

North Somerset Council

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

DATE OF MEETING: 11 MARCH 2021

SUBJECT OF REPORT: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

**OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: CAROLANN JAMES – ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S 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 1 2020/21, 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

There has been no Children's Services Ofsted inspection since March 2020.

North Somerset Youth Offending Service

- Inspection date: 14 September 2020
- Report published: 15 December 2020
- Overall grade is 'Good';

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/nsomersetsmallyot>

For all North Somerset schools (as of February 2021):

Primary schools

- 16% Outstanding (10)
- 71% Good (45)
- 8% Requires Improvement (5)
- 3% Inadequate (2)
- 2% not yet inspected (1)

Secondary schools

- 37% Outstanding (4)
- 18% Good (2)
- 37% Requires Improvement (4)
- 0% Inadequate (0)
- 8% not yet inspected (1)

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).

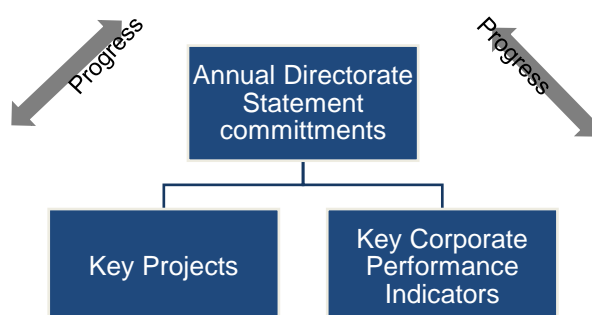


Fig 1.1 measuring corporate performance

Table 1.1 shows the Quarter 3 position of all KCPIs related to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

EO: Equality Objective Table 1.1	Year-End 2019/20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Predicted Year-End Status	Comments	National benchmarking
The percentage of children's case audits graded good or outstanding	38.9%	DNA	DNA	87.0%		GREEN	<i>Performance is better than target</i>	Local measure
The number of early help interventions	1,050 families	1,035 families	911 families	1,028 families		GREEN	<i>Exceeding the annual target of 1,000 families.</i>	Local measure
The percentage of care leavers who are EET (in education, employment or training) (aged 19 - 21 years) EO	46.5%	37.0%	43.0%	44.0%		RED	Targeted work is being undertaken through our children's improvement plan to address this. This includes auditing of those who are NEET, working within North Somerset and partner agencies through kickstart and support through the SIB RREBBOT west as well as targeted work in the leaving care team.	England, 53% South West, 53%
The percentage of care leavers who are EET (in education, employment or training) who are education / work ready (aged 19 - 21 years) EO	63.9%	51.5%	55.0%	56.0%		RED		
The percentage of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation EO	tbc	88.0%	88.0%	89.0%		GREEN	We continue to drive performance forward in this area, as we are aware, we can always improve and develop further, and we work with our commissioning colleagues closely on this.	England, 85% South West, 85%
The rate of children looked after entering care (overall) EO	53.7 per 10,000	52 per 10,000	50 per 10,000	51 per 10,000		AMBER	No significant change since last quarter. Further analysis is in train.	England, 67 South West, 57
The number of North Somerset foster carers	62	65	63	62		GREEN	Our recruitment this year is on target to deliver 18 new foster households, which is a significant improvement in previous years.	Local measure
The number of new SEND school places to be commissioned in the next five years based on agreed capital schemes EO	18	18	18	18		GREEN	All agreed schemes for September 2020 have been delivered.	Local measure

EO: Equality Objective

Table 1.1

	Year-End 2019/20	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Predicted Year-End Status	Comments	National benchmarking
KS4: the gap between FSM and Non-FSM Attainment 8 score EO	15.8			15.4		GREEN		England, 13.7 South West, 15.4
Child Poverty Indicator: The percentage of children in child poverty EO	22.3%			22.0%		not targeted	Data relates to the 2018/19 financial year.	England, 31.0% South West, 25.0%
The number of children and families open to Early Help and CSC where domestic abuse is the predominant factor EO (note: figures currently do not include Early Help)	n/a	341	303	276		not targeted	Figure relates to CSC DA identified, not EH.	Local measure

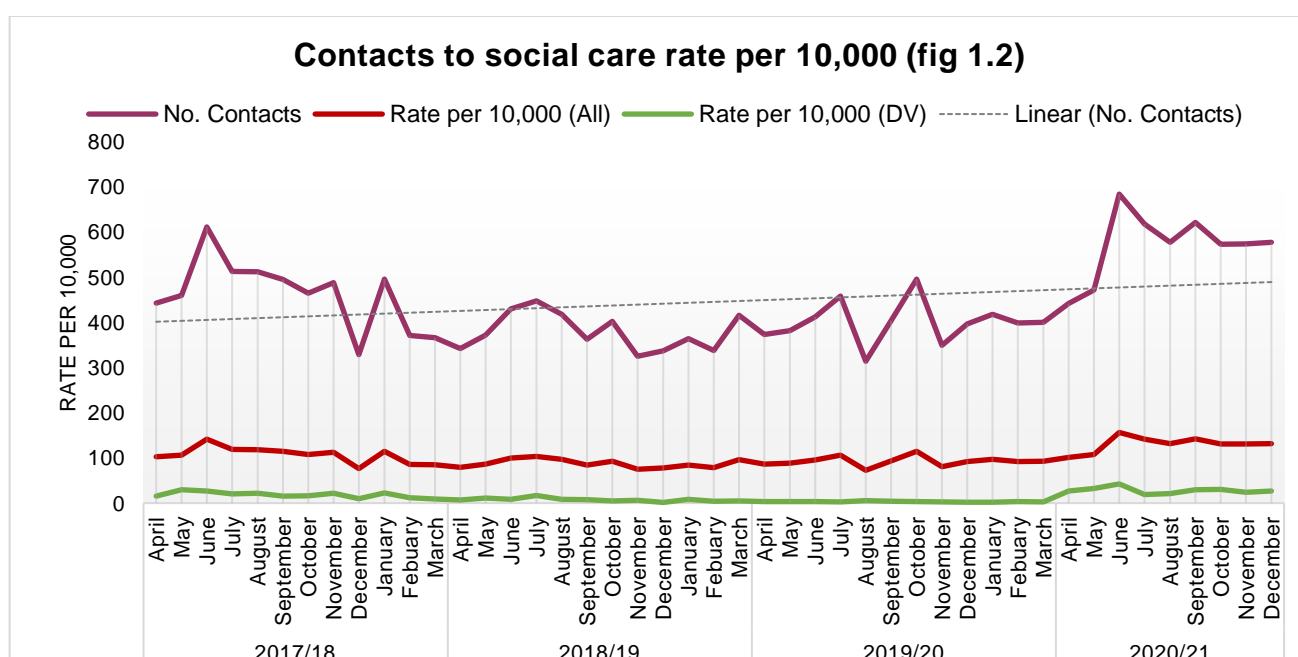
KEY SERVICE MEASURES FOR SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARDING

