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| REPORT TITLE | Children's Services Performance Report |
| DATE OF MEETING | 14th January 2021 |
| REPORT AUTHORS | Kelly Headley, Performance and Improvement Manager Andy Dempsey, Director of Partnerships and Strategy |
| REASON FOR PRESENTING REPORT | <p>The purpose of this report is to provide Children's Services Leadership Team with an overview of performance against key metrics for November 2020. It highlights areas of good performance and the areas in which further improvement is needed. The report is intended as a high-level summary of key activity from contact through to permanence to enable Senior Leadership to understand and address key drivers of/barriers to improved performance.</p> <p>Child level interventions (for missing or overdue visits etc) will continue to be actioned through the locality performance surgeries, with information available to Managers through daily web reporting. This report will also form the basis of reporting to Corporate Leadership, Improvement Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Note: This report reflects the working arrangements put in place to mitigate the spread of Covid 19 following local and national guidance. Our practice standards have remained in place and we have chosen not to relax these using the freedoms and flexibilities provided by the <u>Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020</u>. The ongoing issues with ICT fragility, reliability and resilience continue to impact adversely on performance.</p> |
| REPORTING PERIOD | The data provided in this report represents a mature cut of performance data for November 2020 . |
| OVERVIEW | <p>Our initial response to risk in terms of timeliness of initial visits and initial child protection conferences is good and above target. However, performance of initial decision making and decisions for Red rated contacts experienced a drop in October and remained similar this month. Changes to processes within the MASH and ICT issues are likely to be significant factors impacting this change from what had been largely consistent high performance.</p> <p>Our subsequent response to risk arising is performing below levels that we've set to assure that risk is managed well for children. Completion of return interviews following a missing episode is declining as is timeliness of pre-proceedings. The timeliness of visits to children assessed as at Moderate or Significant risk of CE is improving but more is needed. These areas need improvement in order to secure the safety of children and to achieve permanence at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>We consistently perform well in terms of seeing children in need of support, protection or who are in our care in a timely way. We are also in touch with a high proportion of young people who have left our care in order to provide ongoing support. Seeing our Care Leavers has been impacted by lockdown restrictions lifting in July but performance is recovering and now within tolerance of target. The only group for whom we are not performing well are our younger Care Leavers for whom timeliness of visiting has been too low over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Children subject to a child protection plan have the opportunity to share their views at least once a month during visits but it would be encouraging to see more of these children completing My Views forms to support understanding and discussion of their views at their child protection conference. Participation of children in our care in their reviews is high.</p> |

Assessments and reviews for Children in Need, subject to a protection plan or in our care are broadly timely with performance above or within tolerance of target. However, timeliness of pathway planning for children in our care and Care Leavers has declined since lockdown restrictions were lifted in July and is below target.

Support around health and well being for children in our care has been impacted by lockdown with a growing proportion of children overdue a health or dental check. At a time when understanding of emotional and mental health is even more critical than ever, the proportion of children in care with an up-to-date Strengths and Difficulties assessment has declined and is off target.

Levels of repeat work remain high indicating that we are not yet getting it right first time for children and families and contributing to the volume of work within the system. The COVID pandemic may be affecting levels of repeat demand as re-referrals, repeat protection plans, readmissions to care and repeat CSE assessments were all lower prior to March this year.

Placement stability both long and short term remains a concern as is workforce stability although this is improving. Our use of Section 20 arrangements to accommodate children in care is within tolerance of target but this is against a growing volume of children in care overall Further work is needed to ensure that the right permanence plan is in place for children in order to bring us in line with peer comparators, against whom we are an outlier. The proportion of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation is improving and is now within tolerance of target. The proportion of Care Leavers in education, employment and training has also been impacted by the pandemic and while improving, is yet to recover to the level seen at the same time last year with performance still below target.

There continue to be delays in recording information for children across the system which impacts on management's line of sight for risk and the legal basis under which we are acting. In particular, issues with recording information on Early Help visits and assessments and the progress of Legal proceedings were strongly evident in November.

KEY MESSAGES

For measures performing above or within tolerance of target, it was a mixed picture in November, with performance in some areas improving while in others there was further slippage.

However, it is those indicators that are performing below target where the direction of travel is a particularly concerning one, with the majority of indicators moving in the wrong direction. This would suggest that work to address under performance is not getting the traction it needs.

Above or within tolerance of target/high performance

| RAG | Performance Measure | Direction of Travel |
|-----|---|---|
| | Initial visits (All, S17, S47) | Declined marginally (all and S17) and Improved |
| | Single Assessment completion | Declined marginally |
| | Timeliness of S47 enquiries | Declined |
| | Timeliness of ICPCs | Improved |
| | Visits to Children in Need and subject to a protection plan | Improved and Maintained |
| | CiN plan in place in a timely way | Consistently high for 10 months |
| | Up-to-date CiN review | Improved |
| | Children subject to a protection plan with an up-to-date review | Declined marginally |
| | Children in care accommodated under S20 | Maintained |
| | Statutory visiting, assessment and review for children in care | Maintained, declined marginally for the 2nd month and 100% for 8 th month |
| | Children in care with a timely health assessment and health checks for older children | Declined for the second month and Declined |
| | Foster Carer annual reviews, DBS and medical checks and unannounced visits | Declined (annual reviews and unannounced visits), improving 7-month trend (DBS), Maintained (Medical) |
| | Children in care Out-of-County and more than 20 miles from home | Growing pressure continues |
| | Care leavers in touch in the last 6 months and seeing older care leaver | Improved and Maintained (older Care Leavers) |
| | Care leavers in suitable accommodation | Declined for the 2 nd month (below target for 16-18 year olds) |
| | Timeliness of return interviews | Improved |
| | Timeliness of case supervision | Improving trend |

