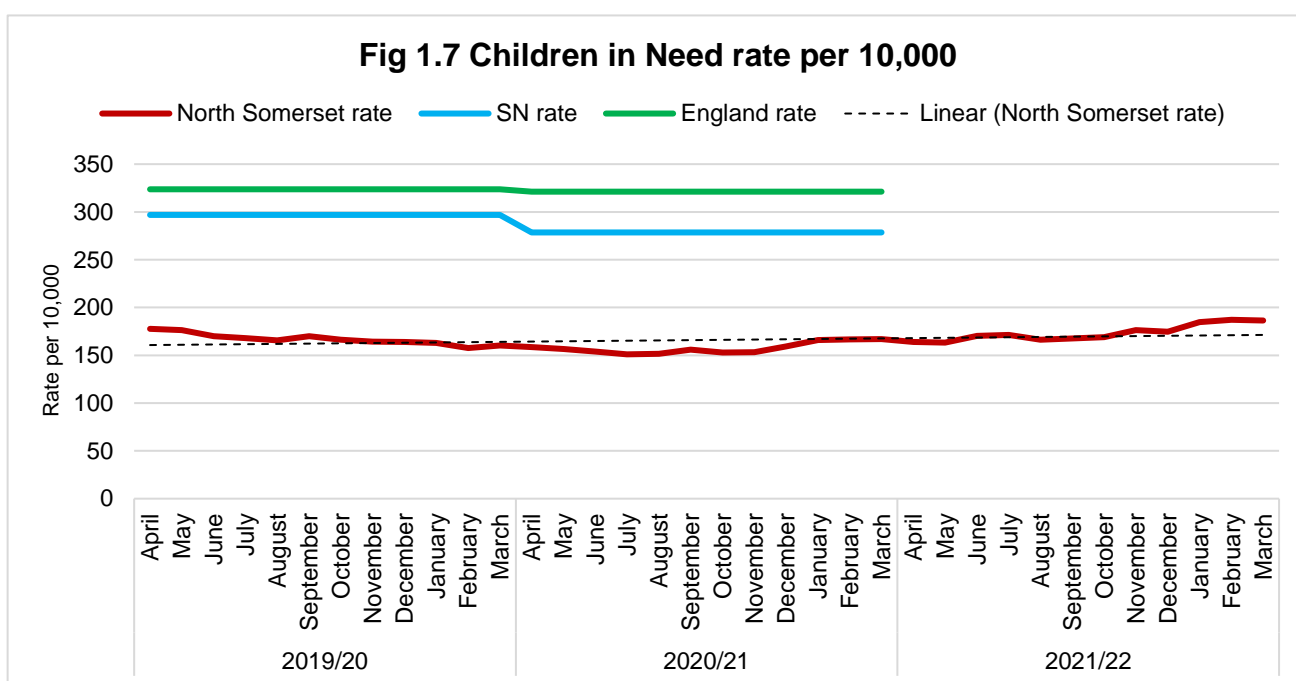


## Children in Need

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).



