





PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT TITLE	Children's Services Performance Report
DATE OF MEETING	3 rd January 2019
REPORT AUTHOR	Kelly Headley, Performance and Improvement Manager
REASON FOR BRINGING TO SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor the progress of Children's Services performance improvement journey • To understand impacts and performance and risk which may require decisions or change at a Strategic level

KEY:

	Performance is below target/requires attention (Red/Amber/Yellow used to denote extent of concern)
	Performance is acceptable/within tolerance
	Performance is good/exceeds target
	Direction of travel (Red/Amber/Yellow/Blue/Green used to denote performance level)

SUMMARY OF KEY AREAS OF PERFORMANCE

There are a number of areas, across Children's Social Care, where performance has improved or continued to improve in November. This performance will need to be maintained despite the challenging factors of a system under pressure and continued workforce churn.

Further improvements are required in those areas where performance is not progressing or where issues are still evident for a reducing number of children, in order for all children to be seen, assessed or worked with in a timely way and have plans in place to support progress, protection and transition to adulthood.

The proportion of case holding staff with a caseload of 20 or fewer continues to improve (86%, up 14% points since the beginning of 2018/19. The distribution of cases across lower caseload levels also continues its improving trajectory and significantly more children (an additional 765) now have a Social Worker who has a caseload of 20 or fewer compared with at the start of the financial year (75% of children up from 57%). It is recognised that there are areas within the service where caseloads are not where we want them to be and Senior Leadership team are reviewing these on a case by case basis, as well as feeding concerns into consideration of the structure as a whole.

This improvement results from significant additional investment in the workforce increasing case holding staff from 246 in May 2018 to 295 in November. However, despite welcome and retention payments, there continues to be significant levels of workforce churn with 10% of children having experienced 3 or more changes of in the last 6 months and this has been static over the last 7 months. Churn is higher in Safeguarding teams and a deep dive is to be undertaken to understand this further.

The vast majority of children (99%) have an allocated Social Worker. However, for a very small number of children, drift in being allocated a Social Worker has increased. This relates to awaiting newly recruited staff starting in post, timeliness of I.T. access (although the child is being held and worked with) and delays due to workload pressures.

There was a decline in timely decision making for children following contact in November (1827, 70.9% down from 2164, 79%) and the proportion of referrals leading to assessment remains lower than in 2017/18. All localities and service areas have had higher than target numbers of re-referrals over the last 12 months.

More children were seen within timescale following contact in October (395) and November (390). Performance levels are at their highest following the tightening of local standards nearly a year ago. However, it continues to be the case that, just under half of children had not been seen or had not been seen in a timely way (301) and for these children the pace of carrying out an initial visit to assess risk and engage with the family requires improvement.

Timeliness of completion of Single Assessments has been affected by the change in the way this is measured in November as legacy assessments that required further administrative processes or further work from Social Workers have been finalised. However, performance remains within tolerance of the 80% target. There is a growing proportion of open assessments that have been open for 21-45 working days and for more than 45 working days and grip will be needed to ensure that drift for children with overdue assessments is stemmed and the number of children in this group does not grow.

Children in Need seen within timescale continues to exceed target in November with the number of children seen equalling October's high (1735, 81%). However, the number of Children in Need is rising and there was therefore an increase in the number of children not seen in the last 4 weeks 396 up from 340 children. A high number of Children in Need were again closed who had not been seen in the last 4 weeks (425). There are a number of recommendations arising from the dip sample that has been undertaken which include increased oversight of the rationale for not carrying out a further visit and for case closure, improved communication with the family and child, use of alternative approaches to maximise the success of engaging with the child and/or family where engagement is the primary reason for closure, improved engagement with multi-agency partners to inform decision making around case closure.

95% of Children in Need who should have a plan have one however 5% continue to await one. The review for a similar proportion of children is overdue and 30 Children in Need have been on a plan for more than 2 years.

Timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences improved; up from 61.3% to 76% and is now within tolerance of target. 95.3% of review conferences were held within timescale in November and continues to be above target.

76.3% of children subject to a child protection plan had been visited in the last 10 working days; the direction of travel has been improving since in July 2018 (60.5%). Performance remains off target but is borderline with 85% of children being seen within 12 working days. 204 children had not been seen in a timely way in November. This has reduced from 338 children in July. 96.8% of children on a child protection plan had been seen within 20 working days.

While the number of annual admissions to care has dropped over the last 3 years, the number of children in care has risen by 6.8% over the last 12 months due to fewer children being discharged. 31.9% of children in care are accommodated under Section 20. 92.7% of children in care have an assessment or Pathway Plan in place (whichever is relevant to the child) which is up to date. 97.5% of children in care had an up-to-date Statutory Visit. Improvement is needed with regard to Dental and Health Checks and Pathway Planning with 22.7%, 28.7% and 29.2% of children overdue respectively.

40% of pre-proceedings cases are approaching or have exceeded timescale; this impacts 48% of children currently in pre-proceedings (55 children). The progress for these children has been reviewed in order to address delays and drive action.

79% of children who went missing in November were offered a return interview. 67% accepted and a return interview was completed, 12% refused. 62% of return interviews were completed within 72 hours.

Workforce

Caseload Levels

At the end of November, 3,996 children were open to Social Care.

- ↑ There are more Social Workers holding caseloads of a reasonable level. 86% of Social Workers (253) hold 20 children or fewer and this continues the gradual improved direction of travel, rising from 72% at the beginning of 2018/19. 97% of Social Workers (287) hold 25 children or fewer. **(See Fig. 1).**
- ↓ The number of Social Workers with higher caseloads also continues to see minor reductions with 42 workers responsible for 20 or more children in November, down from 69 at the beginning of the financial year and from 46 in October. **(See Fig. 1).**
- ↓ The number responsible for more than 25 children has decreased this month to 8 Social Workers from 15 in October. **(See Fig. 1).** High caseloads are flagged on a weekly basis and cascaded to Heads of Service and Team Managers for action.
- ↑ The distribution of caseloads has improved and more children have a Social Worker whose caseload is of a reasonable level. 75% of children (2959) now have a Social Worker who holds 20 cases or fewer, up from 57% (2194 children) in April 2018 and from 71% (2839 children) in October. 94% of children (3717) have a Social Worker who holds 25 cases or fewer; up from 88% of children in October **(See Fig. 2).**
- ↑ The number of case holding workers continued to increase in November from 284 to 295. **(See Fig. 1).**
- 68% of part-time Social Workers are carrying the full time equivalent caseload of 20 children or fewer. There are 9 part-time Social Workers (29%) who hold the full-time equivalent caseload of more than 20 children, this is the same as October.

Inactivity for Children

- Activity for children remains high with 98.9% of children (3952) having some form of activity recorded on their case within timescales appropriate to the child's circumstances.
- ▲ However, there has been no activity recorded for 6 weeks or more for 44 children in November, up from 31 at the end of October. The Director of Safeguarding regularly reviews children on this report to ensure they are safe and inactive cases are raised regularly at performance surgeries. **(See Fig.3).**

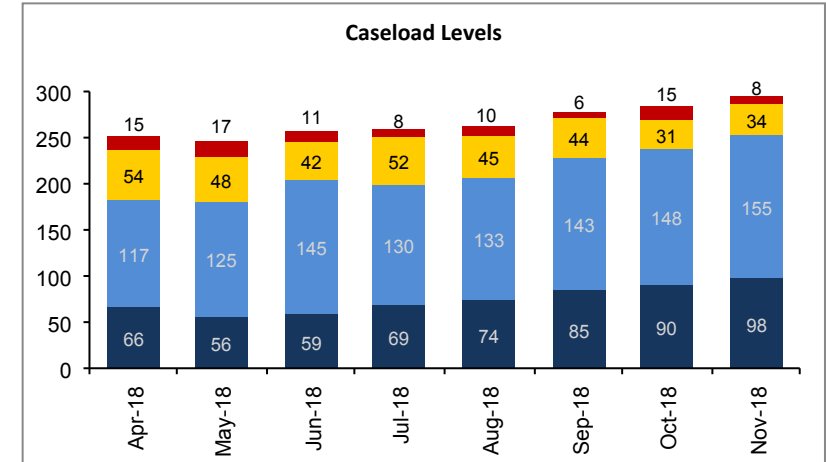


Fig.1 Caseload level breakdown

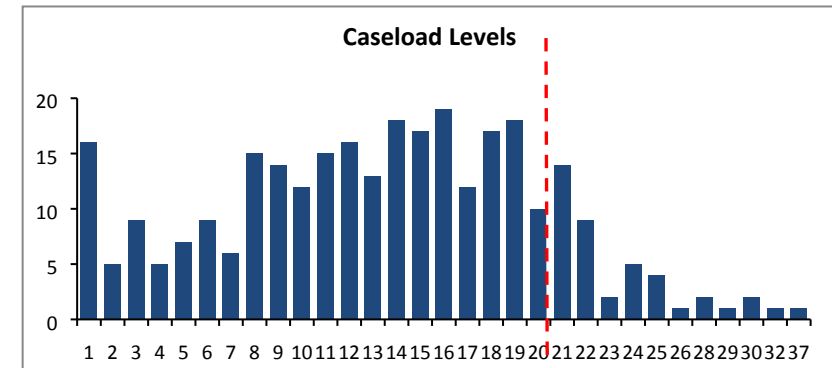


Fig.2 Distribution of caseloads across Social Workers

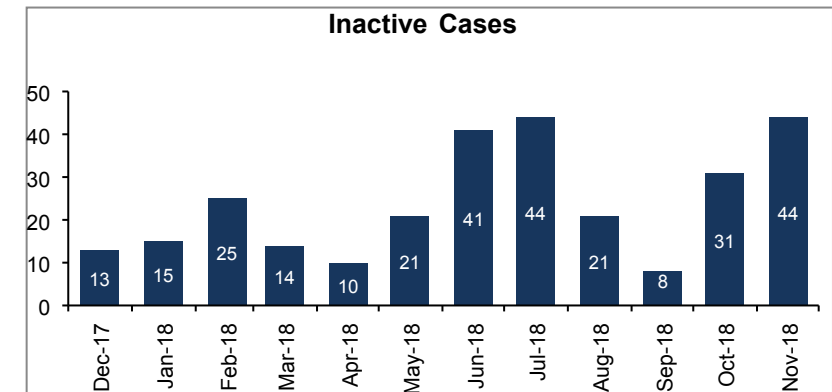


Fig. 3 Snapshot of the number of children for whom there has been no activity within guidance timescales

Children where there is a delay in allocating a worker or who are allocated to a Manager

→ 99.1% of children have an allocated case worker at the end of November (See Fig. 4). The percentage of children allocated a Social Worker has remained high throughout 2018 but continues to fluctuate on a weekly basis. This is an area of performance which still requires weekly monitoring and management by the Director of Safeguarding and the DCS in order to ensure that children are allocated a Social Worker in a timely way.