Below Target but not significantly so and/or not for a significant period

| RAG | Performance Measure | Direction of Travel |
|-----|--|--|
| | Initial and end to end contact decision making and decisions for Red rated contacts | Improved marginally and Unchanged |
| | Timeliness of Strategy Discussions | Improved |
| | Pathway planning for children in care and Care Leavers | Unchanged and Declined for 5 th month |
| | Timeliness of IHAs and RHAs and health checks for younger children in care | IHAs: Significant increase over past two months (47% up to 85%) RHAs: Remains low (56%) Younger children: declined (down 10% points in two months) |
| | Up-to-date dental checks | Declining trend |
| | Children in care with an up-to-date SDQ | Remained static for the third month |
| | Foster Carer supervision | Declined for the second month |
| | Seeing younger care leavers | Declined |
| | Care Leavers EET | Declined marginally |
| | Return interviews following a missing episode | Improved |

Significantly below target and/or off target for a significant period

| RAG | Performance Measure | Direction of Travel |
|-----|--|--|
| | Repeat referrals Repeat protection plans and readmissions | Re-referrals: Increased, off target for more than 12 mths Repeat protection plans: Reduced, off target for majority of 2020/21 Readmissions: Increased, off target for majority of 12 mths |
| | Children in care continue to experience short and long-term placement instability | Remained the same and Declined |
| | Stability of Social Worker and children in care stability of Social Worker | Broadly static performance for more than 12 months affecting one-fifth of children and Declined for second month |
| | Delays in recording across the system | Continued evidence of delay |

Note: **Bold text** indicates those measures that are those monitored through the Accelerated Improvement Plan

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Executive Summary

Contact Activity and Assessment

Timeliness of initial, end-to-end decision making and decisions for Red rated contacts all remained at a similar level to last month and were below target.

The Neglect toolkit continues to be significantly under utilised at the contact stage (3%). This requires improvement to support the level of vulnerability of these children being quickly understood and the right help put in place.

The timeliness of initial visits to children was good in November.

15% of children for whom MASH had decided that a referral and assessment were required continue to be closed within the month without the child being seen (equating to almost 100 children). Data shows an increased likelihood of the children being re-referred (on average 29% compared to 20% for those children where an initial visit was undertaken). For children who were not seen, the timeliness of the decision to close their case dropped from 83% to 67%.

Timeliness of completion of Single Assessments has followed a declining trend over the last 5 months and continues to need focus. More than half of assessments concluded with no requirement for a Tier 4 service and the, pace of completing proportionate assessments is still too slow. For a small number of children, assessments continue to take more than 60 working days to complete.

Early Help

Timeliness of decision making following contact remained low in November with one-quarter of families experiencing delays.

A significant proportion of episodes for families receiving advice, guidance and support or targeted support were closed due to non-engagement or withdrawal of consent (24% and 14% respectively). Repeat work remains high with over one-third of children open to Targeted Support having had a previous episode in the last 12 months.

Work is needed to obtain a deeper understanding of the two-thirds of My Plan/+ open for more than 12 months, in particular, those open to education. These plans may need review.

One-third of the work undertaken by Targeted Support is in support of children open to a Social Care intervention.

Timeliness of initial visits to children requiring targeted support work remains low (17%) as does the timely completion of assessments which have followed a declining trend from 95% in June to 18% in November. In both cases, this may reflect poor data quality and, if so, recording needs to significantly improve in order to accurately reflect performance levels.

Children in Need

We develop our Children in Need plans in a timely way and continue to see and work with our Children in Need regularly. Timeliness of reviewing Children in Need improved in November and is within tolerance of target but needs continued focus.

Child Protection

Pace of strategy discussions improved but remains below target. Timeliness of S47 enquiries remained high and timely completion of initial child protection conferences was above target and peer comparators.

We see and review the majority of children subject to a protection plan in a timely way. Capturing the child's voice could continue to be improved with around three-fifths of children seen alone during the last 10 working days; a decline from last month. More than half of children undergoing conference expressed their views by completing a My Views form. 15% of children who had a conference in November were referred to the Advocacy service for support.

Only a small proportion of children have been subject to a protection plan for more than two years and all of these are in proceedings.

Children in Care

Just over a quarter of children in care are accommodated under a Section 20 arrangement. Performance is within tolerance of target but remains an outlier compared with the national average. Proceedings are underway for just under one-fifth of these children in order to secure permanence arrangements for them.

The numbers of children in care have increased over recent years reflecting a national trend. A growing proportion of our children in our care are living in placements out of County (nearly a quarter compared to one-fifth at the end of March), although only one-fifth of these children live more than 20 miles from home. Three-quarters of in-house foster placement capacity is currently being utilised with work underway to better utilise available capacity and increase the number and range of placements as part of our Sufficiency Strategy.