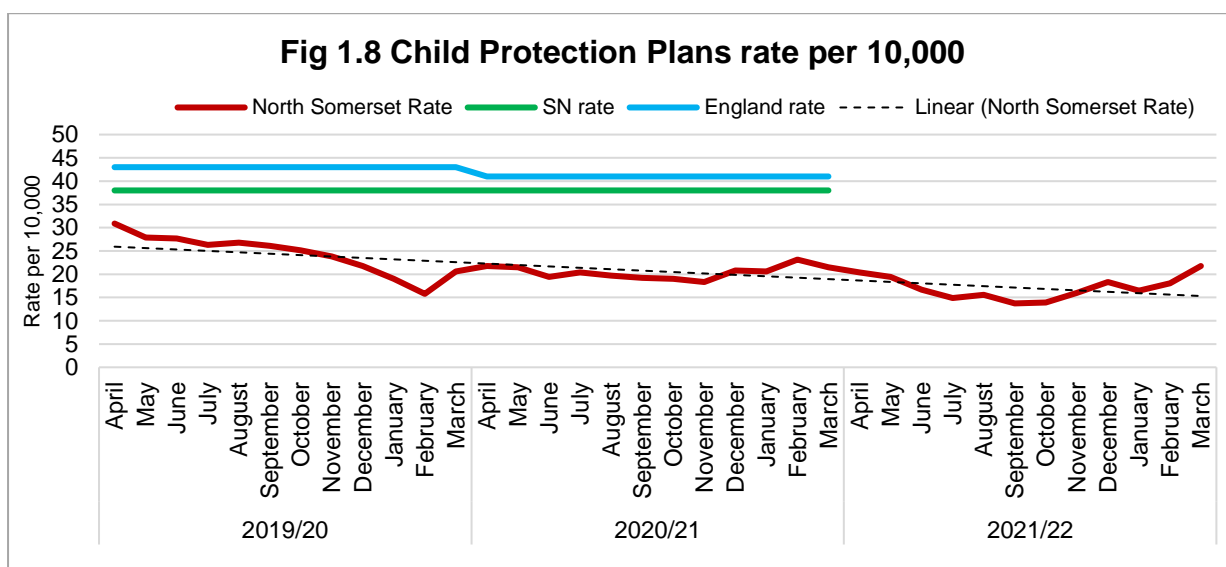
The categories of need that children in care are mostly likely to experience (in descending order) are:

- 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%

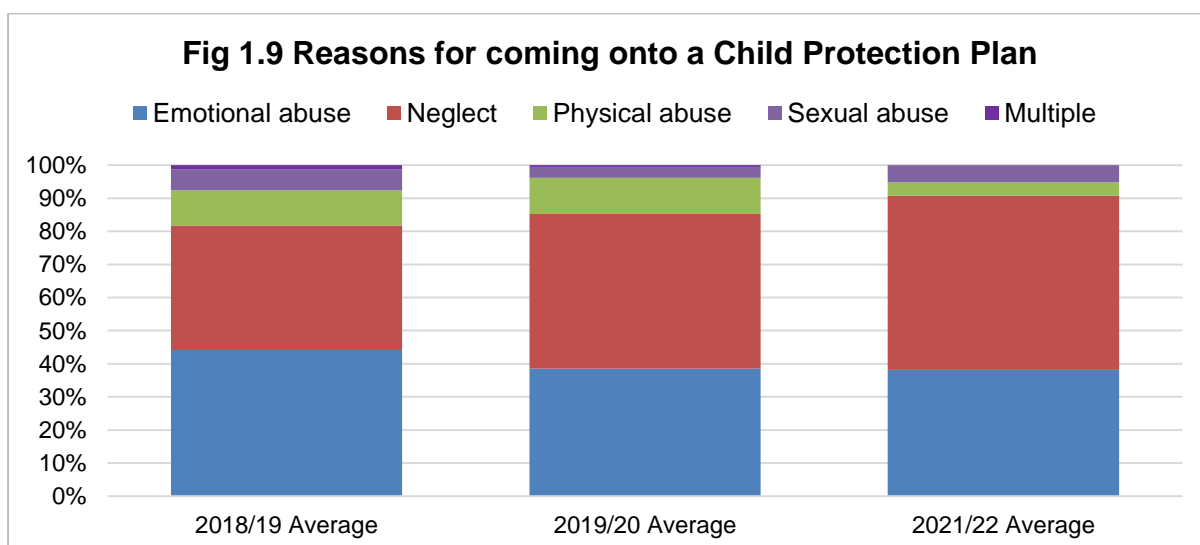
## Child Protection Plans

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.