There were 37 children who were experiencing a delay in being allocated a Social Worker (See Fig. 5). There were also 16 children allocated to Managers across 6 teams (See Fig. 5).

↓ The number of children experiencing a delay of more than 2 weeks in being allocated to a Social Worker has decreased this month. 6 children are experiencing a delay greater than 2 weeks in being allocated to a Social Worker. 4 children (2 sibling groups) referred in August and October have recently had their allocated worker involvement ended and are awaiting the allocation of a new Social Worker. 5 children have been allocated to a Manager for longer than two weeks (Under 11's Permanence Team, Adoption Team, MASH and FoD CAT 2) (See Fig.6)

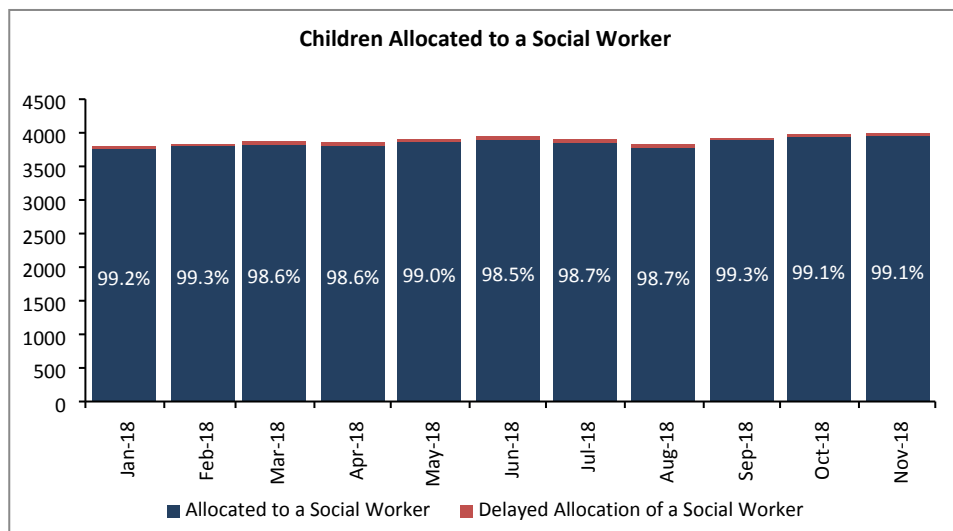


Fig.4 Allocation to a Social Worker

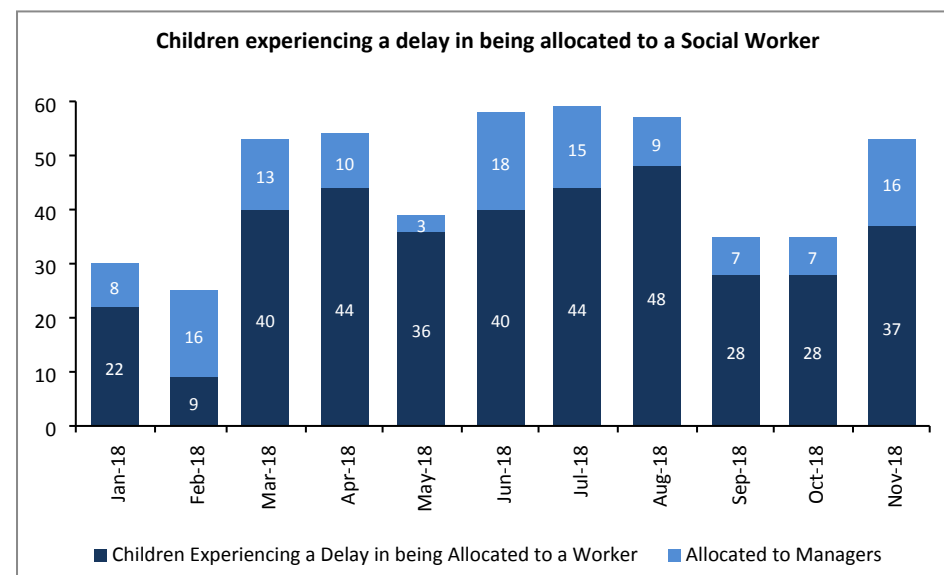


Fig. 5 Number of children with no allocated worker or children allocated to managers

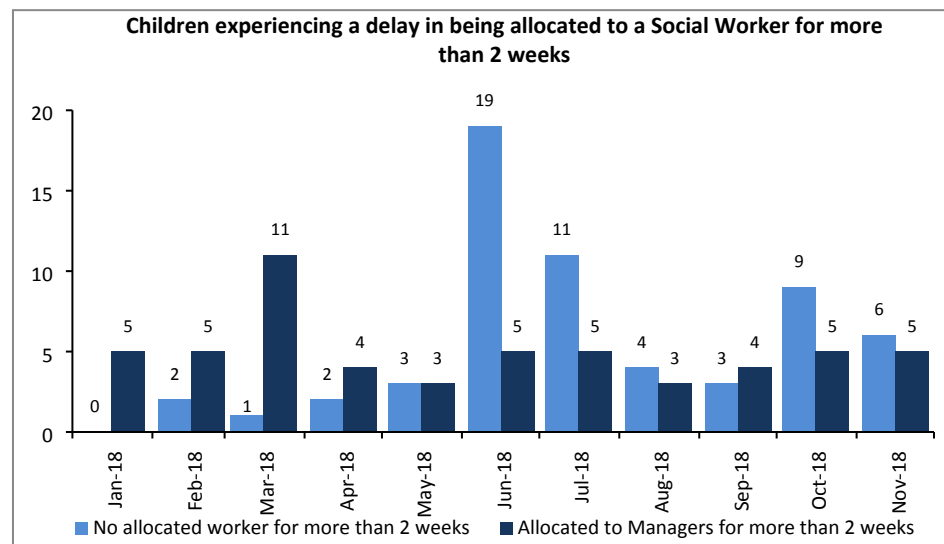


Fig. 6 Number of children with no allocated worker or children allocated to managers for more than 2 weeks

Social Worker Stability

- ➔ 89.7% of children have had fewer than 3 changes of Social Worker in the last 6 months, including 28% who have had no change of worker during that time (See Fig. 7).
- ▲ Workforce churn continues to impact children, with 10% of children experiencing a number of changes of Social Worker within the last 6 months (See Fig. 7). 80% of these children are held by Safeguarding teams. These changes reduce opportunities to build trusting relationships, identify and follow up on risk of harm and progress plans.
- ▲ Gloucester Safeguarding teams hold 20% of all children open to Social Care but 32% of all children experiencing instability of Social Worker (See Fig. 8).
- ▲ 80% of children have experienced more than 3 changes of Social Worker over the duration of their involvement with Social Care.

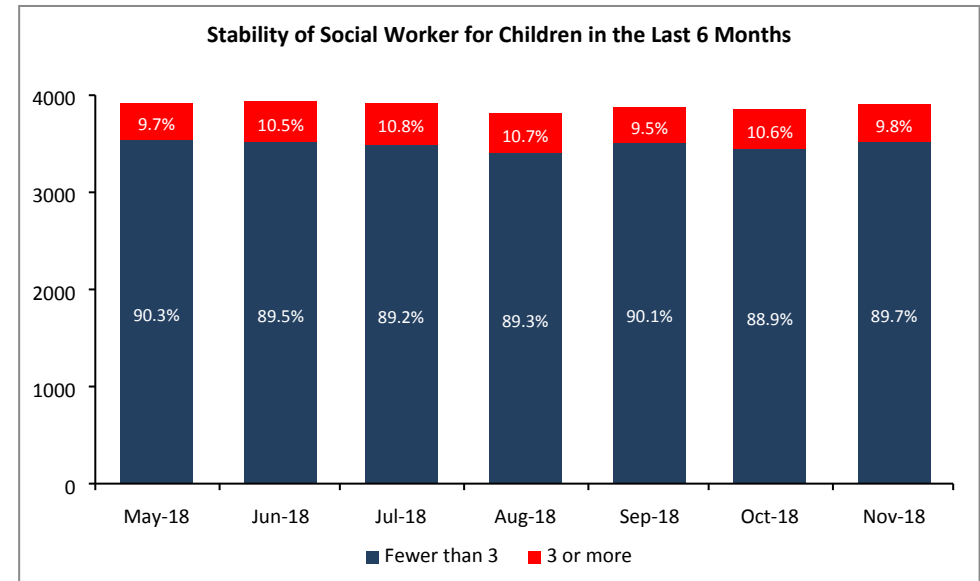


Fig. 7 Children who have had 3 or more Social Workers in the last 6 months as @ 30th November 2018

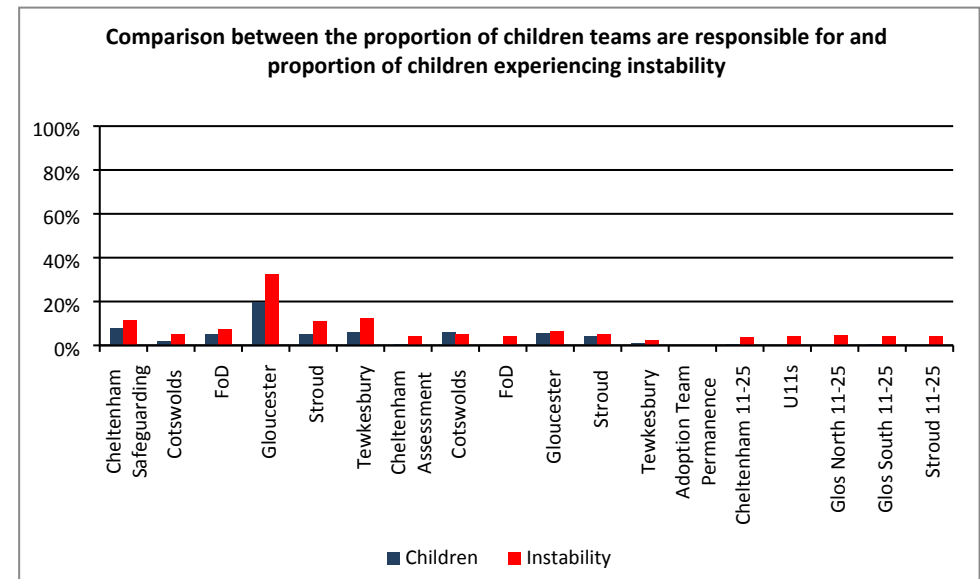


Fig. 8 Comparison between the proportion of children teams are responsible for and proportion of children experiencing instability as @ 30th November 2018

Contacts

- ↓ There were 2603 contacts in November. This is lower than the previous month. The biggest proportion of this reduction relates to contacts that did not meet the threshold for a Social Care response (**See Fig. 8**).
- ↓ Decisions for 70.9% of children were made within 24 hours (1827 contacts). This is a decline in the performance achieved over the last 3 months when decisions were made for a greater number of children within timescale. 78% of decisions for children requiring a Social Care response were within timescale (**See Fig. 9**).
- Decisions for 93.2% children (2403) were made within 48 hours. This is around the same proportion as October (93.9%).