The vast majority of our children in care had a statutory visit and up-to-date assessment at the end of October and all reviews undertaken were timely for the 8th month. Pathway planning for children in care has been below target for the majority of 2020/21 and needs improvement.

Almost all children had their views represented in their review either by attending or via an Advocate, IRO or other media. A high proportion of children in care have evidence of the IROs footprint on their case notes in the last 6 months. However, the proportion of children who have had a visit from their IRO in the last 6 months remains very low (7%).

The majority of children in care have an up-to-date health check and performance is within tolerance of target. Performance needs improvement for our younger children in care; health assessments were overdue for one-fifth of this group. Timeliness of dental checks continued to follow a declining trend with half of children in care now overdue a check. While children in care are not classified as a priority group by NHS England, a local arrangement has been put in place which does. However, this arrangement is not as yet evidencing an improvement in the numbers of children in care receiving dental checks. Almost two-fifths of these children have an emotional wellbeing score that indicates there is cause for concern. We also do not have timely sight of the emotional health of more than a quarter of our children in care.

Challenges around short and long-term placement stability continue to impact our children in care with performance worse than target and statistical comparators.

Oversight and risk management of Foster Carers is largely positive. The vast majority of Foster Carers having had an unannounced visit and DBS check within timescale and a good proportion of Foster Carers having had a timely annual review. The timeliness of supervisions, which provide support, development and advice for the Foster Carers and assurance for us in terms of quality and risk, needs to improve. Just under three-fifths of our Foster Carers received a supervision in November which is well below target (75%).

There is a requirement for each school aged child in care to have a refreshed personal education plan in place. An updated PEP is in place or is planned for the vast majority of children in Term 1. Further work is needed for those children where a PEP is not as yet planned.

The overwhelming majority of children in care have a school place and are attending mainstream education settings. A very small number of children do not have a school place and have not had a setting for some time.

A growing proportion of our school aged children in care are receiving education out of County, with almost one-third having a school place outside of Gloucestershire. This against an increasing number of children in care overall.

Attendance levels for children in care are lower than last year and are likely to be impacted by sickness absence, self-isolation and shielding etc. relating to the COVID pandemic.

The number of children who have been fixed-term excluded is higher than at the same time last academic year and accounts for 8% of school aged children in care.

Children Leaving Care

We have been in touch with the majority of our care leavers in the last 6 months. However, timeliness of seeing our care leavers, and in particular our younger care leavers (66%), continues to need improvement.

Pathway plans are in place for the majority of our care leavers but performance is following a declining trend and is below target.

The greater majority of our care leavers live in suitable accommodation. Particular focus is needed with regards to the living arrangements for our younger care leavers.

With around half of our Care Leavers in some form of education, employment or training, further work is needed to ensure that our young people are supported to achieve the best outcomes available to them and narrow the gap between care leavers and their peers.

Missing Children and Child Exploitation

Almost one-fifth of our children in care have had a missing episode in the last 12 months. This group has remained at a broadly consistent level over time. This continues to indicate that work to prevent missing episodes is not impacting on risk and the decision making of young people.

We need to speak to more children following a missing episode in order to improve our response to risk when it arises. Timeliness of conversations with children who we did speak to following a missing episode improved in November.

Two-thirds of the children who were assessed as at risk of exploitation in November had been assessed previously. We are undertaking an increasing proportion of repeat assessments, following which the majority of children which continue to be rated as at Moderate or Significant risk. This raises questions about the impact of work to support the reduction of risk and protection in place for these children.

During 2020/21, children in care have accounted for the highest proportion of children for whom an exploitation screening tool was rated a Moderate or Significant risk, raising concerns about our effectiveness as a Corporate Parent and wider contextual safeguarding approach across the partnership.

Timeliness of seeing children rated them as at Moderate or Significant risk of exploitation continued to improve in November but remains low with just under two-thirds of children seen within 5 working days and 15% of children still not seen at the time of reporting.

Legal Proceedings

Completion of pre-proceedings needs improvement with under half of cases concluded within timescale in 2020/21, significantly below target (80%). Timeliness of completion of court proceedings is also low. ICT issues have impacted our ability to undertake virtual hearings.

Barristers with stable video conferencing facilities are therefore being engaged to undertake virtual hearings. Final hearings are now scheduled through to 2021. The volume of child protection cases remains high and there is continued reliance on Warwickshire County Council or additional locum support to address backlog. There is a financial pressure arising in order to support these cases to progress.

Data quality in this area needs improvement. There is a high proportion of data missing in relation to all steps in the proceedings process affecting sight of progress for children. Caseload levels are also not reflective of cases being held and the outcome of the majority of Legal Planning Meetings in November is not available to report.

Workforce

Just over three-quarters of Social Workers have a caseload of 18 children or fewer; the greater majority of workers continue to hold 22 children or fewer (93%).

Almost all children were allocated a Social Worker in a timely way (12-month high) and there is activity taking place in a timely way for the vast majority of children.