Contacts

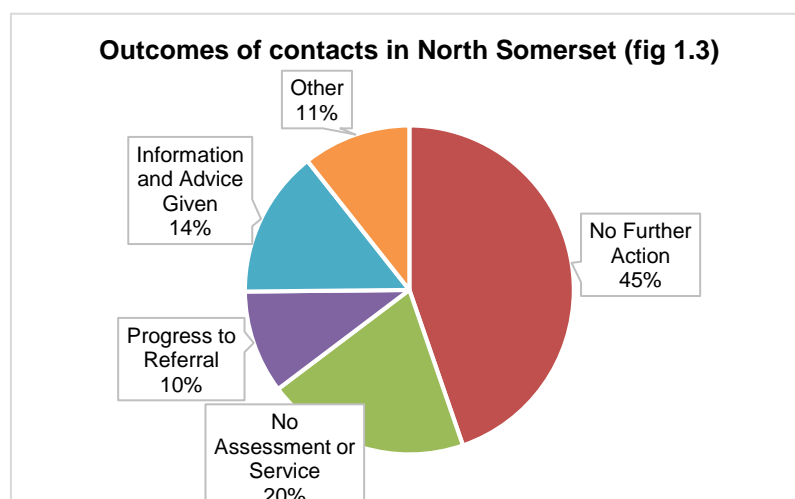
Where there is a need for advice and / or information or support from Children's Services a contact is made. From February 1st, 2021 we have operated a single 'Front Door' for all new contacts ensuring children receive the Right Help, Right Time. For the past three years North Somerset's has reported a declining trend on contact numbers.

However, since Quarter 1 of 2020/21 there has been an increase in the number of contacts. During Q3 2020/21, the average rate of contacts per 10,000 children was 131 compared to a rate of 96 contacts during the same time last year.

The number and rate of domestic abuse (DA) contacts has also experienced a significant increase since Quarter 1 2020/21. After a peak of 445 DA contacts during Q1 2020/21, we have seen a slight reduction in numbers during Q2 and Q3 2020/21 with 308 and 355 DA contacts respectively. This remains much higher than the previous year 2019/20 when on average we had 43 DA contacts per quarter.



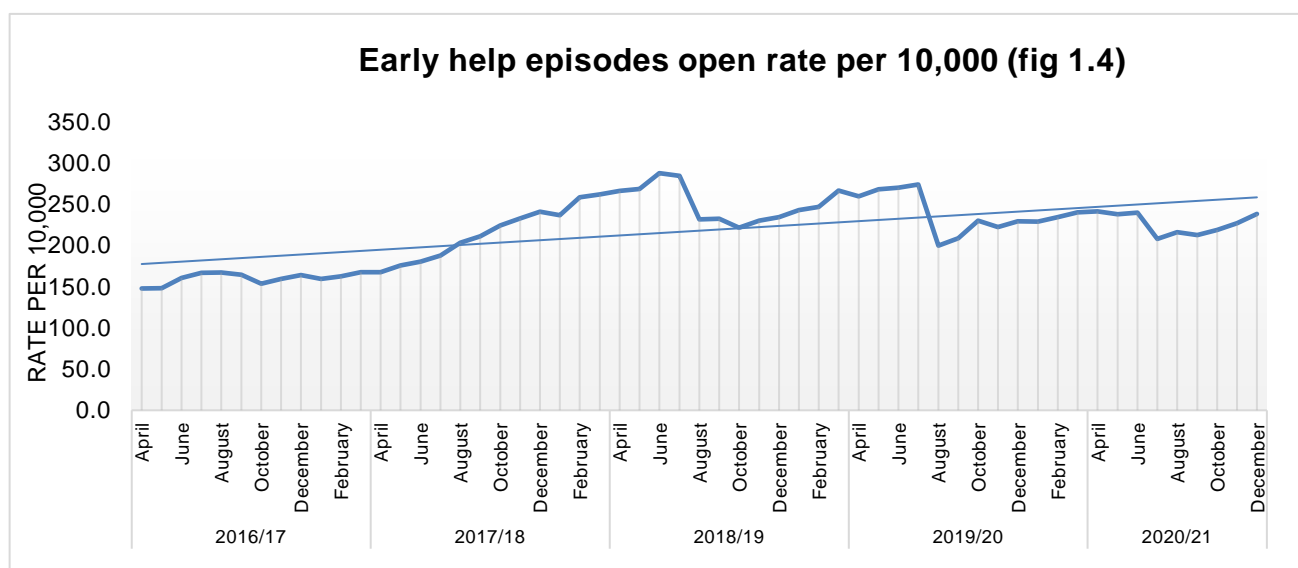
Outcomes for contacts to Family Support and Safeguarding vary (fig 1.3), but as at the end of Quarter 3 the main outcomes were: No Further Action (45%), No Assessment or Service (20%), Progress to referral (10%), Information and Advice Given (14%).