Overall 48% of children (1235 contacts) progressed to a referral. 727 children progressed to a Social Care referral (79% of contacts requiring a Social Care response) and 508 contacts progressed to an Early Help referral (31% of contacts requiring an Early Help response).

There continues to be just over 50% of contacts requiring an Early Help response with an outcome of “Other” (**See Table 1**). A review of processes within the MASH has taken place and system changes are currently being tested. Once implemented, this will give a better understanding of how we are responding to demand.

- 7% of contacts (187 contacts) resulted in advice being provided. This may increase in coming months if the proposed changes to include calls to the former professional advice line in the MASH decision making process are made.
- ↓ Overall 2% of contacts (39 contacts) resulted in No Further Action (**see Fig. 10**). This has reduced significantly compared to previous months and has reduced from 158 contacts (6%) in October. Historically, as the highest referrer the number of Police contacts resulting in no further action has been the highest. The Police remain the highest referring agency in November (577 contacts) however only 2 of these contacts resulted in No Further Action. There has also been a decrease compared to previous months in the number of contacts resulting in No Further Action from Head Teachers/Teachers and Teaching Assistants. The highest number of contacts resulting in No Further Action were received from unknown sources (14); family, relatives or carers of individuals (7) and Social Care Professionals (4).

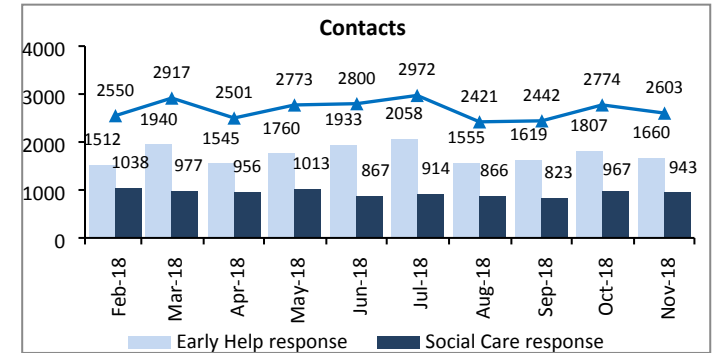


Fig 8. Number of contacts by threshold – trend over time

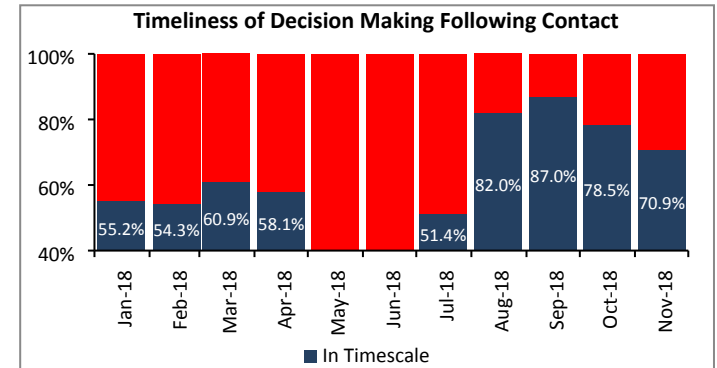


Fig 9. Percentage of decisions made within 24 hours following contact

Outcome	Social Care	%	Early Help	%	Total Nov 2018	%
Other Outcomes	2	0%	942	57%	944	37%
Progress to Referral	727	79%	508	31%	1235	48%
No Further Action	3	0%	36	2%	39	2%
Link to Existing Referral	3	0%	130	8%	133	5%
Mash Episode			38	2%	38	1%
Missing	1	0%			1	0%
Advice	187	20%			187	7%
Total Number of Contacts Progressing	923		1654		2577	
Timeliness Information Unavailable	13				13	
Decision Not Made at Time of Reporting	7		6		13	
Total Contacts November 2018	943		1660		2603	

Table 1. Breakdown of contacts by outcome and threshold

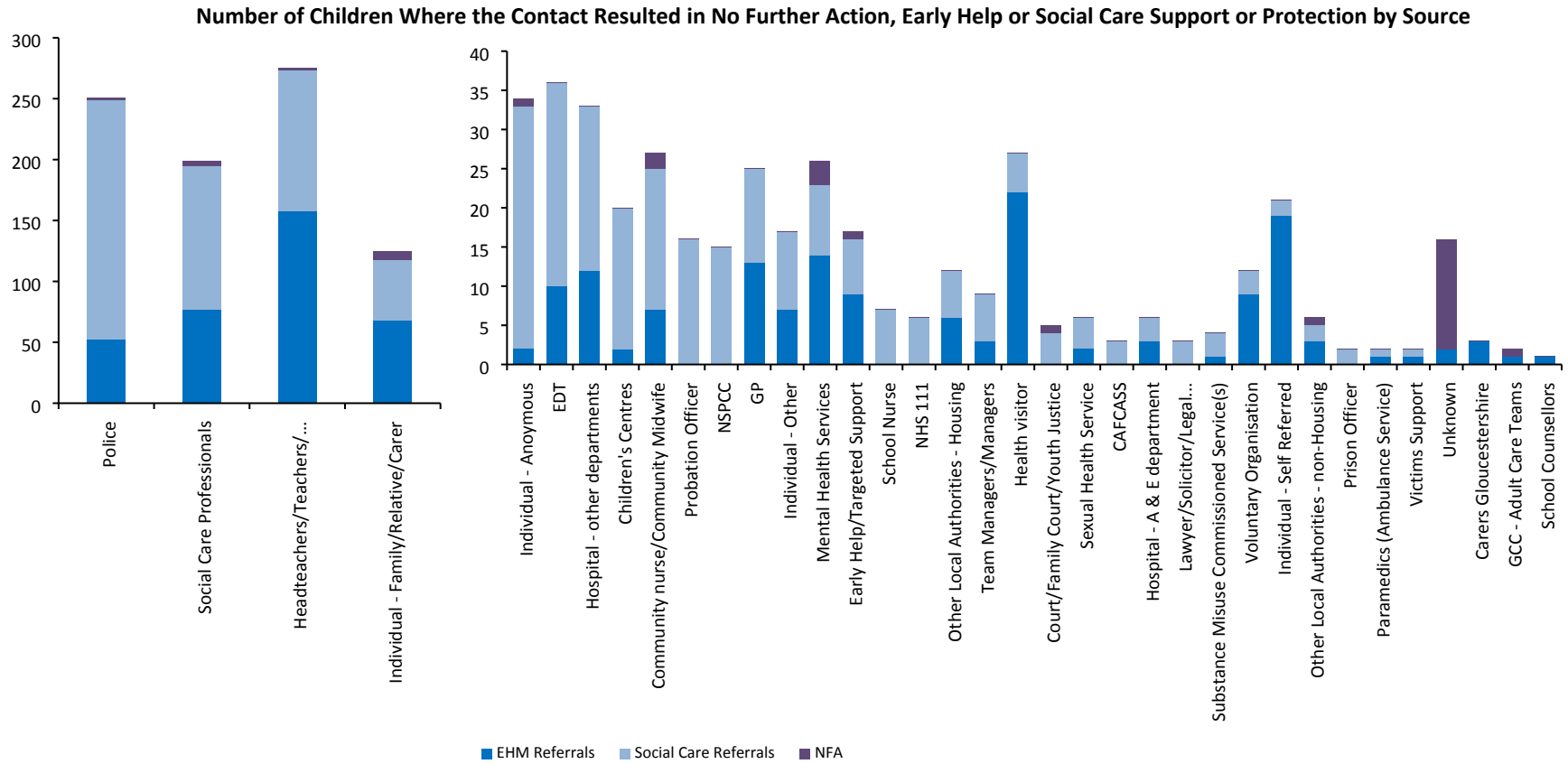


Fig. 11 Contacts resulting in No Further Action, Early Help or Social Care referral in November 2018 by referring source

Social Care Referrals

↑ The number of referrals received in November is similar to last month and is at the highest level in 12 months (727). The steepest increase has been in first referrals within a 12 month period rising from 406 in September to 537 in November (See Fig. 12).

Note: 36 Section 17 children are not included in the analysis below as, at the time of writing, they had not been seen but their referral had not been open a full 5 working days

▲ Of the 691 children who should have been seen at the time of reporting, more children have been seen within timescale (390, 56.4%) (See Fig. 13 and 14). 61.1% of children had been seen within borderline of target timescales (within 2 further working days of timescales) (See Fig. 15). Performance remains significantly below the 80% target and for nearly half of children referred, the pace of carrying out an initial visit to assess risk and engage with the family requires improvement.

● The identification of children meeting the S47 threshold can sometimes take time as information comes to light during enquiries and visiting. In November, 38 children were categorised as S47 more than 2 working days following contact. 80% of these children (30) had already been seen within 2 working days or within S17 timescales prior to being identified as S47 or were seen within 2 working days of categorisation. 3 children took between 3-8 working days following categorisation to be seen (9-11 working days following contact) and 5 siblings still haven't been seen.

↑ 108 children (15.6%) with an open referral received in November had not been seen and were outside of timescale (see Fig. 13). This has increased for the second month (85 children in October), prior to this the direction of travel had been improving, with fewer children not seen at the end of the month during which they were referred (down from 99 in July to 63 in September). The Cotswolds held the highest number of children not seen (25 children).