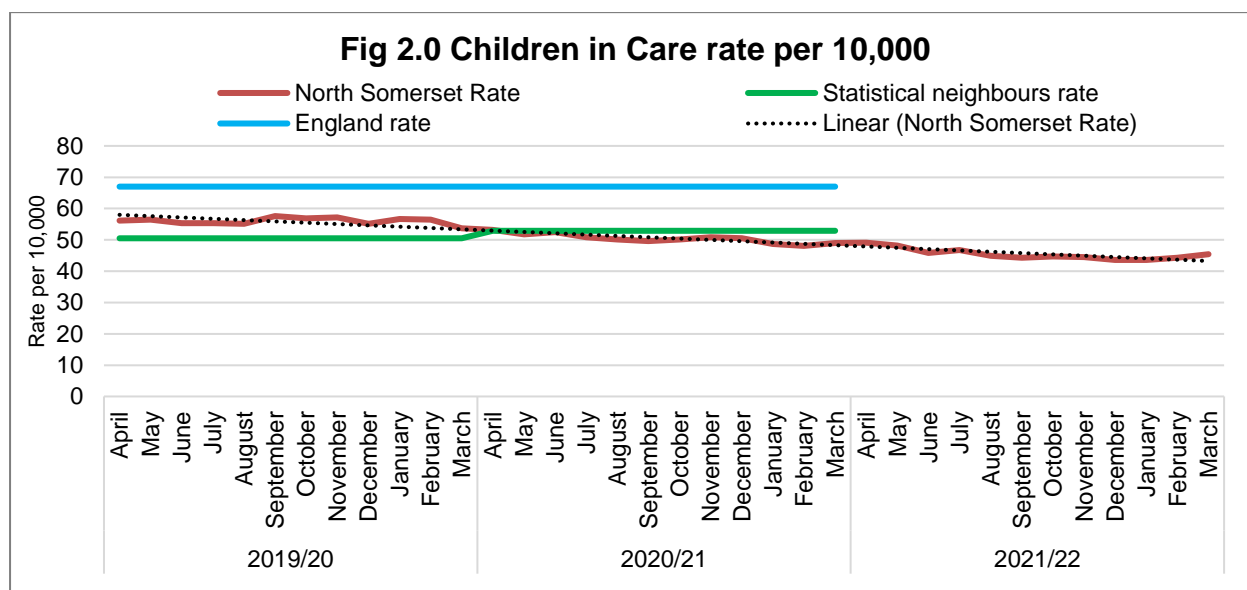


## Children in Care

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
<b>2019/20</b>	39.6%	3.5%	3.7%	29.7%	16.3%	7.2%	-
<b>2020/21</b>	41.0%	3.0%	3.0%	28.0%	17.0%	8.0%	-
<b>2021/22</b>	49.0%	2.0%	2.0%	18.0%	18.0%	10.0%	1.0%