Family Wellbeing (Early Help)

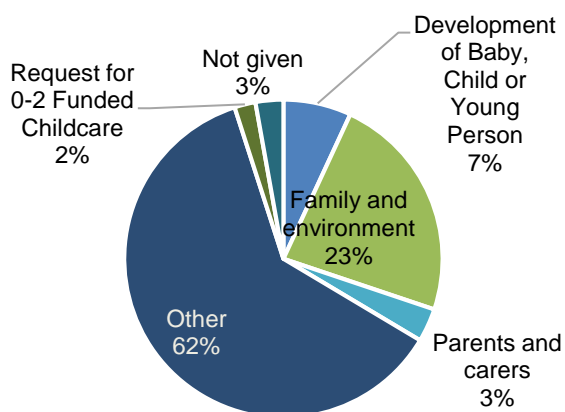
Across the partnership of both statutory and voluntary sectors we can all work together, share information, and put the child and their family at the centre, providing effective support to help them solve problems and find solutions at an early stage to prevent problems escalating. There may be times when the needs of the family are such that intensive early help or specialist statutory intervention is required. All children and young people will receive Universal Services, such as maternity services at birth; health visiting, school nursing and family support delivered from our Children and Family Hubs; school and youth services for older children. 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. Universal services are provided as of right to all children, including those with additional and intensive needs.

However, some children, either because of their own additional needs or because of less advantageous circumstances, will need extra help to be healthy, safe and to achieve their potential. In North Somerset, we want to offer help and support to these children and their families at an early point, in a voluntary way that does not leave them feeling singled out as different. Early help may occur at any point in a child or young person's life and includes both support and interventions early in life as well as support and interventions early in the development of a problem. We seek to offer support early to help families solve problems or to reduce the impact of problems that have already emerged. To do this we need to work together in an open way with the child and their family to identify strengths and needs, to find practical and achievable solutions, and to provide the right amount of information, advice and support providing Right Help, Right Time, Right Place. We have following realignment of Children's Services renamed North Somerset's Council early help provision to Family Wellbeing and our Family Wellbeing (Early Help) service will support children and their families at an intensive level of need (just below the level of need for statutory intervention) as well as providing supports across both the universal level of need such as children's centres and nurseries.



At the end of Quarter 3 there were 1,028 open Early Help episodes. This is a rate of 237 per 10,000 children and is an increase on the previous quarter where there were 917 open episodes.

Reasons for Early Help requests (fig 1.5)



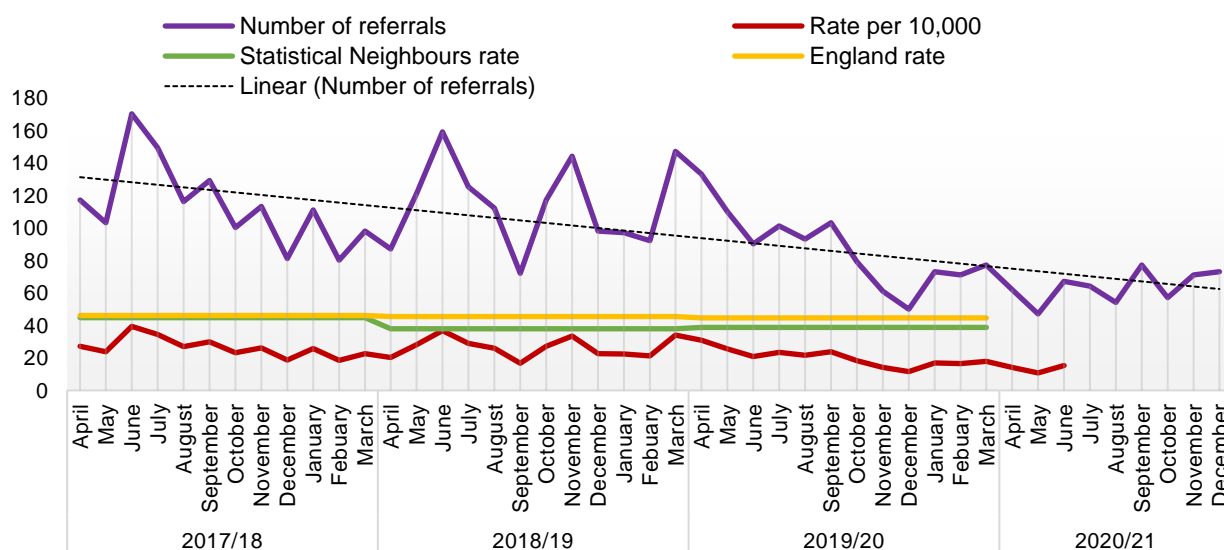
In Quarter 3, 61% of all open episodes were categorized as 'other', following a similar trend to the previous two quarters. Work is underway to better capture the 'need' that is currently described as 'other'. 23% of episodes were for Family and Environment and 7% were for Development of baby, child or young person. 3% of episodes had no given reason.