▲ At the end of November there were 19 children who had not been seen whose referral was received in a previous month. The Director of Safeguarding is investigating these referrals:

May	1 child (returning care leaver)
July	1 child (returning care leaver)
August	1 child
September	4 children
October	12 children including 2 S47s, 2 unborn babies and 1 returning Care Leaver

▲ At the time of writing, 85 referrals (12.3%) had been closed without the child being seen (See Fig. 13).

➔ 73% of referrals progressed to assessment in November. Conversion rates have remained low throughout 2018/19 compared to the outturn for 2017/18 of 84%.

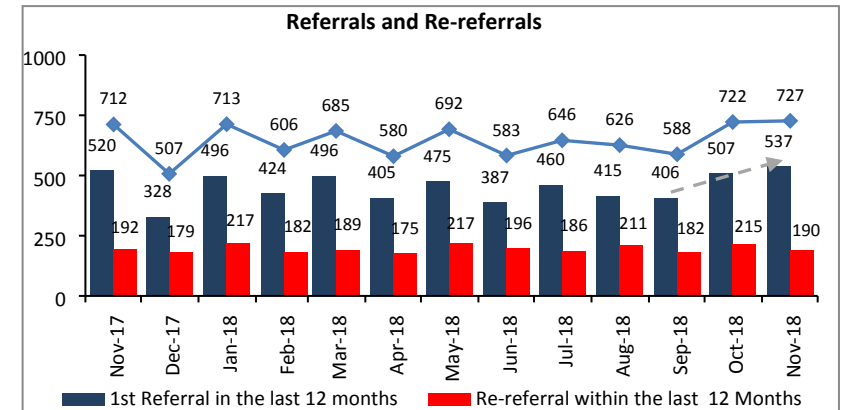


Fig. 12 Number of referrals over the last 13 months broken down by first referral within period and repeat referral in period

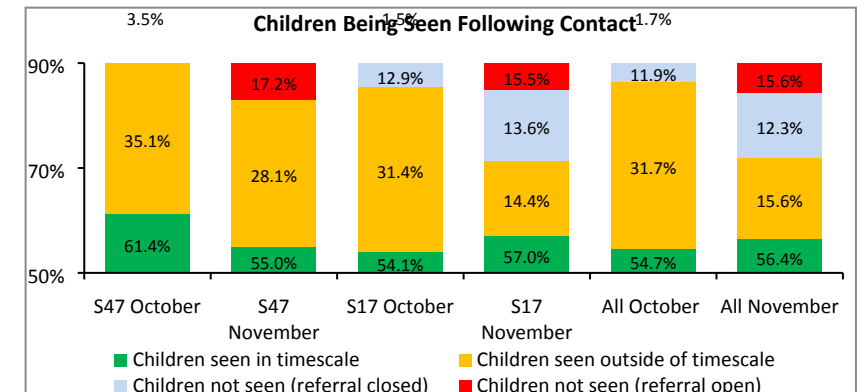


Fig. 13 Proportion of referred children seen/not seen – October and November 2018

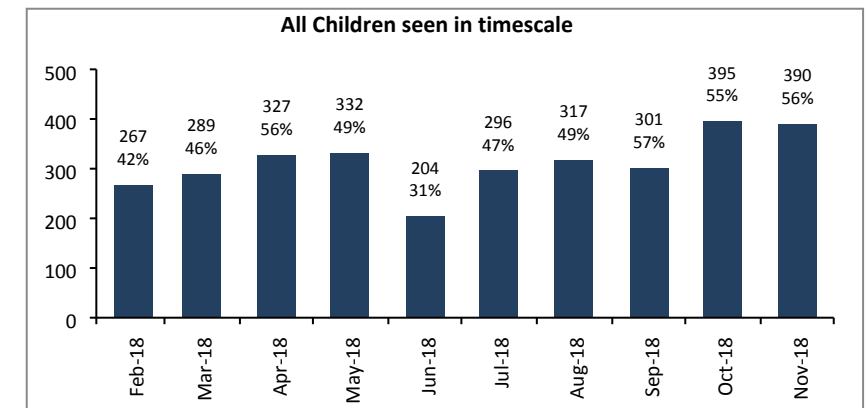


Fig. 14 Percentage of children seen within timescale (snapshot)

Timeliness of children categorised as S47 following contact

Timeliness of children categorised as S17 following contact

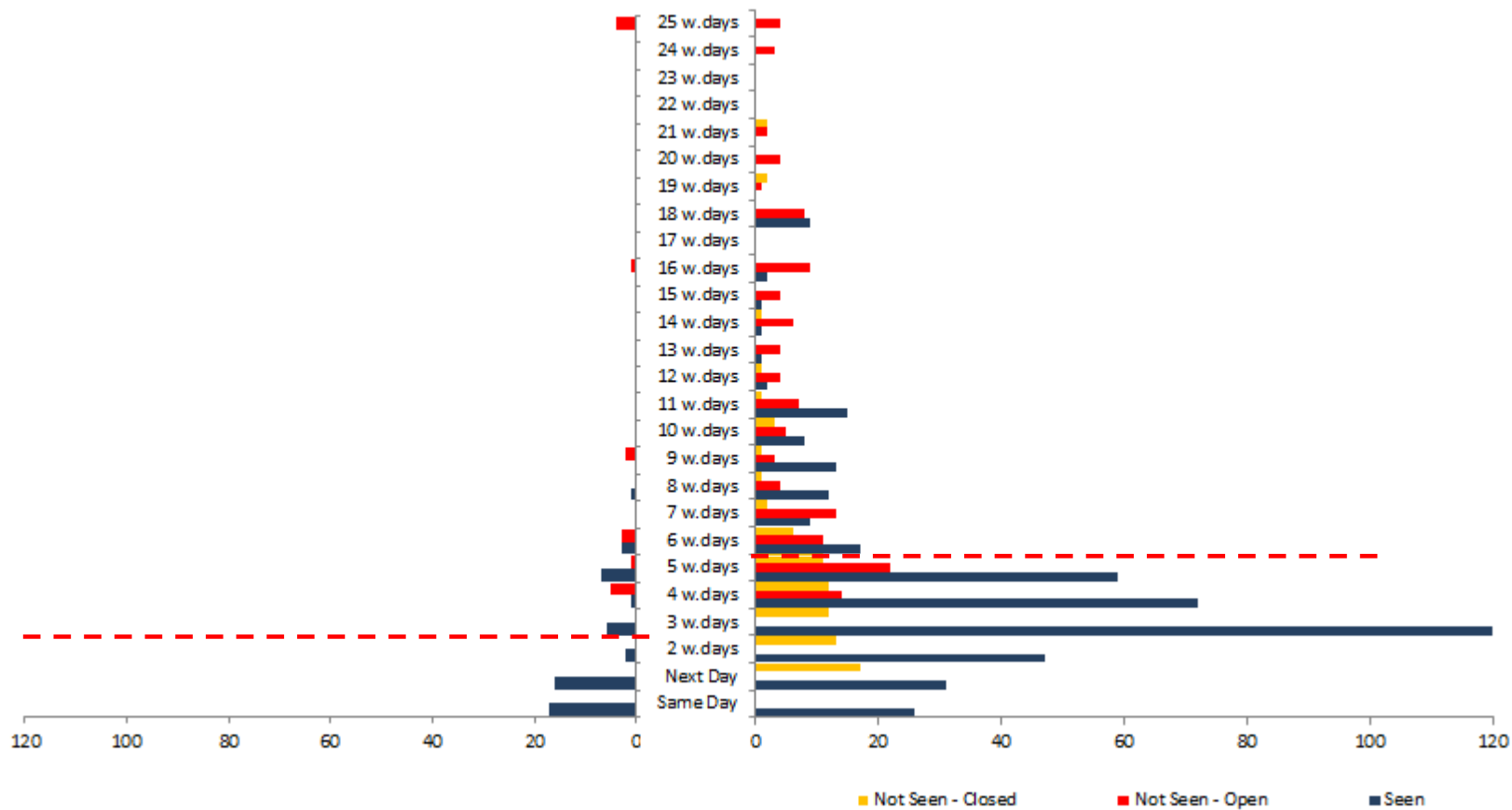


Fig. 15 Distribution of timeliness of seeing children following contact broken down by Social Care threshold

Re-referrals

- ➔ The number of children being re-referred to the service has remained high. 190 (26.1%) of the children referred in November had at least one previous referral within the last 12 months (See Fig. 12). 47 of the 190 re-referrals in November (24.7%) were closed within the month.
- ▲ Over the last year, all localities/areas of service have had higher than target repeat referrals (See Fig. 16). The Permanence teams have had the highest proportion of re-referrals.

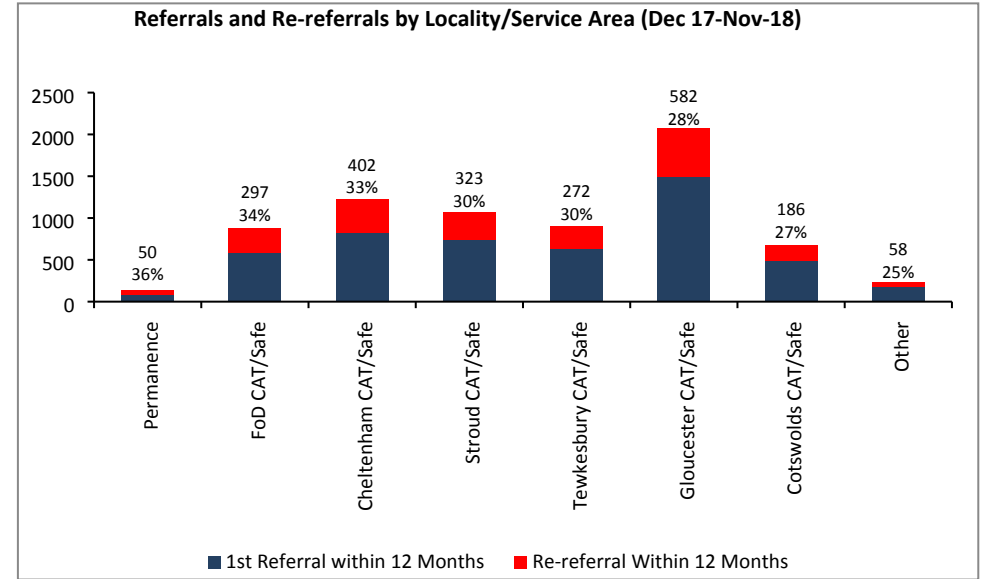


Fig. 16 Referrals received Dec 17-Nov 18 broken down by 1st and repeat referrals within 12 months by locality/service area

Single Assessments

There were 751 single assessments completed in November. This is an increase on October and September (659 and 516) and is higher than the average number completed over the last 12 months (687) (See Fig. 17).