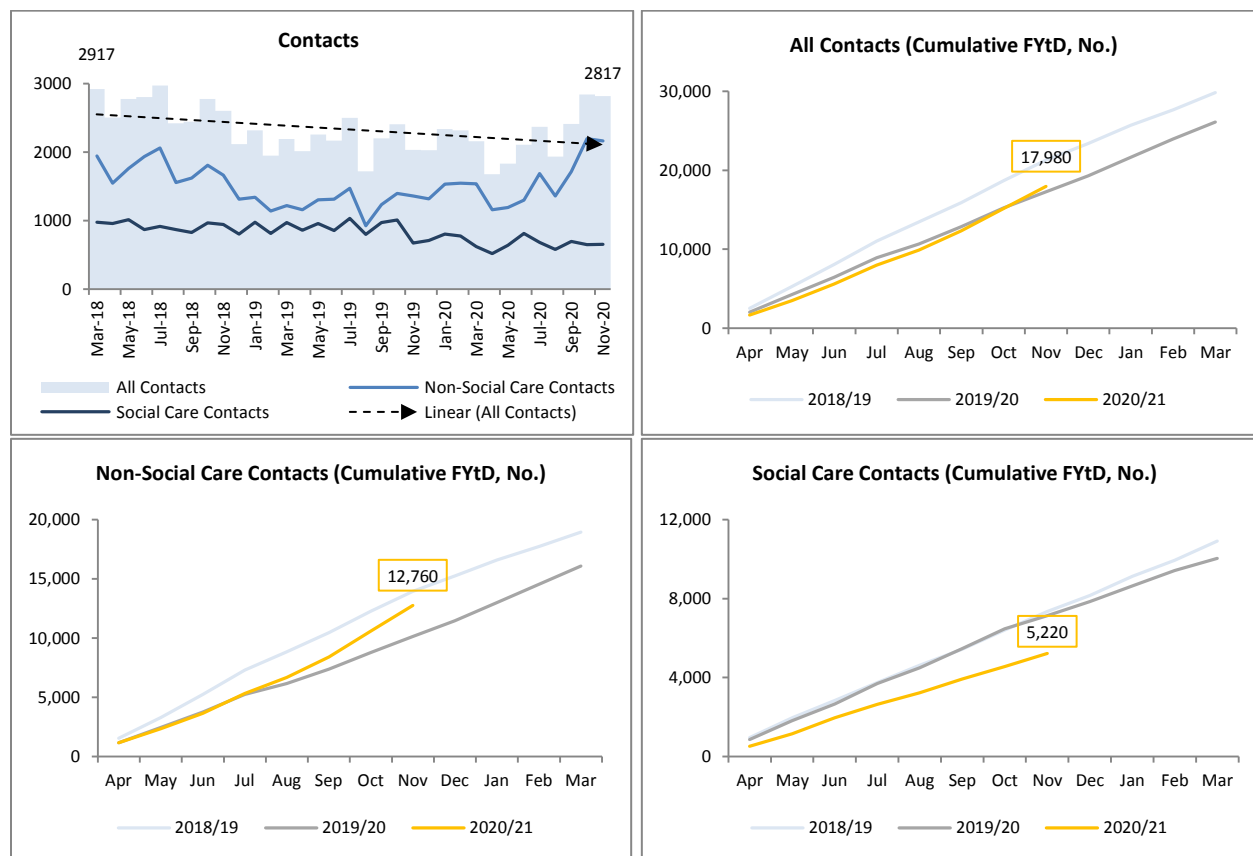
The greater majority of children had a timely supervision recorded, evidencing practice oversight. Performance continues to follow an improving trend.

Just under 80% of children had fewer than 3 Social Workers in the last 6 months. Stability of Social Worker for our children in care decreased and is worse than other authorities rated as Inadequate.

Demand Dashboard

This section of the report is intended to give insight into the overall volumes and pressures at key points in the system.

KEY: trendline -----

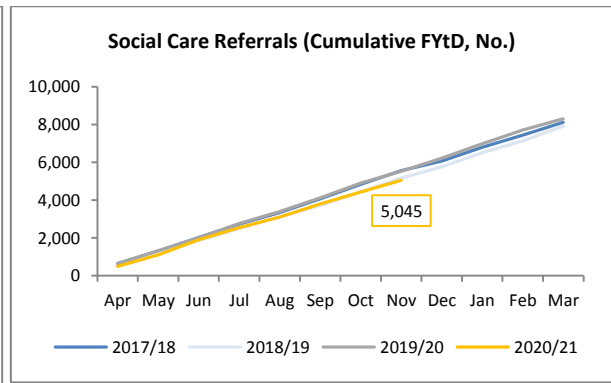
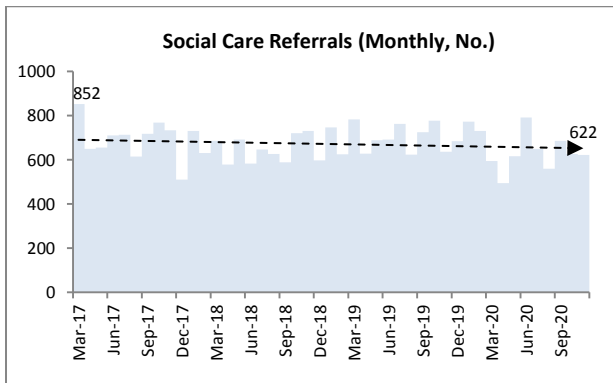


The number of contacts remained high in November (2,840) and are at a similar level to that seen following inspection of the service which may indicate high anxiety levels across the Safeguarding system as well as increasing social breakdown linked to the pandemic.