Referrals

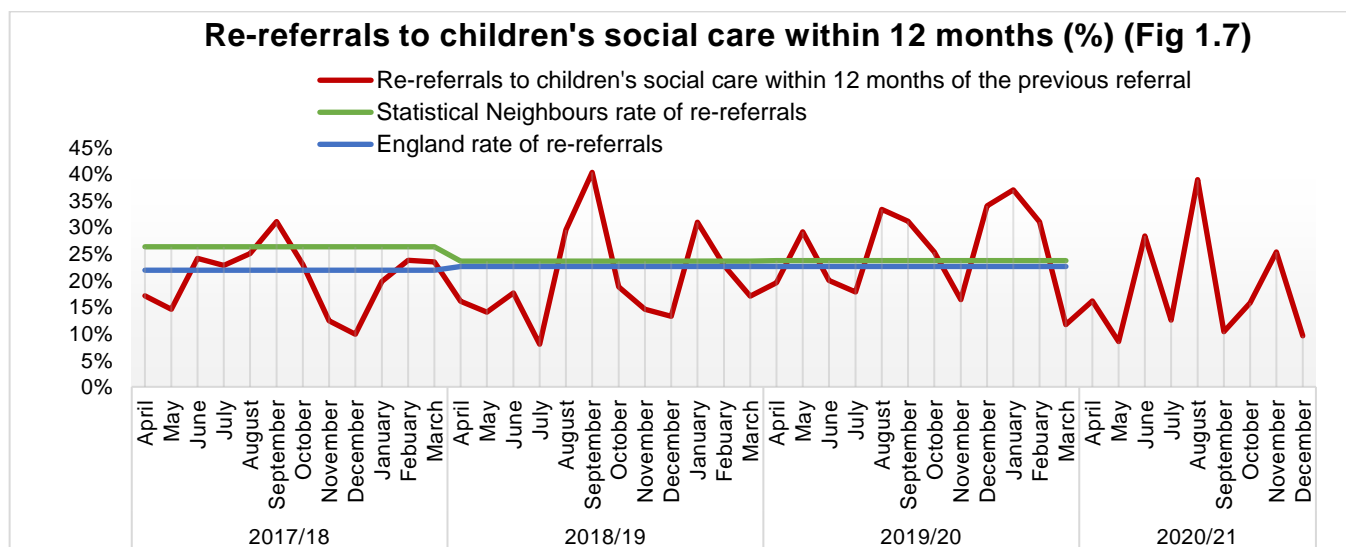
If a contact is made which requires further support beyond advice and / or information and requires statutory intervention, then it will progress to a referral to one of our Family Support and Safeguarding teams. The number and rate of referrals varies by month. Whilst the annual averages for 2017/18 and 2018/19 remained similar at 114, the 2019/20 annual average reported 87 referrals (a 24% reduction), and the trend line in fig 1.6 indicates a steady downward direction.

The North Somerset referral rates continue to remain lower than both our statistical neighbours and the national rate (fig 1.6). During Quarter 3 2020/21, the average rate of referrals was 15.3 per 10,000 children which is slightly above the average referral rate of 14.7 during Quarter 3 2019/20. Referral outcomes vary but during Quarter 3, 99% went on to receive some further service and 1% closed with no further action.

Referrals to children's social care (rate per 10,000) Fig.(1.6)



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 3 2020/21, the average rate of re-referrals was 17% which compares to 25% for the same period in 2019/20 (fig 1.7). The year to date average rate for 2020/21 is 18% which is significantly lower than the average rate of re-referrals for 2019/20 at 26%, and also lower than the statistical neighbours and national average.

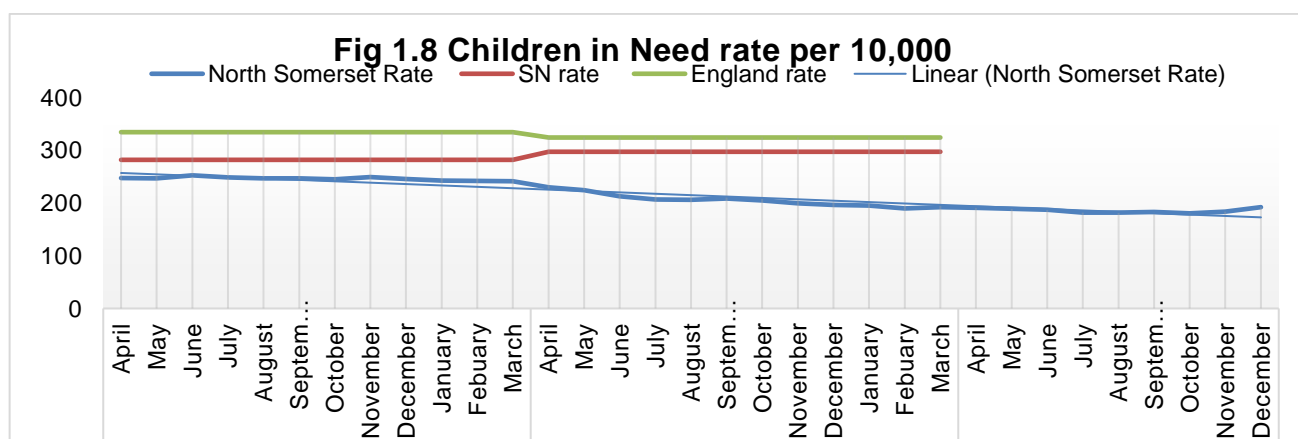


Children in Need

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
- they are registered disabled.

At the end of Quarter 3 2020/21, the rate was 192 Children in Need per 10,000 children. The numbers and rates have remained relatively stable and continues to be significantly lower than our statistical neighbours and England rate (fig 1.8).