- 76.0% of single assessments (571) completed in November were within timescale. This is a decline compared to October but remains within tolerance of target. (See Fig. 18).

180 single assessments were overdue, a breakdown of time taken to complete these overdue assessments is as follows:

Up to 10 working days overdue	51	28%
11-20 working days overdue	43	24%
21-30 working days overdue	39	22%
31-40 working days overdue	8	4%
Over 40 working days overdue	39	22%

Following the change in the way completion of assessments is measured, a greater number of assessments were classified as open. The rise in the number of completed assessments that were over 8 weeks overdue is as a result of data cleansing within teams where further administrative action or further work by the Social Worker was required in order to finalise the assessment.

There were 1192 single assessments open at the end of November.

- 83.3% of open assessments are within timescale. This has dropped below target performance which was being achieved in September but remains within tolerance of target. The number of open assessments that are overdue (199) is similar to October (204) (See Fig. 19). Further data cleansing is required as well as a focus on overdue assessments to increase the pace of assessment, analysis and support and protection planning for these children.

The proportion of assessments that have been open 21-45 working days or for more than 45 working days is growing and further management oversight is required to stem this growth.

The outcome of 68.0% of completed assessments was recorded as either 'NFA' or 'Other' in November. Changes to the system have been agreed which will give increased sight of outcomes following assessment in future performance reports.

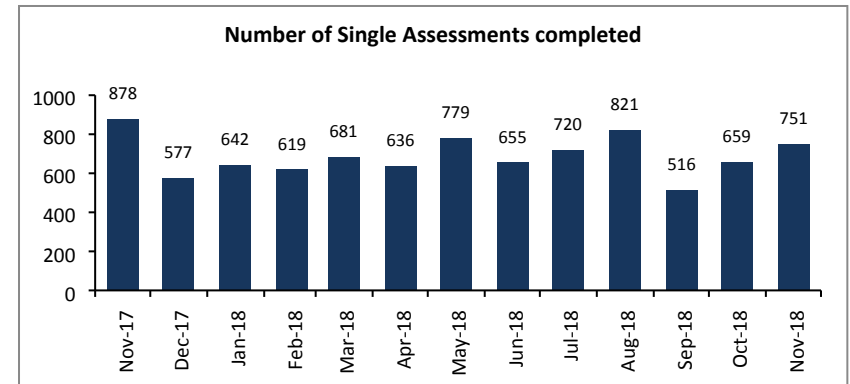


Fig. 17 Number of Single Assessments completed Nov-17 to Nov-18

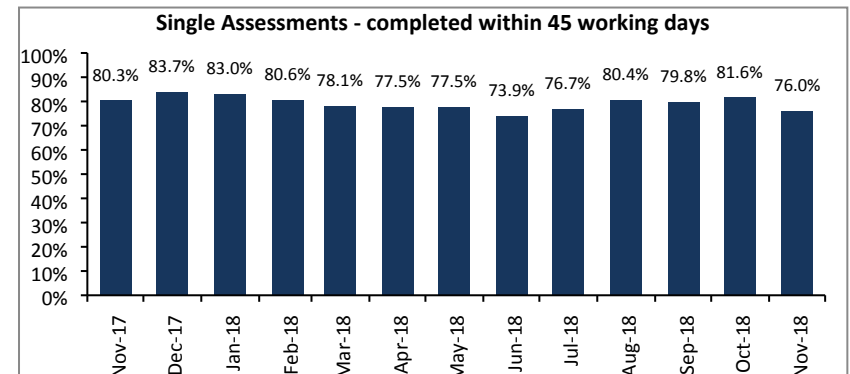


Fig. 18 Percentage of Single Assessments completed within timescale Nov-17 to Nov-18

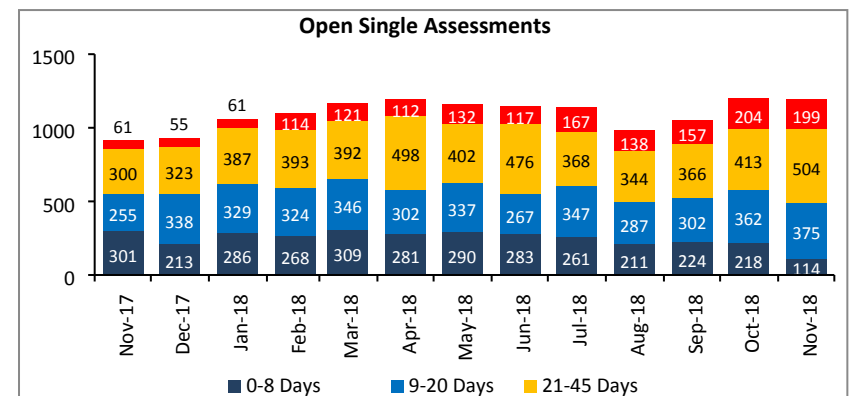


Fig. 19 Open single assessments snapshot at month end, trend over time

Safeguarding

Children in Need

- ↑ The number of Children in Need has risen by more than 200 children over the last three months from a 12 month low in August of 1913 to 2131 at the end of November.
- ★ More children were seen within timescale in October and November. 81% (1735) of children had been seen within the last 4 weeks at the end of November; this is above the target of 80% (See Fig. 20). In November, Tewkesbury Assessment team had seen 100% (105) of their Children in Need within timescales. The majority of the Assessment teams and Safeguarding teams were within tolerance of, or above target for seeing their Children in Need within timescales (See Table 2).
- ▲ More children had also not been seen within timescale during November (396 up from 340 in October) an increase from October but an improvement compared with earlier in the year.
- ▲ Due to significant staff churn over the last few months, the Cotswolds Assessment team and Safeguarding team are significant outliers with the highest proportion of Children in Need not seen within timescale: 55% (122 children) of the Children in Need held by the teams (See Table 2).
- ★ 99% of children have been seen within the last 3 months.
- ▲ There are 25 children who have not been seen for 3 months or more.
- ▲ 425 Children in Need were closed in October having not been seen in more than 4 weeks.
- 92.7% of children have been classified as a Child in Need for 12 months or less. This is within tolerance of the target of 97%. The number of children classified as a Child in Need for more than 12 months has reduced gradually since July 2018 down from 169 to 145 children at the end of November (See Fig. 21).
- ➔ 24 children are receiving short breaks and are on long-term plans. A further 30 children have been on a plan for more than 2 years which may indicate an issue with sufficient progress being made for these children in a timely way.

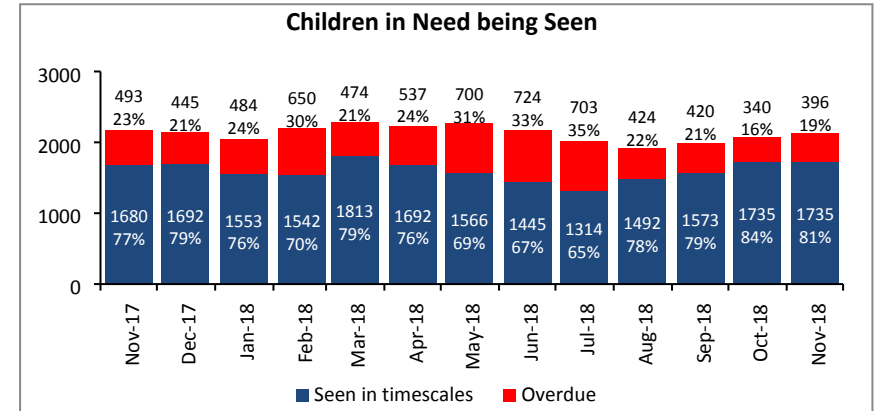


Fig.20 Percentage of Children in Need seen or not seen within timescales by Safeguarding and Assessment teams

Children in Need Seen In Timescales

	Assessment Teams		Safeguarding Teams	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Cheltenham	98%	2%	74%	26%
Cotswolds	46%	54%	44%	56%
Forest of Dean	75%	25%	80%	20%
Gloucester	96%	4%	83%	17%
Stroud	90%	10%	76%	24%
Tewkesbury	100%	0%	85%	15%
Total	84%	16%	79%	21%

Table 2 Percentage of Children in Need seen or not seen within timescales by Safeguarding and Assessment teams

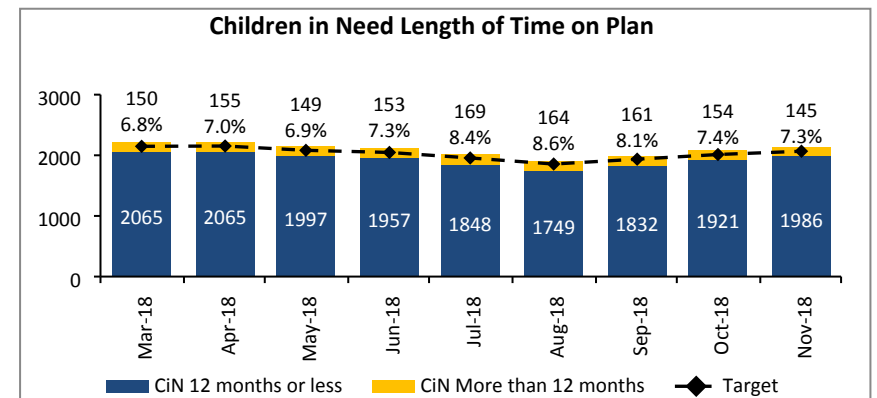


Fig. 21 Length of time as Child in Need

- ↓ 106 children (5.0%) have been classified as a Child in Need for 3 or more months and have no plan; 6 of these have been classified as a Child in Need for more than 12 months. 9 children with no recorded plan had been stepped down from a protection plan. **(See Fig. 22).**
- ↓ 117 (5.5%) Children in Need have had an open plan for 3 months or more and have had no recorded review of their plan. 32 of these children have stepped down from Child Protection Plans. **(See Fig. 22).**

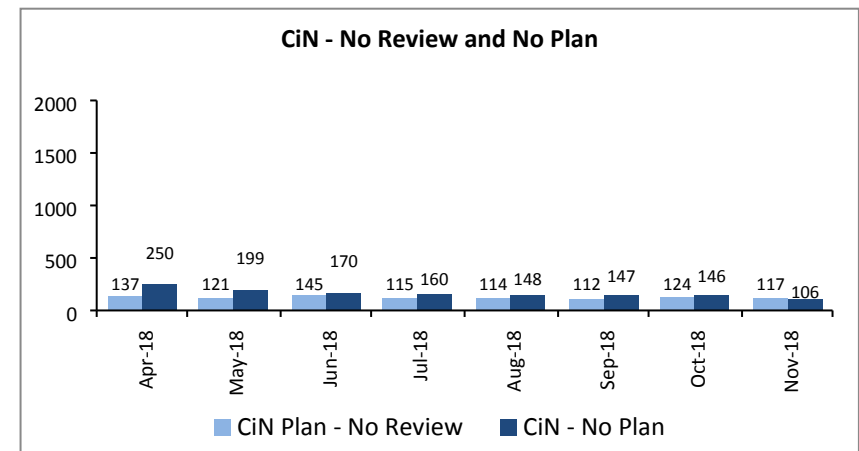


Fig. 22 CiN on Plans for 3 months or more with no review & Child open as S17 for 3 months or more and No Plan.