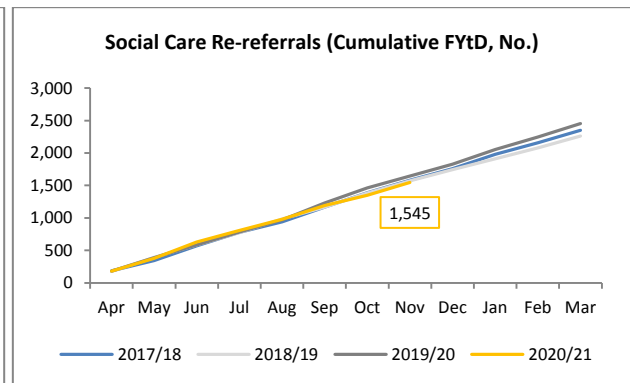
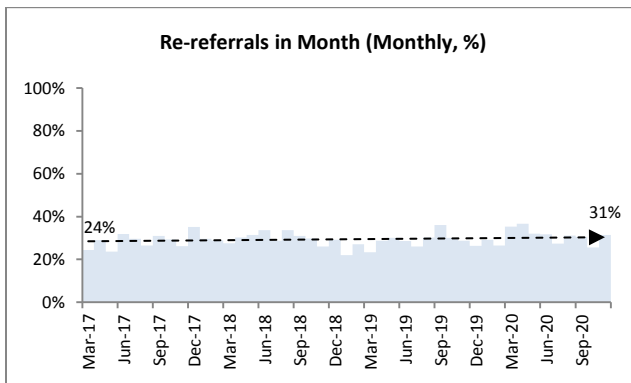
The overall volume of contacts FYtD, is now slightly higher than 2019/20 (+4%, up almost 700 contacts). However, the trend in contacts requiring a lower threshold of support compared with last year continues.

Contacts which require a Social Care response remain down just over one-quarter compared with 2019/20 (27%, just over 1,900 contacts). There continue to be more people who require advice or support from our Early Help system compared to last year, with the level of increase in demand remaining steep in November. Currently contact volumes requiring a non-Social Care response are up more than one-quarter compared with last year FYtD (27%, just over 2,600 contacts).

While two-fifths of all contacts received by MASH resulted in No Further Action with a high proportion of those only requiring information, advice or guidance, there is evidence that concerns are growing around genuine risk for children which can be seen in the number of RED rated contacts in November which was at the highest level in 18 months.



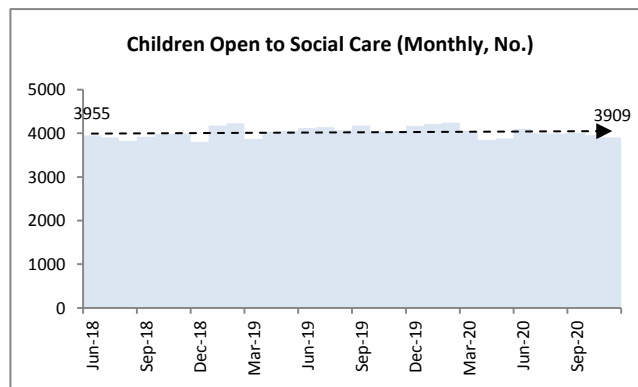
In 2020/21, referrals remain below levels seen over the previous 3 years and are currently 9% lower than last year FYtD, equating to 486 children. However, the rate of referrals remains high compared to our comparator group (391.4 compared with 280.7).



As with the lower number of children being referred to Social Care, fewer re-referrals have been received by the service FYtD compared to last year, down 6.2%, 102 re-referrals (this may include multiple re-referrals for the same child within a 12-month period).