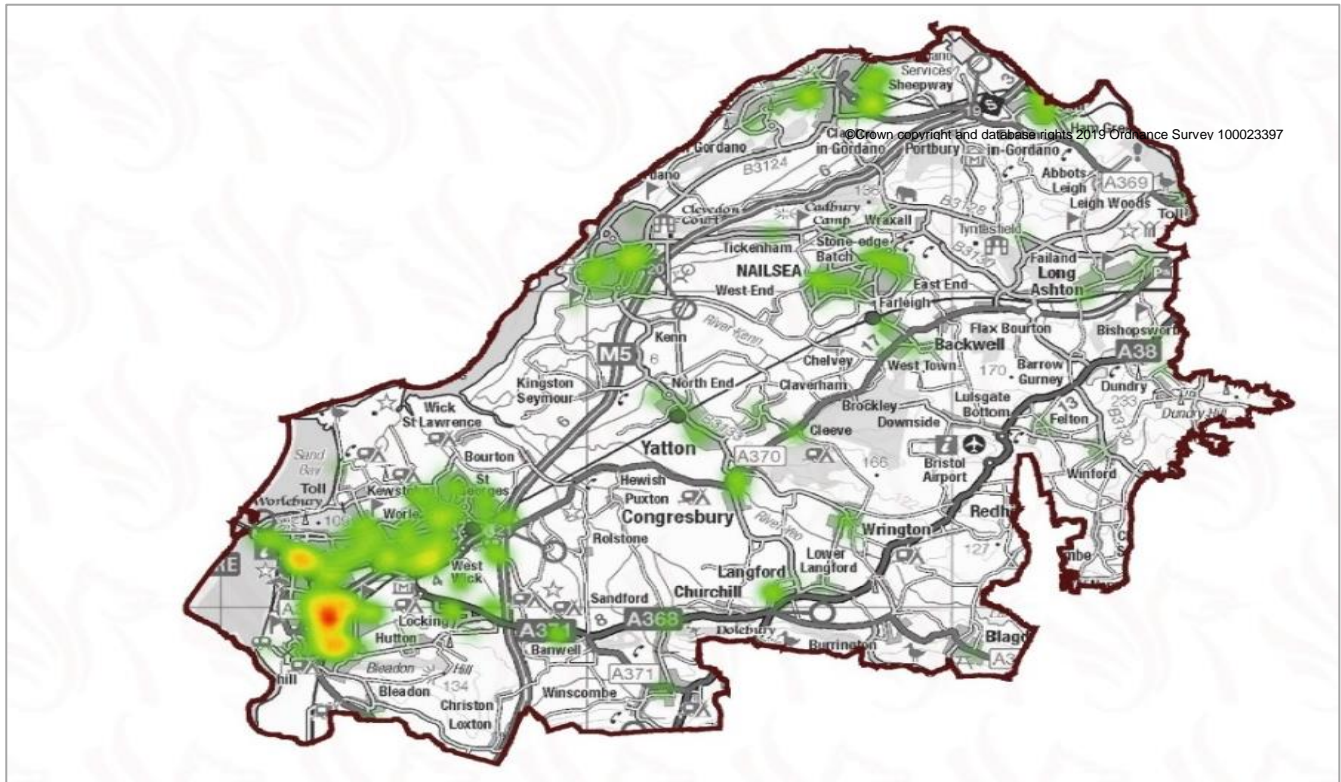


A hotspot analysis of Children in Need was undertaken at the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

Fig 1.9

Fig 1.9 shows several significant hotspots within Weston-super-Mare but also smaller hotspots across other areas of the district.