Strategy Discussions

Note: It is evident that in some cases the Strategy Discussion pathway has been opened on Liquid Logic without any indication that a strategy discuss has been requested or held. The reasons for this are being explored and these 88 cases have been excluded from the count together with one Strategy Discussion where the requested date was recorded as being after the date of the Strategy Discussion.

▲ 311 Strategy Discussions took place in November, 295 of these were Initial Discussions and 16 were Follow Up Discussions. 275 Initial Strategy Discussions took place within 5 working days (93.2%).

▲ A small number of Strategy Discussions (7) are recorded as taking between 5-19 weeks from request. 4 of these children are held by the same Social Worker in Gloucester Safeguarding Team 7.

The decision for 79% of Strategy Discussions (246) in November was to proceed to an S47 Enquiry.

The attendance of Health has improved throughout 2018/19, up from 61% in May 2018 to 88% of the Strategy Discussions they were invited to in November. There were 33 Strategy Discussions where Health representatives (Health, GP and Paediatrician) were invited and did not attend and 12 where Health representatives were not invited. (See Fig. 23).

S47 Enquiries and Initial Child Protection Conferences

213 S47 Enquiries were completed in November. Of the 213 S47 Enquiries completed in November, the decision was for 99 (46%) to proceed to conference. The decision was made to continue with 75 single assessments following S47 enquiries (35%). The outcomes for the remaining enquiries were no further action (19, 9%), provision of a service (13, 6%) and legal action (9, 4%).

▲ There are 108 S47 Enquiries that have not yet been recorded as completed, although 20 of these do have a recorded outcome. Of the remaining 88 enquiries, 55 remain within timescale (63%). 33 enquiries are outside of timescale and 13 of these started prior to November.

90 initial child protection conferences were completed in November.

● 68 conferences were within timescale (76%, up from 60% in September and October). Timeliness is within tolerance of the 80% target and represents a 12-month high (See Fig. 24).

▲ 4 conferences took more than twice target timescales (30 to 54 working days); the outcome for one child was to progress to a protection plan.

Of the completed Initial Conferences, the outcome for 71 children (79%) was to become subject of a Protection Plan.

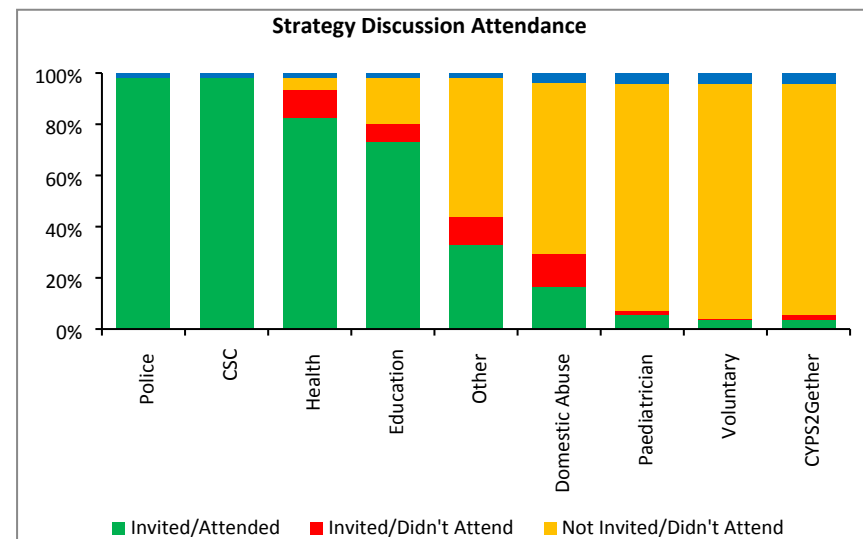


Fig. 23 Attendance at Strategy Discussions which took place in November 2018

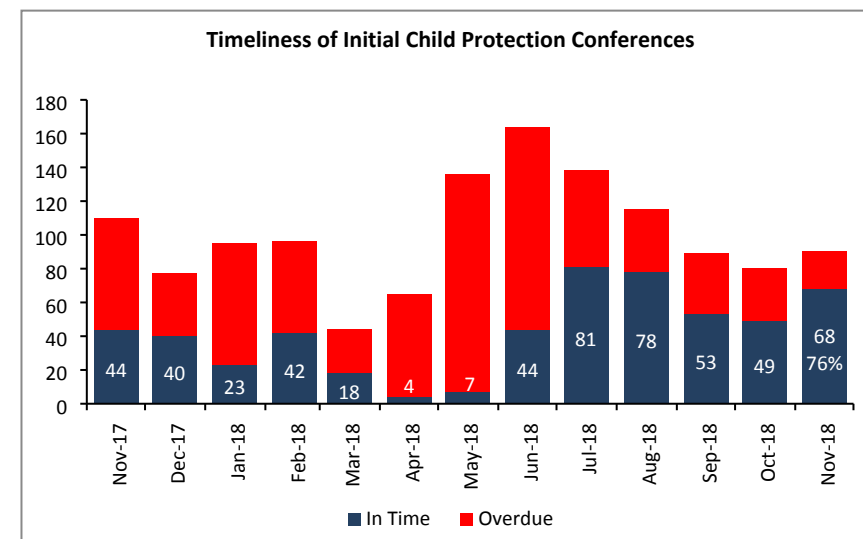


Fig. 24 Timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences

Child Protection Plans

- ↓ The number of children subject to a protection plan continued to reduce in November although it remains high, with 860 children subject to a plan down from 875.
 - ↑ Performance of seeing children at least every 10 working days has been following an improving trend since July 2018. 76.3% (656) of children subject to a protection plan had been seen within timescale at the end of November compared with the 12-month low in July of 60.5% (See Fig. 25). Performance is now borderline of achieving target with 85% of children having been seen within 12 working days. 96.8% of children had been visited within 4 weeks up from 91.5% in October. This supports our aim to ensure that there is strong and regular oversight of risk and that we are creating regular opportunities to build trusting, open relationships with children.
 - ▲ For 204 children (23.7%), visits have not taken place in a timely way at the end of November and continued improvement is needed to ensure that these children are safe (See Fig. 25).
 - ▲ 3 children had not been seen for between 8-15 weeks. These children are held by the Gloucester Safeguarding teams 7 and 2. Performance of seeing children in timescale is poor and has declined in Cheltenham and the Cotswolds 62% and 59% down from 72% and 63%.
 - ★ Tewkesbury and the Forest of Dean are performing above target for seeing children within timescales (Table 3).
 - ↑ Gloucester and Stroud have improved the proportion of children seen (79% and 74% in November up from 60% and 61% respectively).
 - ★ 100% of children were seen during their last visit.
 - ▲ Of the 544 children aged over 5 who have been seen, 68% of children were seen alone during their last visit (363). This equates to 181 children not being seen alone and means that the opportunity is reduced for these children to privately disclose risk, share concerns and let their Social Worker know how they feel and what they want to happen next.
- 96.7% of children have been subject to a protection plan for less than 2 years. Of these, 68% of children have been subject to a protection plan for less than 6 months. 19 children have been subject to a protection plan for more than 2 years, up from a 12-month low of 5 in June 2018. This includes 5 sibling groups of 3-4 children each. 17 of these children are held by the Stroud and Gloucester teams. All but one of these children are in pre-proceedings, while the remaining child will step down to CiN at their next review. Performance remains in line with Good and Outstanding authorities (97.8%) (See Fig. 26).
- ★ 95.3% of review conferences held within timescale in November and performance is above target.
 - ➔ The proportion of children subject to a second or subsequent plan remains high at 31% (267 children). There are 15 children subject to a 4th protection plan, the majority of these are held by Gloucester and FoD Safeguarding. Tewkesbury and the FoD continue to have the highest proportion of children requiring re-work at 41% and 39% respectively.