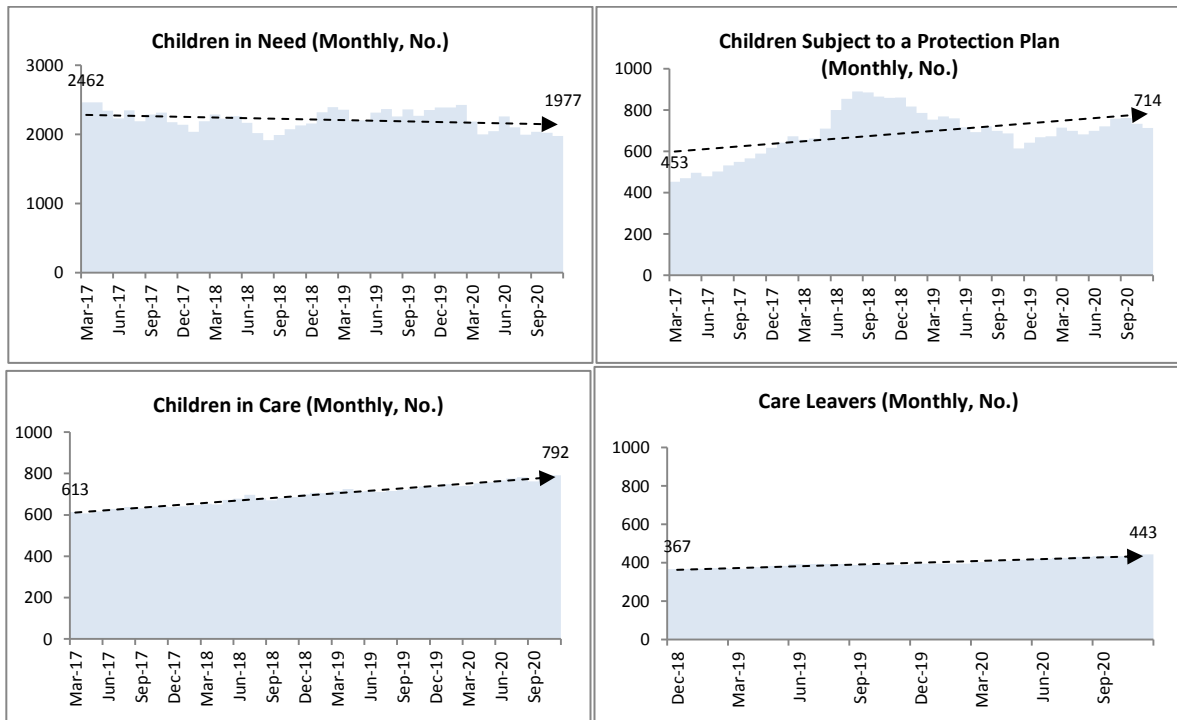
195 children were re-referred in November (31%), up from a 3-year low of 160 re-referrals last month. Performance remains worse than target (24%) and higher than peer group comparators (20.3%).

Overall, one third of referrals in 2020/21 have been re-referrals (31%, 1545 of 5045 referrals) raising continued questions around decision making, understanding of thresholds, risk management and quality of practice both within Children's Services and across the wider safeguarding partnership.



Despite slightly lower referral levels than in previous years, the trend in children open to Social Care remains broadly steady with very low levels of variation throughout the year.

Children in need of support, protection or care

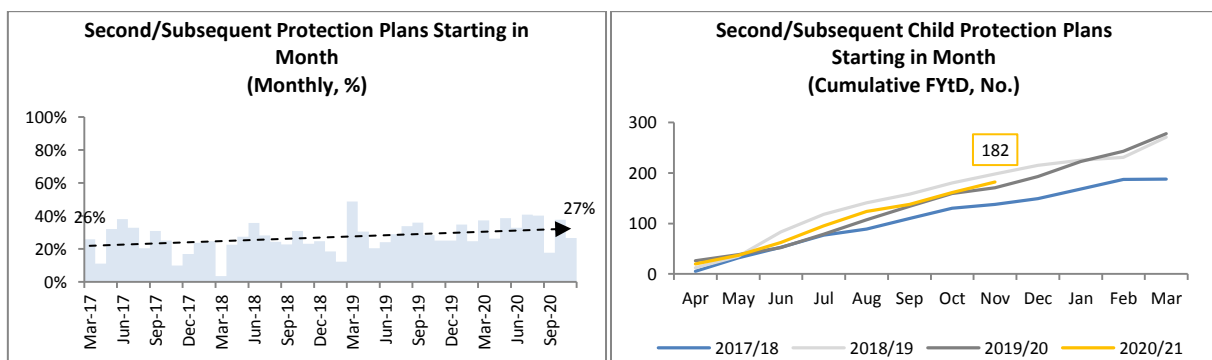


Following reduced levels of referrals into Social Care 2020/21, the number of Children in Need in November remains slightly lower than standard levels of variation over time (1,977 children) and is 10% lower than at the end of 2019/20.

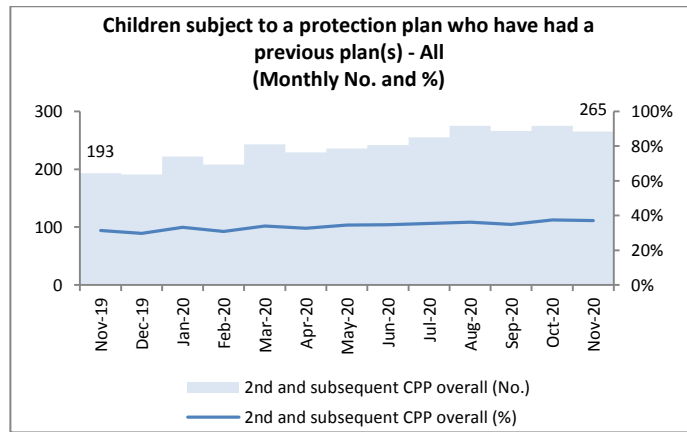
The number of children subject to a protection plan decreased for the second month, down from 761 children to 714. However, we continue to have a much higher rate of children subject to a protection plan per 10,000 population than our peer comparators (55.4 compared to 37.3).

There were 792 number of children in care at the end of November; recent care levels are the highest seen to date. As with child protection levels, we have more children in care per 10,000 population than peer comparators (61.4 compared with 52.7).