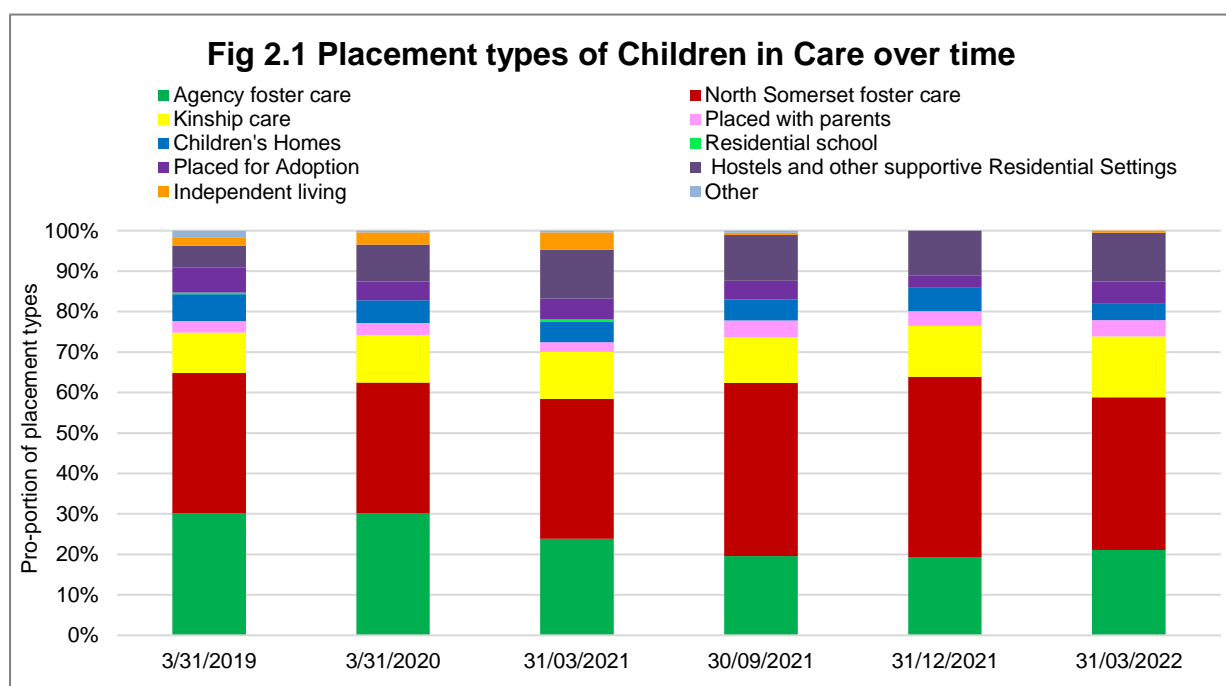
## Placement types of Children in Care

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 compartor (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%	<b>21%</b>	27%
North Somerset foster care	35%	32%	35%	41%	43%	45%	<b>38%</b>	44%
Kinship care	10%	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%	<b>15%</b>	



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.

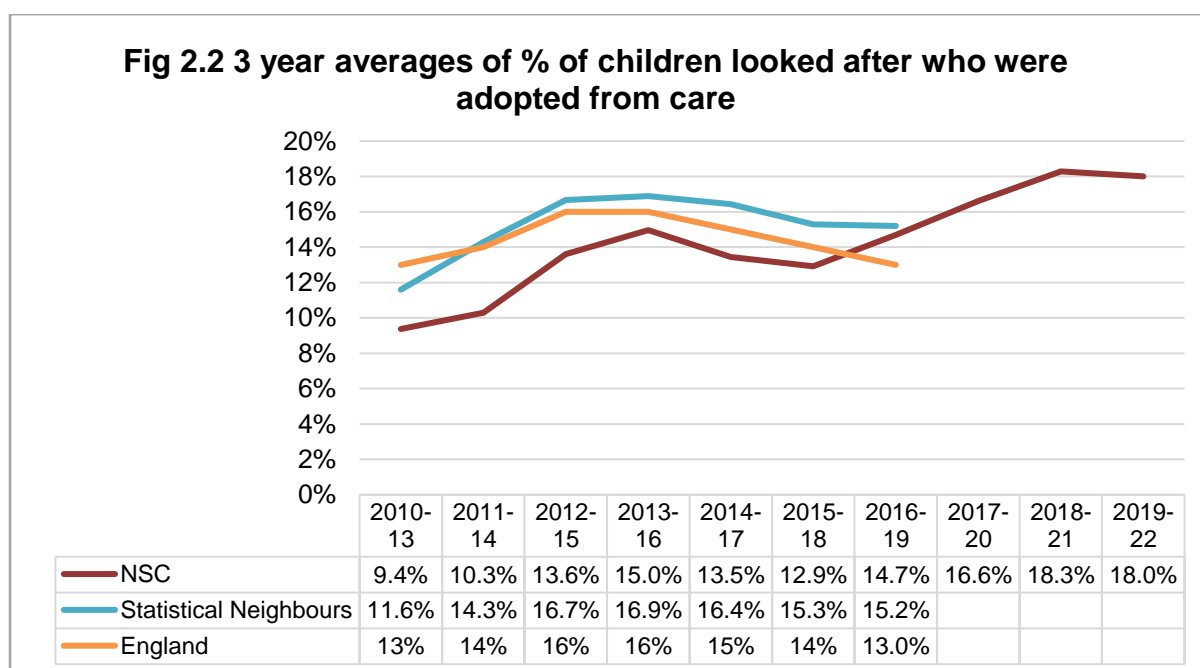
## Adoption

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 (1<sup>st</sup> 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.