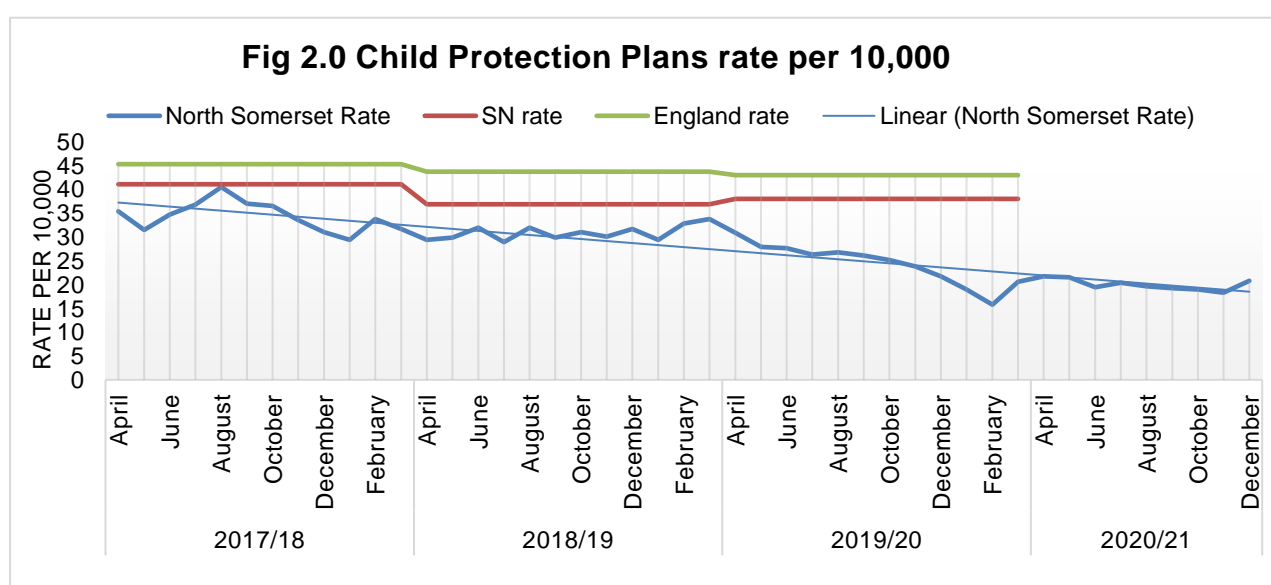
Children in Need Q4 2019/20



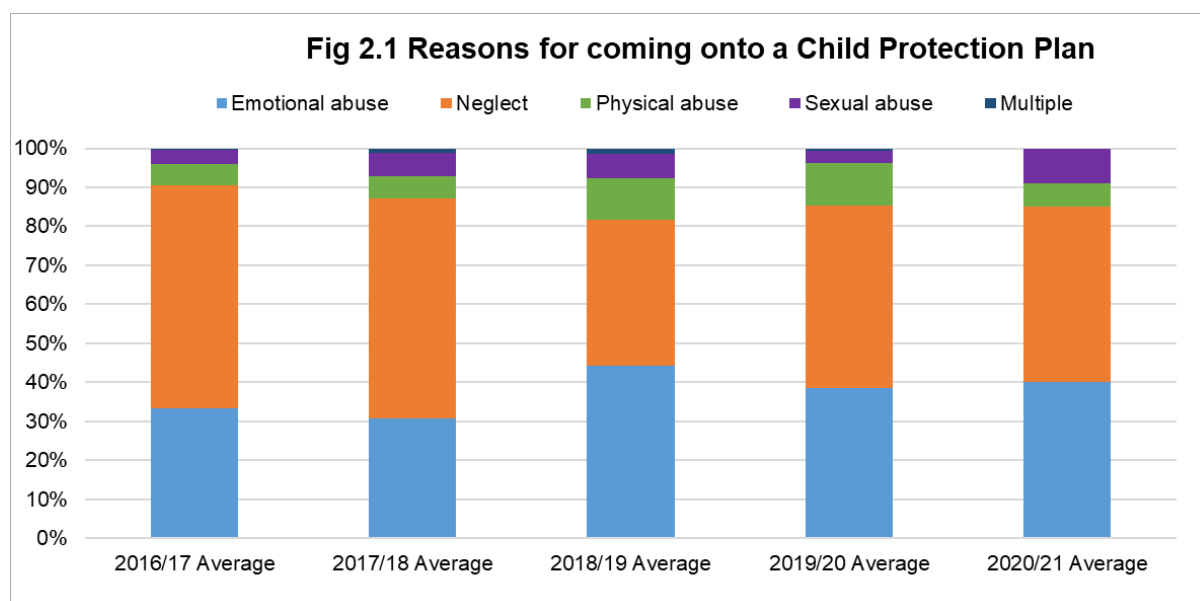
Child Protection Plans

Some children are in need of statutory intervention because they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. In this case 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 and the child will be subject of this 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.

At the end of Quarter 3 2020/21, there were 91 children subject to a Child Protection Plan. Over the past three years there has been a continual downward trend (linear) in the rate of children subject to Child Protection Plan and the rate is significantly below the national rate and the rate of our statistical neighbours, (fig 2.0).



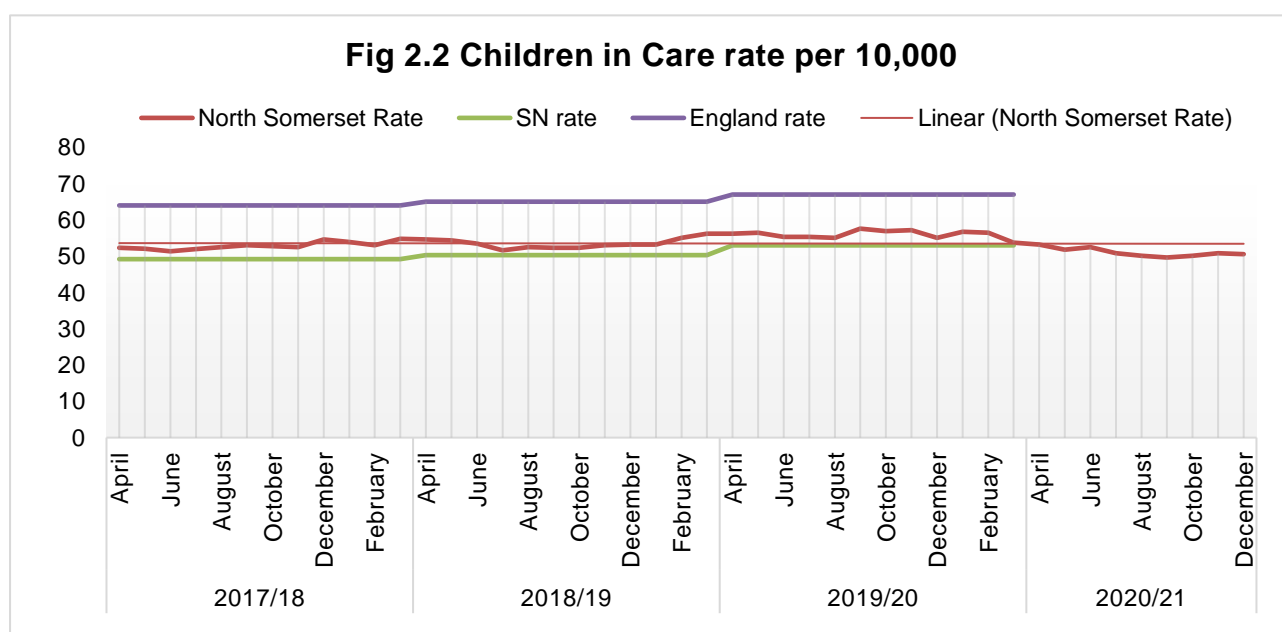
The principal reasons for children being subject of Child Protection Plans continue to be emotional abuse and neglect, followed by physical abuse and then sexual abuse.



Children in Care

In some cases, it is necessary for some 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 previously. Senior managers oversee all requests for a child to become looked after. Every such child's care plan is reviewed to ensure that their care plan meets their needs and wishes, and plans are being progressed and permanency for that child is secured at the earliest opportunity.

At the end of Quarter 3 there were 221 children in care, this equates to a rate of 50.6 children per 10,000 which is lower than both the national and statistical neighbours' rates. It is noted that of the of the 221 children 15 were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.



The reasons for a child entering our care has remained fairly steady over the past few year (table 1.2), with 'abuse or neglect' being the main reasons followed by 'family in acute stress', 'family dysfunction' and 'absent parenting (and other)'.