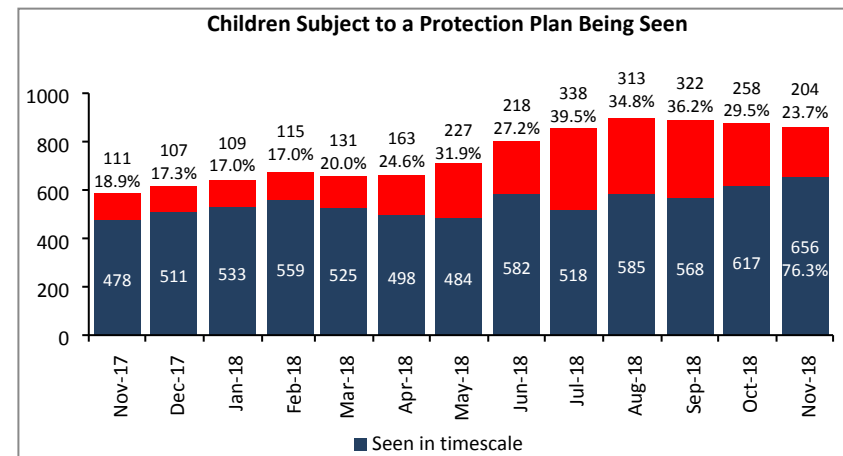


Fig. 25 Performance trend over time of children subject to a protection plan being seen

Children Subject to a Protection Plan Seen In Timescales

	Assessment and Safeguarding Teams	
	Yes	No
Cheltenham	62%	38%
Cotswolds	59%	41%
Forest of Dean	84%	16%
Gloucester	79%	21%
Stroud	74%	26%
Tewkesbury	88%	12%

Table 3 Percentage of Children in Need seen or not seen within timescales by Safeguarding and Assessment teams

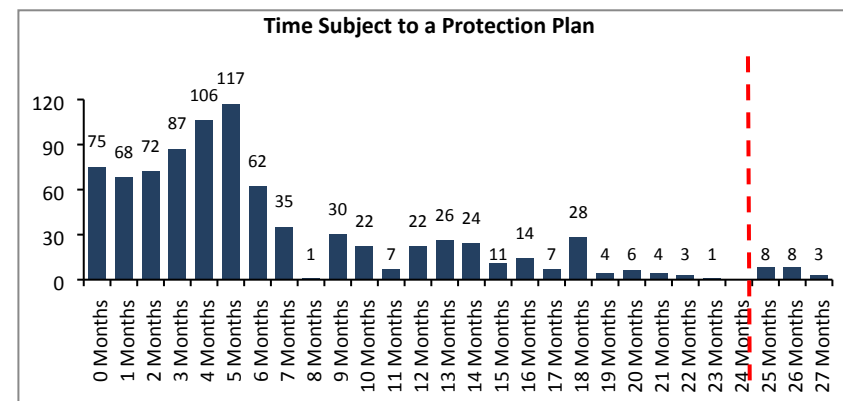


Fig. 26 Distribution of children by length of time subject to a child protection plan

Children in Care

↑ The trend of rising numbers of children in care over the last 12 month continued in November. There were 686 children in care at the end of November; this is 6.8% more children than in November 2017 (See Fig. 27).

↓ Admissions to care have reduced year on year and are down 12% in the last 3 years from 328 to 292 per year. Over the same period, the number of discharges has decreased by 20% from 294 to 245 per year (See Fig. 28). The volume of our children in care population is therefore increasing due to the number of children in long-term care (71% of children have been in care for more than one year and 34% for more than 3 years) (See Fig. 29).

This has a financial implication for the service as well as reflecting on our Strategic permanence planning.

There are 219 (31.9%). Children accommodated under Section 20; of these 51% have been in care for more than 1 year and up to 10 years. 14 children were admitted to care under a Section 20 arrangement in November equating to 67% of admissions in the month.

→ Re-admissions to care have not varied dramatically over the last 3 years. One-Fifth of our children in care have returned to care having been in care at least once before (See Fig. 30).

▲ Recording of admissions for children continues to be delayed with 28 of the 33 admissions to care in October not recorded in a timely way (85%) with some admissions taking more than 2 weeks to record. This is a key area of focus for the Strategic Lead for Children in Care.

Placement Stability

→ 52 children (7.6%) have had 3 or more placements in the last 12 months during their current period of care. There are minor fluctuations month on month but short-term stability remains relatively static. 15 children who have had 3 or more placements changed placement in November.

In addition, 144 of the 275 children (52.4%) who have been in care for more than 2.5 years have been in the same placement for more than 2 years.

Assessments and Pathway Plans

★ 92.7% of children in care (636) have an assessment in place or a Pathway Plan, where appropriate, that is up to date.

Note: a Pathway Plan which for young people aged 16 years and 3 months or older is prioritised, in the absence of safeguarding concerns, over a single assessment).

▲ 50 children do not have an up-to-date assessment (or Pathway Plan), 2 of these children do not have an assessment (or Pathway Plan) and have been in care for more than 12 months.

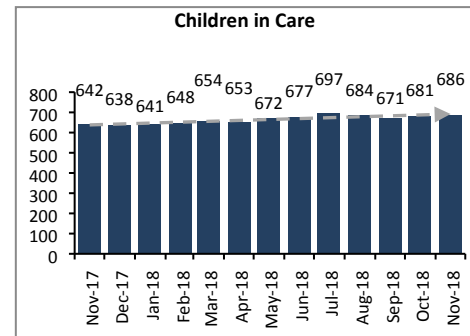


Fig. 27 Number of Children in Care

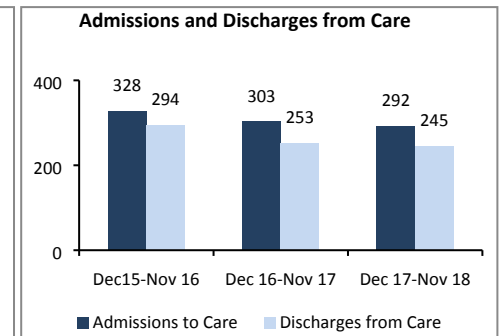


Fig. 28 Admissions and Discharges from Care

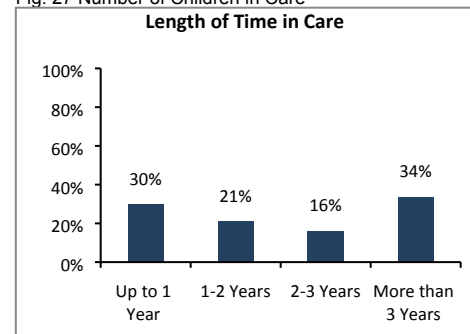


Fig. 29 Length of Time in Care

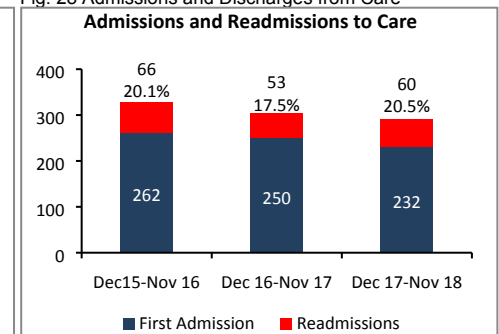


Fig. 30 Admissions and Readmissions to Care

➔ Of the 161 Children in Care who are aged over 16 years and 3 months, 70.8% have a Pathway Plan in place and the plan is up-to-date. 29.2% of those children who should have a Pathway Plan don't have a Plan in place (45 children) and for 2 children the review of their Pathway Plan is overdue. Performance in this area remains relatively static. Although the majority of children are allocated to Permanence Teams, 17 children are allocated across other teams in the service.

Health Checks

▲ 71.3% (489) of children in care have an up to date Health Assessment. The number of children with an overdue Health Assessment had been reducing since July but went up slightly in November (197 up from 186 in October) (See Fig. 31). For 147 children their last health assessment was over 6 or 12 months ago dependant on their age and for 50 children there is no health assessment recorded as taking place since they have entered care. The position remains unchanged since last month with the oldest admission for a child where no Health Assessment has been recorded dating back to May 2017.

▲ Initial Health Assessments were completed for 17 children in November, the care start dates for these children varied from June to October 2018 so the time taken from the child entering care to when their Initial Health Assessment took place was between 22 and 114 days resulting in none of these health assessments being completed with the statutory timescale of 20 working days of entering care.

Health Assessments have been a focus at recent Children in Care Strategic Performance Surgeries. Inconsistent recording has been identified as an issue, The process for Initial Health Assessments and how they, and review Health Assessments, are being recorded is now being reviewed.

Dental Checks

↑ 77.3% of children have an up to date Dental Assessment (530), leaving 156 children (22.7%) whose dental assessment is overdue. There had been some progress in reducing the number of children with an overdue Dental Check between July and September but performance has subsequently been static. (See Fig. 31). For 112 of the children who do not have an up to date Dental Assessment, their last assessment was over 12 months ago. For the remaining 44 children no Dental Assessments has been recorded since entering care, all of these children are aged over 2 years and have been in care over 3 months. The longest overdue Dental Assessment is 27 months.

Statutory Visits

★ 97.5% of children in care (669 children) had an up to date Statutory Visit at the end of November. Statutory Visits are overdue for 17 children and the majority of these are held by the Under and Over 11s Permanence Teams, however, there were 4 overdue Statutory Visits across Safeguarding Teams and 1 in DCYPs.

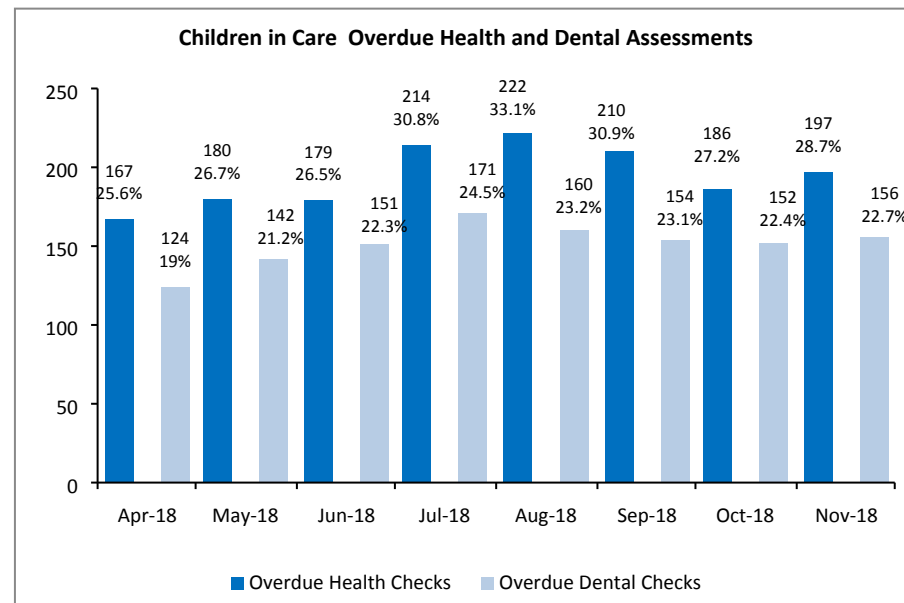


Fig. 31 Numbers of Children in Care with an overdue Health and Dental Assessment April 2018 – November 2018

Legal Proceedings

Pre-proceedings expected to exceed 26 weeks

▲ There are currently 50 cases for 114 children in Pre-Proceedings. Of these, 30 cases (60%) relating to 59 children are within timescales. However, 17 cases (34%) relating to 40 children have exceeded agreed timescales and 3 cases (6%) relating to 15 children are approaching 26 weeks (See Fig. 32).