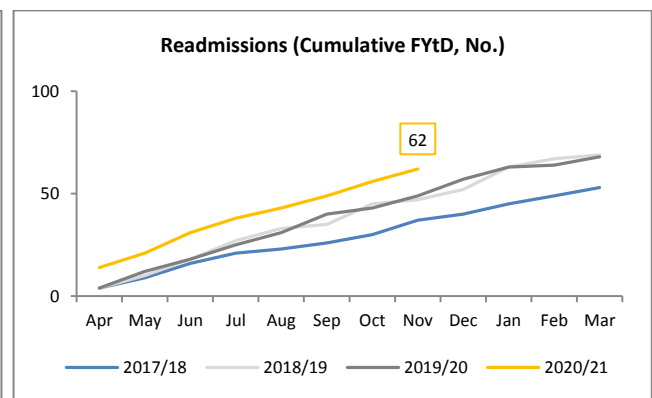
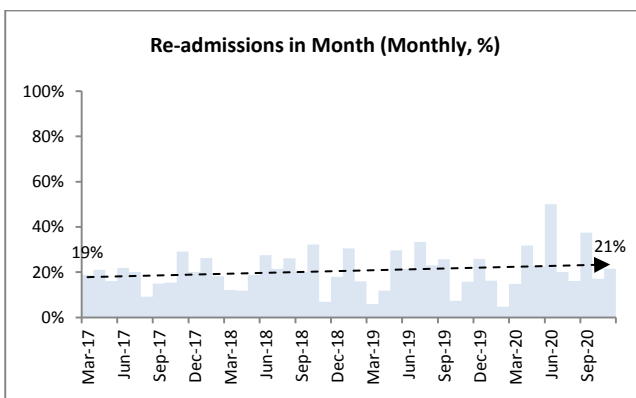
Our Care Leavers are also higher than seen to date (443, up 10% in 2020/21).



Unlike earlier stages of the Social Care system where volumes have been lower in 2020/21, the number of children returning to protection plans FYtD is higher than the same time last year (up 6% 11 children). Just over one-quarter of children starting a protection plan in November have had a previous plan (27%). Performance is worse than target (25%) and peer comparators (22.4%).

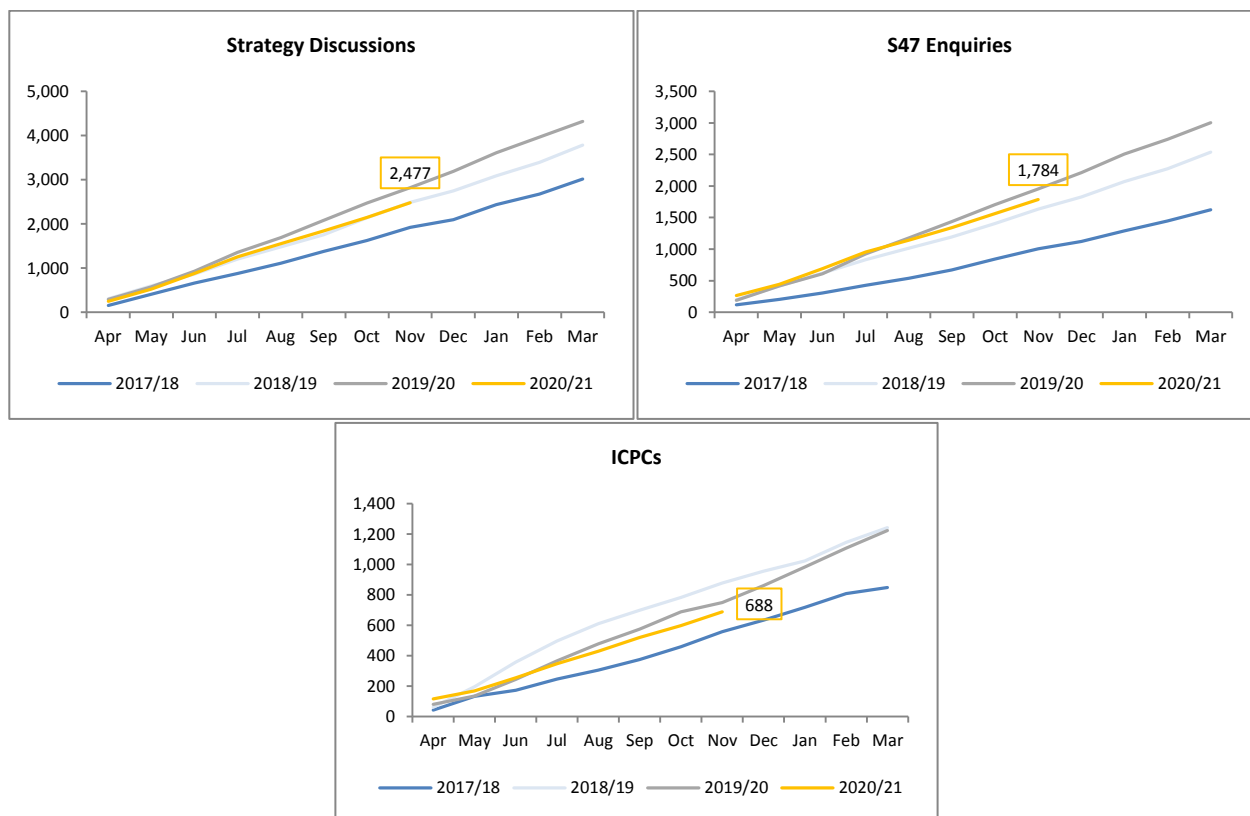


Overall, almost two-fifths of children subject to a protection plan have had a previous plan (37%, 265 children), up from just under one-third at the same time last year (30%, 193 children).