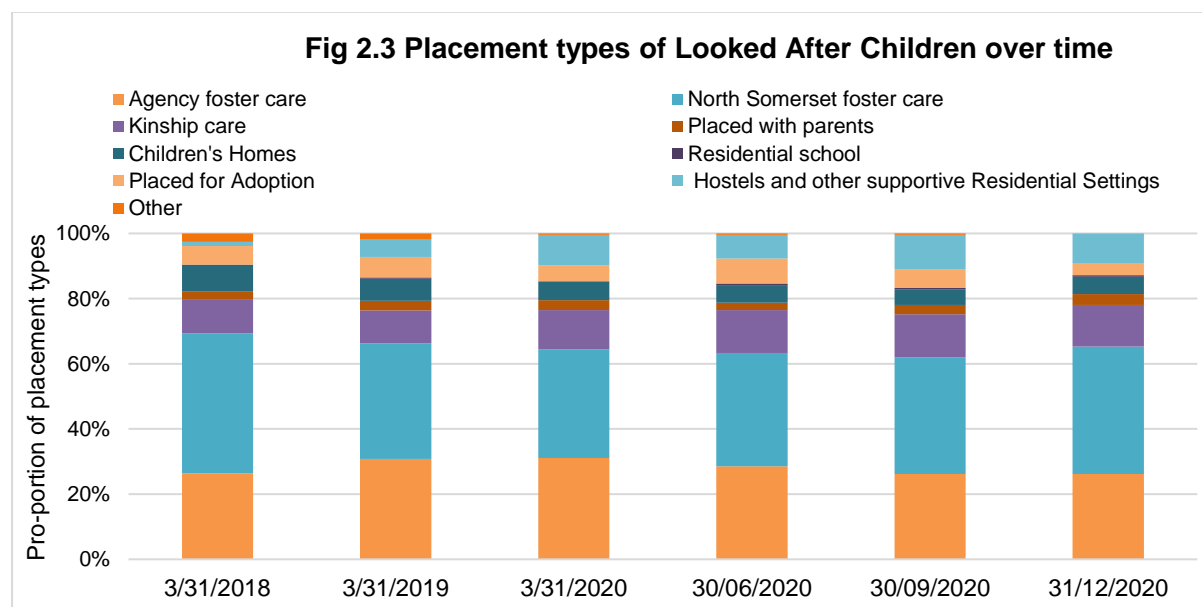
(table 1.2)	Abuse or Neglect	Disability	Parent Illness or Disability	Family in Acute Stress	Family Dysfunction	Absent Parenting and other
2016/17	43.0%	3.8%	2.7%	25.8%	19.1%	5.5%
2017/18	40.8%	3.4%	2.2%	26.9%	20.6%	6.0%
2018/19	40.4%	3.6%	3.1%	29.3%	17.5%	6.0%
2019/20	39.6%	3.5%	3.7%	29.7%	16.3%	7.2%
2020/21	37.5%	2.6%	3.4%	30.3%	16.1%	10.1%

Placement types of Children in Care

There are various arrangements for the living arrangements for children in care, known collectively as 'placements'. Nearly two thirds (62% at the end of Quarter 1 2020/21) of North Somerset's children in care live in foster care. Other placement types include children's homes, supported independence and adoption placements.

Fig 2.3 provides snapshot figures of where our children in care have been placed at the end of Quarter 3 in 2020/21, compared to the previous two quarters in 2020/21 and the year-endings for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20.

The percentage of independent foster carers (IFA's) has remained relatively stable during the last four years, fluctuating between 30% and 25%. As at Quarter 3 2020/21 37.1% of looked after children were placed with North Somerset foster carers, this is an increase of a 2.6% point compared to the previous reporting period in fig.2.3.



At the end of Quarter 3 2020/21, (where specified i.e. excluding adoptive placements), 32% of children were placed outside of North Somerset which is similar to the previous quarter. A high proportion (65%), almost two thirds, of children looked after by agency foster carers are outside of North Somerset, again similar to the previous quarter.

Foster Carers

North Somerset Council has within its own resource 105 registered foster carers.

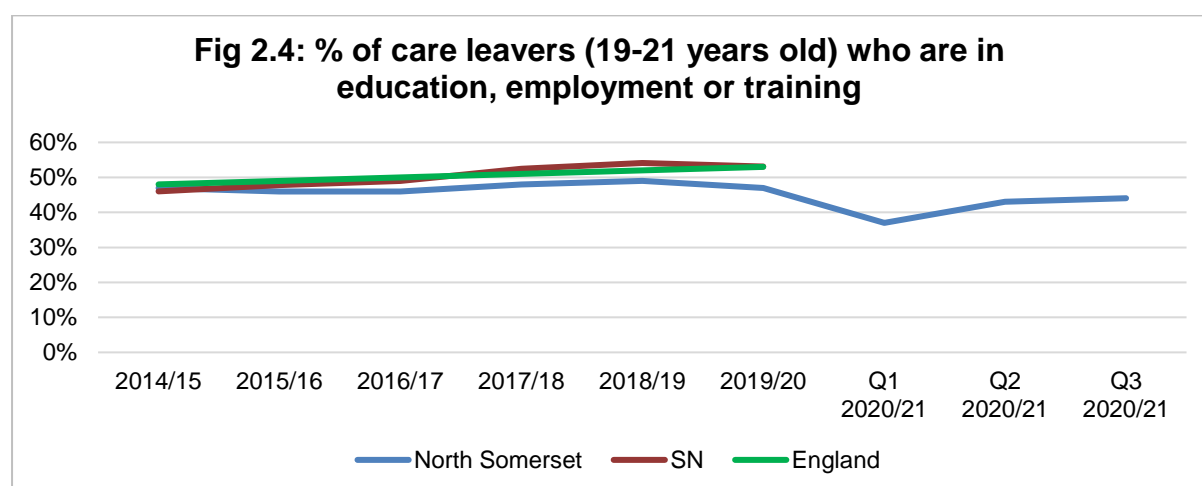
As of the end of Quarter 3 there were:

- 63 registered households that are known as mainstream foster carers that are 'sourced' by the council
- 32 kinship carers that are friends or family of the looked after child
- 6 Supported Lodgings households that provide support for a small number of older young people.
- 4 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 a number of young people that that were previously in their care. Key areas of support are in housing and accommodation and employment and education.

At the end of Quarter 3 20120/21, 44% of the care leavers aged 17-21 years (41 out of 93) were in employment, education or training (EET). The rate for the past three quarters of 2020/21 have been noticeably lower than those of the previous three years (fig 2.4).