Court Cases expected to exceed 26 weeks

▲ There are currently 105 cases for 163 children with ongoing court proceedings. Of these, 47 cases (48%) relating to 77 children are ongoing and are expected to exceed 26 weeks based on the date when their next hearing is due to take place. The two cases that have been in court proceeding the longest are expected to have been in court for more than 2 years at the Final Hearings.

Outcome of Legal Planning Meetings

Of the 19 Legal Planning Meetings held in November, 8 (42%) resulted in care proceedings, 5 (26%) resulted in pre-proceedings and 6 (32%) resulted in no further action (See Fig. 33).

Of the Legal Planning Meetings resulting in no further action:

- the threshold for legal action was not met in 3 cases
- the threshold was not met but may be met with further work by the Social Worker in 1 case
- the threshold was met but further work was required by the Social Worker whereby a second LPM would then be convened in 1 case
- 1 case was sent to LPM in error

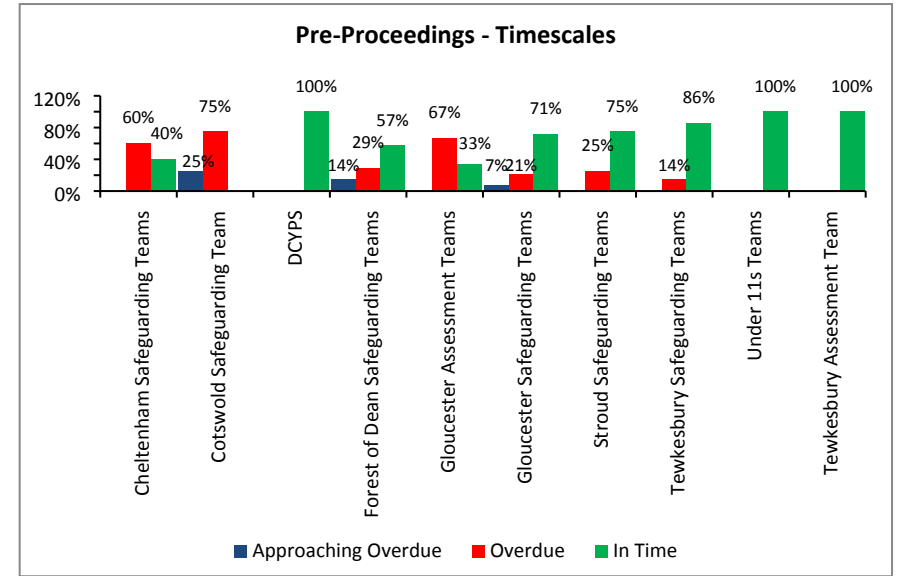


Fig 32 Number of Children in Pre-Proceedings who are within or have exceeded the agreed timescales

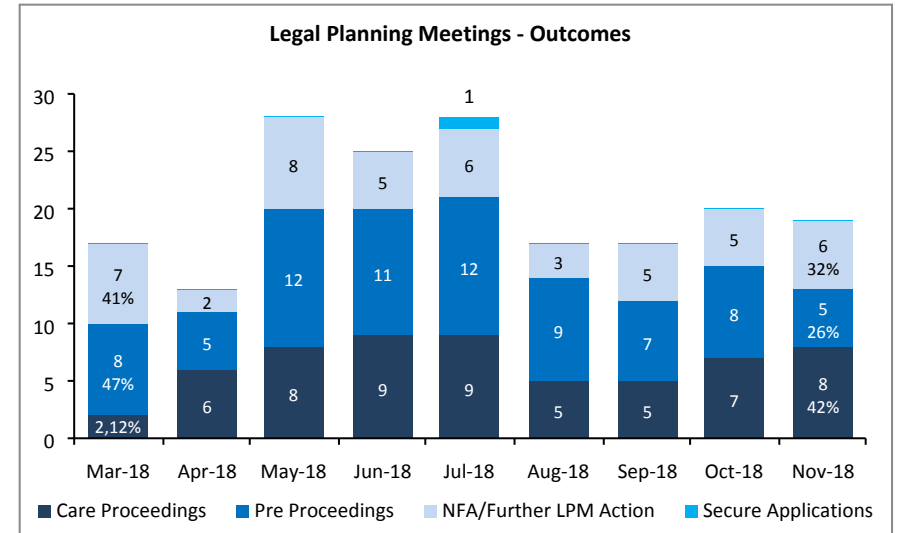


Fig. 33 Outcomes of legal planning meetings - monthly since start of the calendar year.

Missing Children

The number of children missing and missing episodes has remained at similar levels over the past 4 months following a peak between May-July. (See Fig 34).

- ▲ We have spoken to the majority of children who went missing in November. So far 79% of children (52) who had a missing episode(s) in November were offered a Return Interview of which 67% (44) accepted and 12% (8) refused. The completion of Return Interviews is within tolerance of the 80% target. Sight of risk for 33% of children who go missing may therefore be compromised.
- ▲ There are currently 21% of children (14) that have not had a Return Interview for any episode during which they were missing in November. (See Figs. 35 & 36). This impacts our ability to understand what is triggering episodes and the level of risk the young person is exposed to.
- ▲ 62% of return interviews were recorded as having taken place within 72 hours of the missing episode. 25 return interviews took place outside of timescale between 4-29 calendar days after the missing episode.
- ▲ Over the last 6 months, 7 children have had more than 20 missing episodes. Of these 7 children, 4 children have had a return interview following their latest missing episode and 3 children were offered and refused a return interview. The child with the highest number of missing episodes during that period had 40 episodes 10 of which were in November.

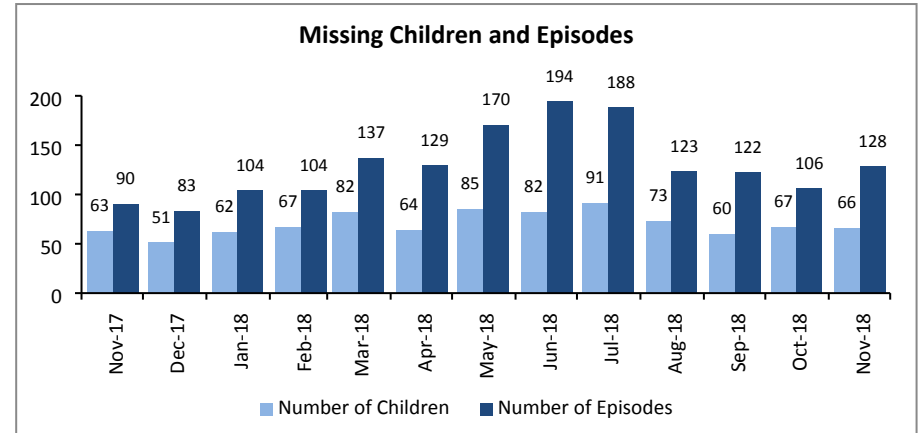


Fig. 34 Number of children who were reported missing in the month and number of missing episodes overall

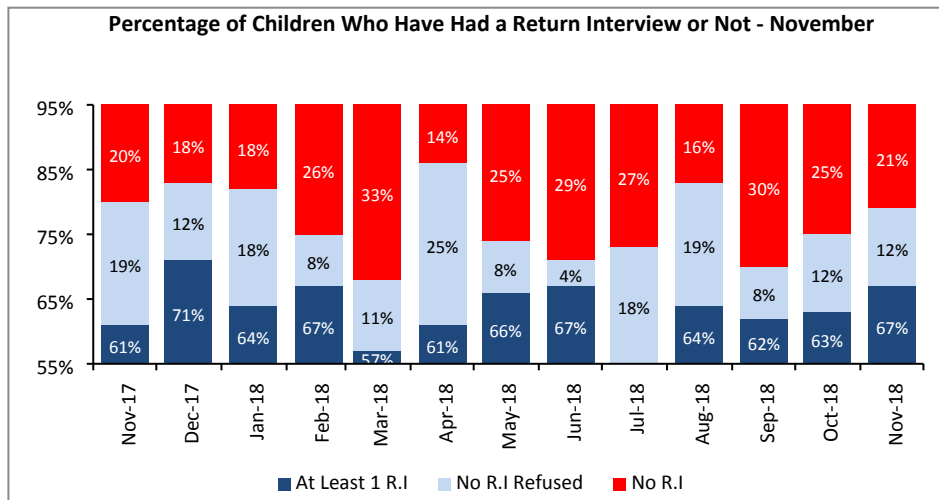


Fig. 36 Proportion of children whose missing episode(s) started in the month and whether they have had at least 1 R.I. subsequently or not

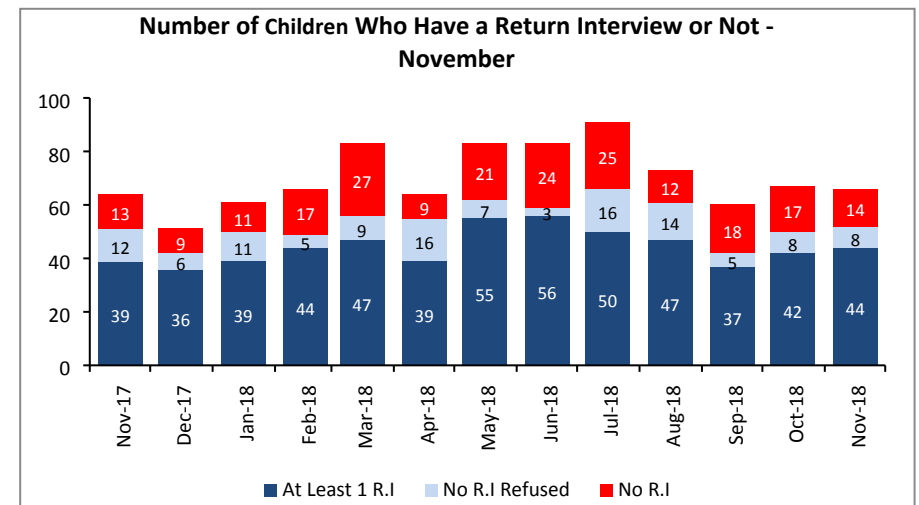


Fig. 35 Number of children whose missing episode(s) started in the month and whether they have had at least 1 R.I. subsequently or not