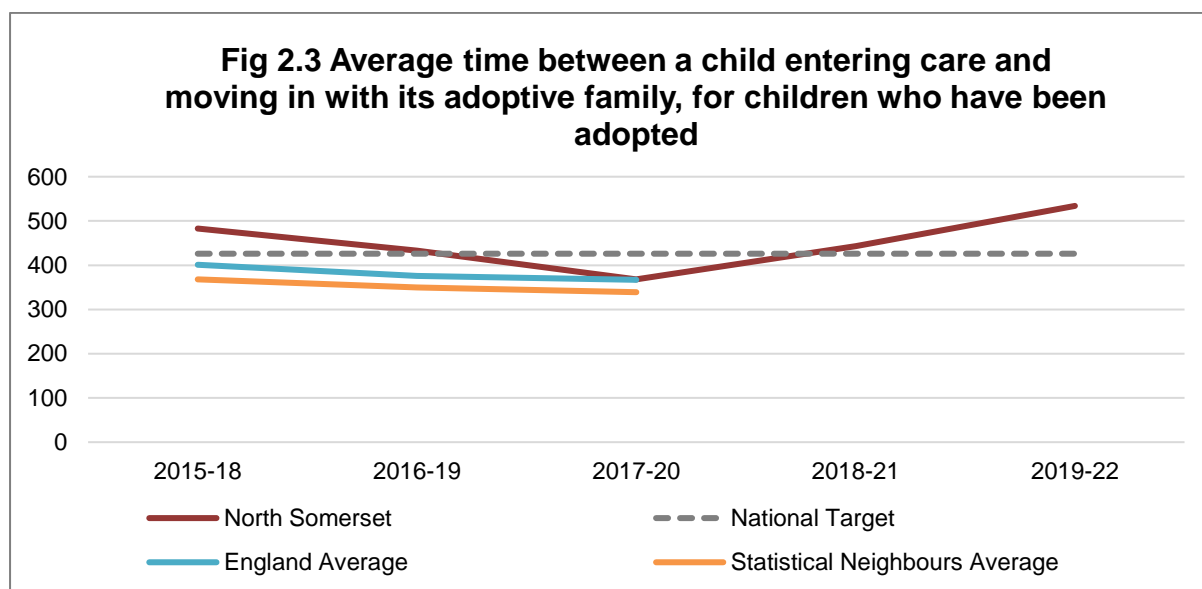
The average age of a child at adoption for North Somerset during 2021/22 was 2 years old. This is a decrease from 3 years old during 2020/21 and a further decrease from 3 years and 6 months during 2019/20. Nationally, the average age at adoption during 2021 was 3 years and 3 months.

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%).