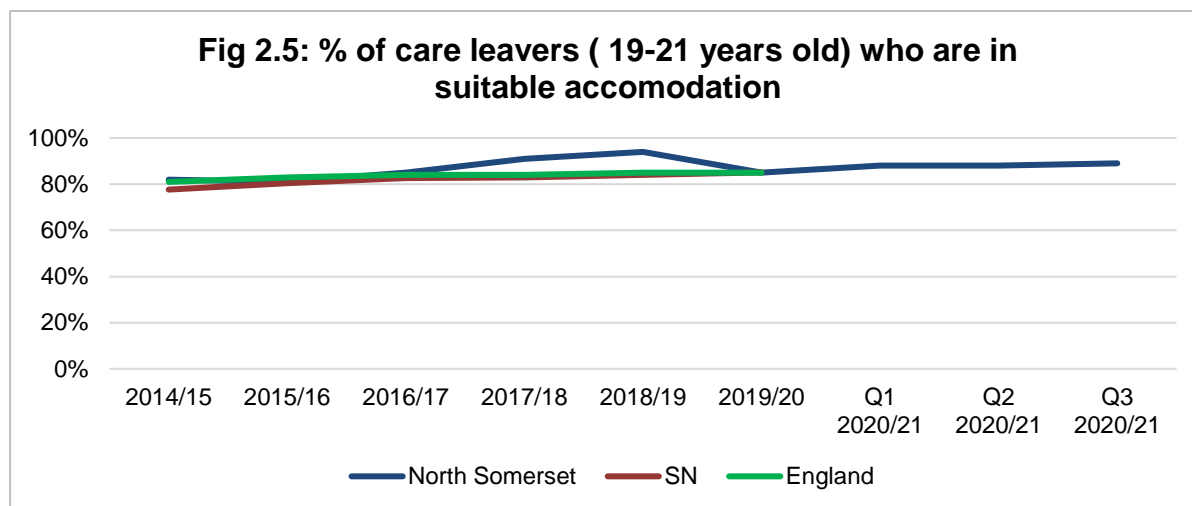


There are varying reasons for young people being not in education training or employment (NEET) including emotional and mental health needs, young parents caring for children, in custody, previously unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have not been given leave to remain in the UK post 18.

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). Additionally, through support services such as of Kickstart and support through the Social Impact Bond (SIB) RREBBOT west as well as targeted work in the leaving care team.

Care Leavers in suitable accommodation has ranged between 85% and 94% over the last three years seeing a sustained rate of 85% and above over the past 12 months. This compares favourably against the most recent statistical neighbour and national averages of 85% (fig 2.5).



Contextual safeguarding

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

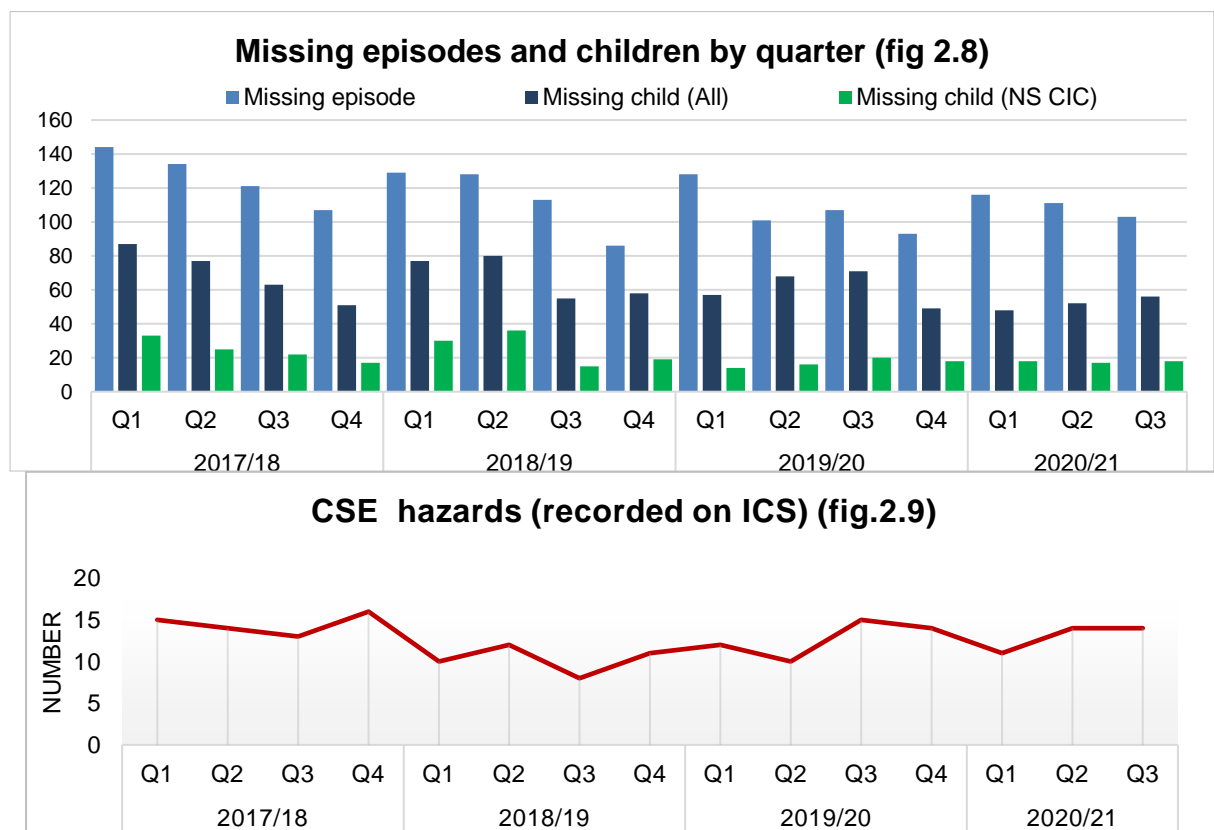
Therefore, children's social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors. Work on this area is another key area of our children's improvement plan working across the partnership.

Missing Children

During Quarter 3 2020/21, there were 103 episodes of children going missing relating to 56 children. Of these 56 children 18 (32%) were children in care. This compares to 20 children in care who went missing during the same time last year.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Fig. 2.9 shows the number of open hazards on the children's recording system (LCS) at the end of each quarter. At the end of Quarter 3 2020/21 there were 14 open child sexual exploitation hazards. This compares to 15 open hazards same time last year.



To note:

List of statistical neighbours (from LAIT, updated March 2019)

- 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 (2016/17 to 2020/21)
- P&C Annual Directorate Statement
- North Somerset Council Corporate Plan