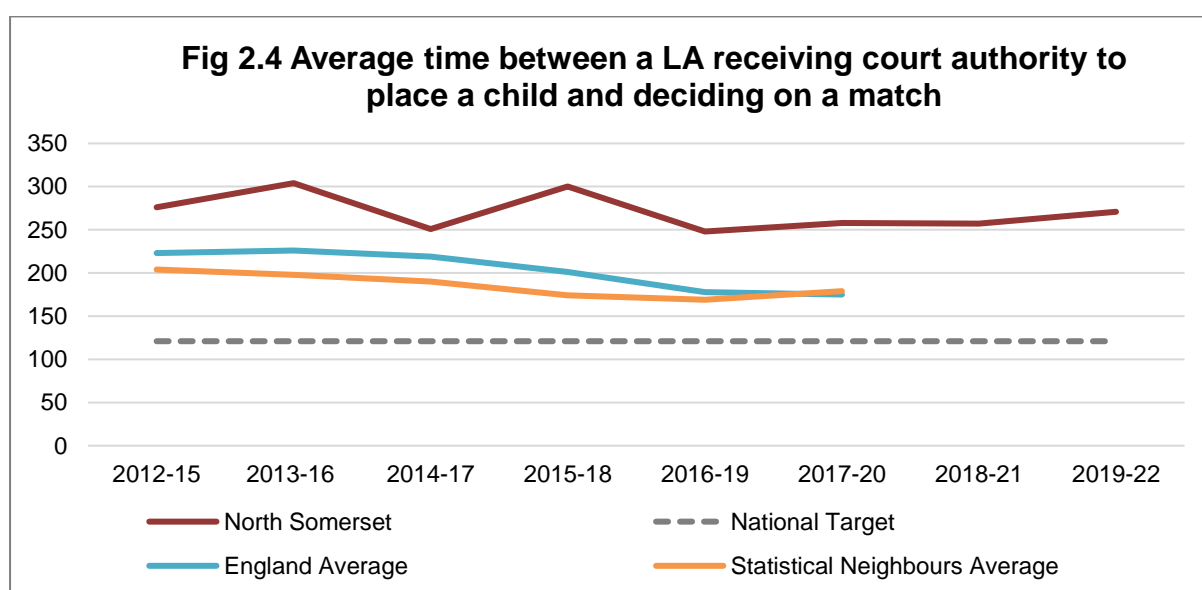
The current 3 year rolling average (2019-22) for the time between children entering care and being placed with their adoptive family stands at 534 days which is an increase on previous years.

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.

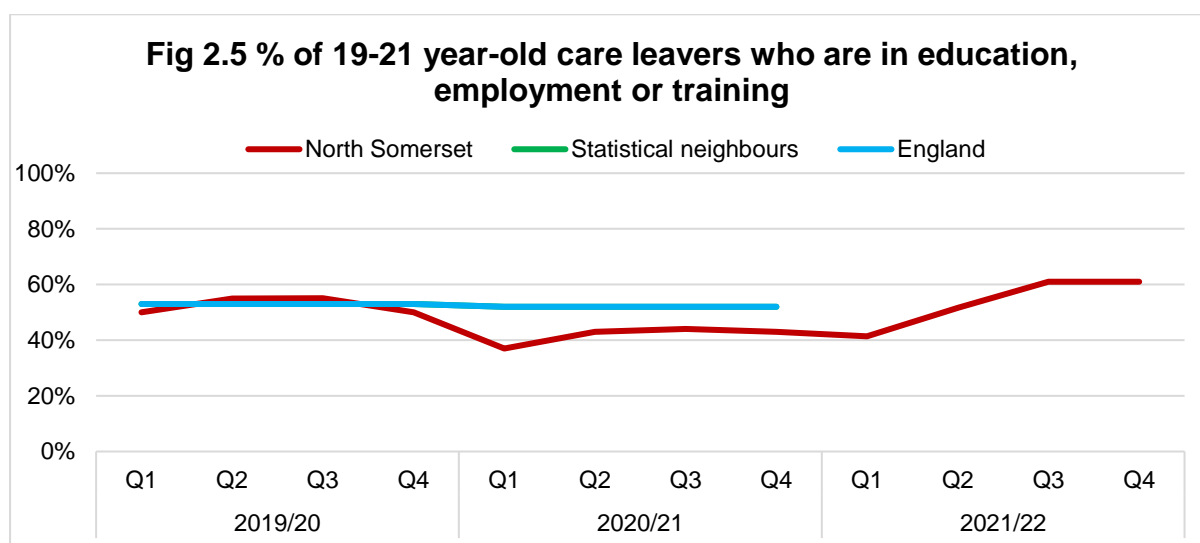
As of the end of Quarter 4 there were:

- 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

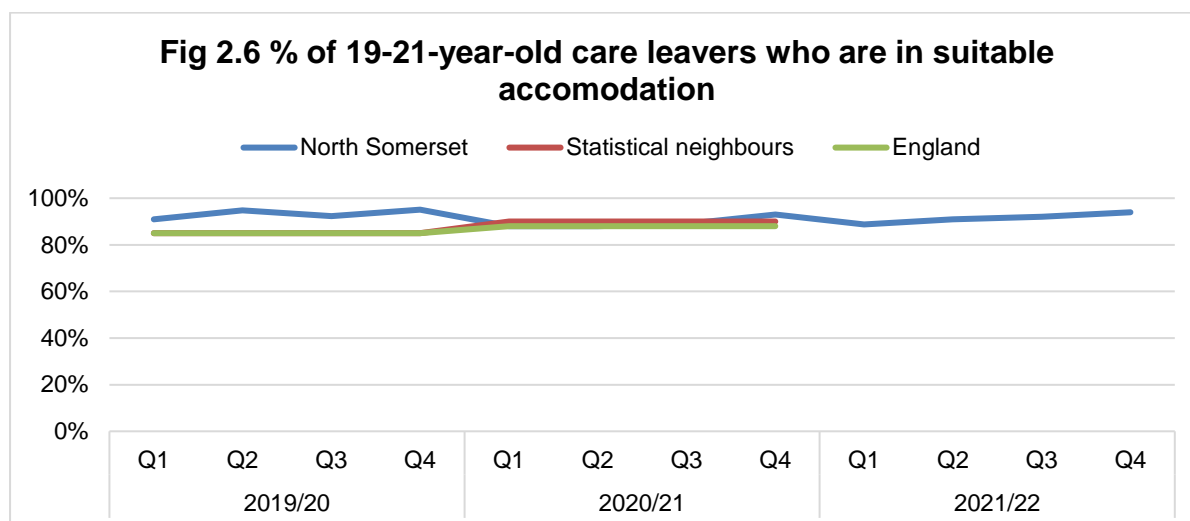
The council has responsibility to continue to help and support young people that were previously in our care. Key areas of support are in housing and accommodation and employment and education.

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.

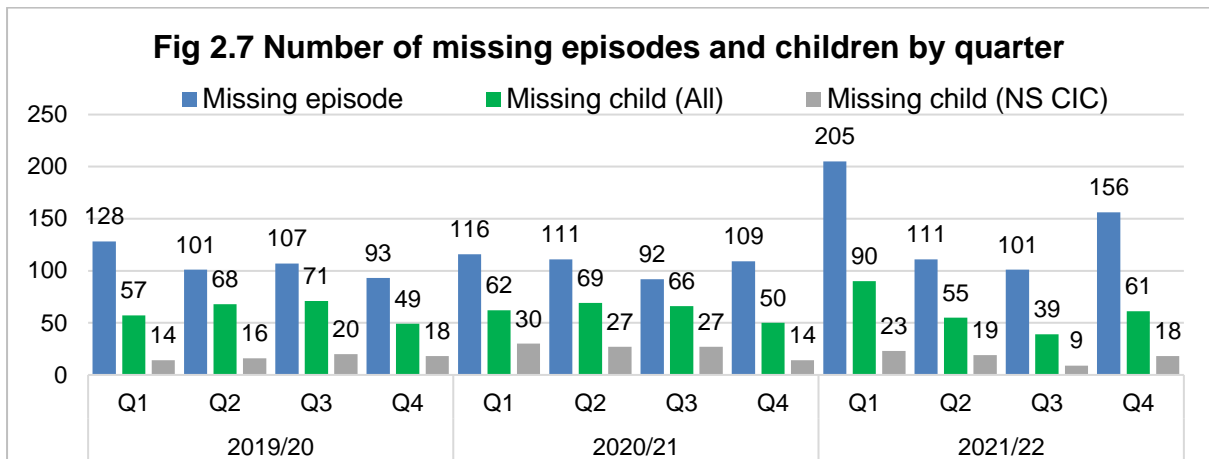
## Missing Children

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).

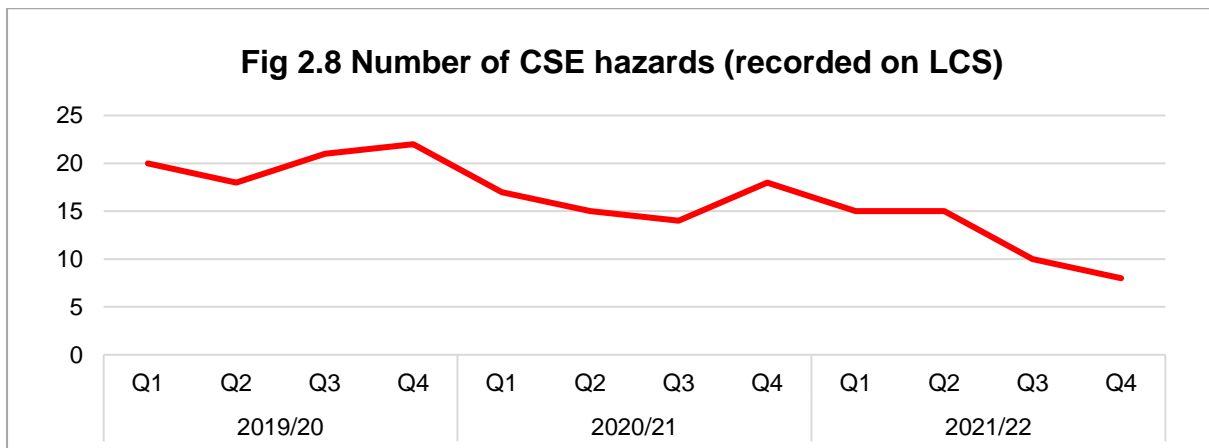
The majority of the 69 missing episodes were made up from just 2 individual children in care who had 43 missing episodes between them. Out of the 18 children who went missing, 4 were UASC children





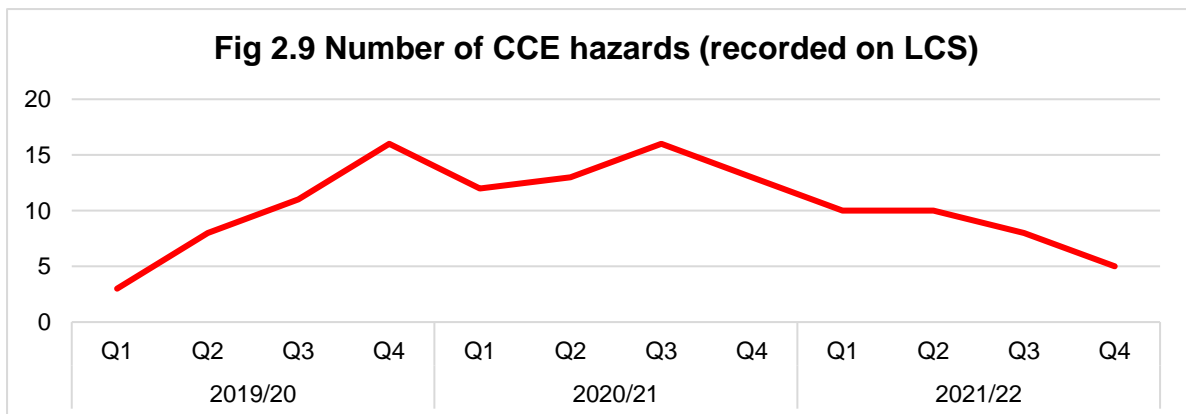
### Child Sexual Exploitation

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 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> 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

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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