Readmission to care have been higher in 2020/21 compared with last year (up 27%, 13 readmissions). Readmissions remain higher than target and national levels (12.7%).

S47 Activity



In 2020/21, the number of undertaken Strategy Discussions, S47 enquiries and ICPCs remain lower than ast year (down 12%, 9% and 8% respectively, equating to 342, 168 and 61 fewer discussions, enquiries and conferences).

| | November | 12-month Average |
|---|----------|------------------|
| Strategy Discussions progressing to S47 Enquiry | 77% | 74% |
| S47 Enquiries progressing to ICPC | 39% | 42% |
| ICPCs progressing to CP Plans | 87% | 80% |

Three-quarters of children undergoing a Strategy Discussion progress on to an S47 Enquiry. However, for children for whom an enquiry is undertaken, progression to an initial child protection conference is much lower, with around two-fifths of children proceeding to conference over the last 12 months. This may indicate that further information is derived from the enquiry which enables a further assessment of risk and the decision that this can be managed at a lower threshold. However, it may also raise questions about understanding of thresholds and risk anxiety across the Safeguarding partnership which is resulting in a high volume of Strategy Discussions taking place and progressing to enquiry.

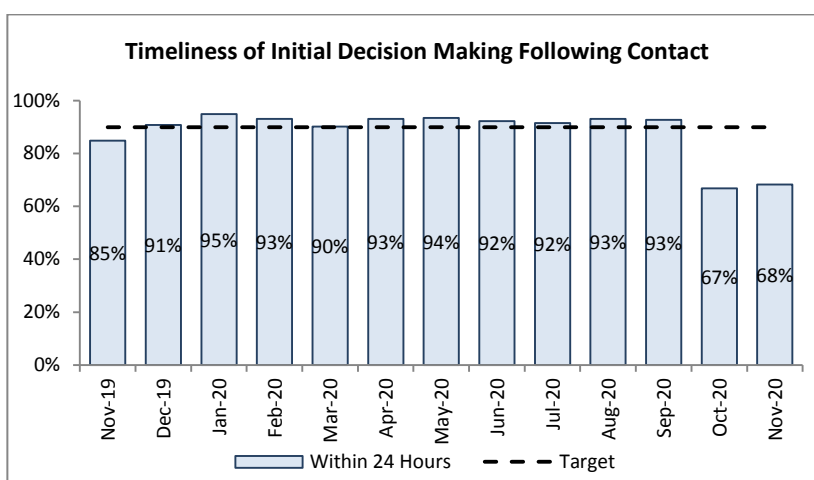
A good proportion of children who have had an ICPC over the last 12 months are made subject of a child protection plan but one-fifth of children undergoing conference are found not to require a protection plan raising questions about decision making at earlier stages of the system.

Contact, Referral and Assessment

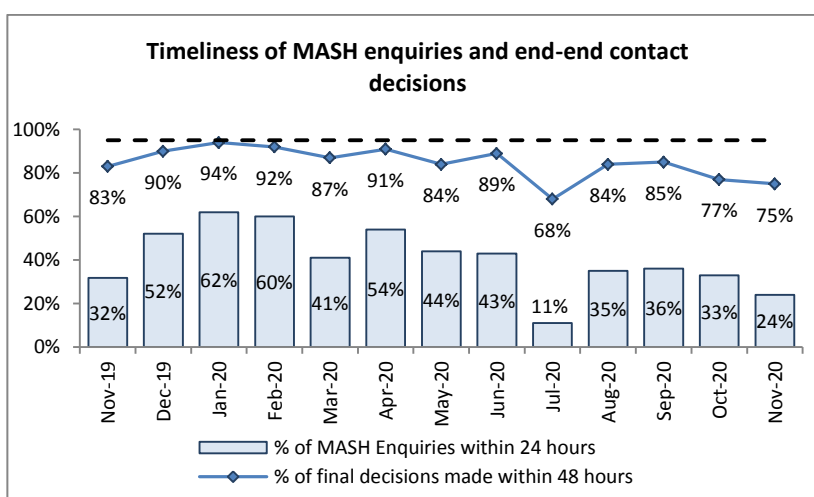
Contacts

Note: There were some ICT system issues in November which may have impacted on the processes required to progress a contact to referral on the case management system. There were 10 contacts where the final outcome was unknown, 5 contacts of which related to MASH enquiries which were still active. Missing notifications are not included in contact numbers (146).

There were a total of 237 contacts where neglect featured as a presenting reason in November, 52 of these contacts were from an anonymous source or from an individual (such as a relative) so a neglect toolkit would not be expected from the referrer. Of the 185 contacts relating to neglect from known referral sources, only 6 neglect toolkits were completed (3%). Significant improvement continues to be needed.



Timeliness of initial decision making remained low at 68% in November, this is significantly below usual performance levels and target (90%). A new process was implemented in MASH in October, the implementation phase of this process as well as the ICT system issues mentioned above may have impacted timeliness.

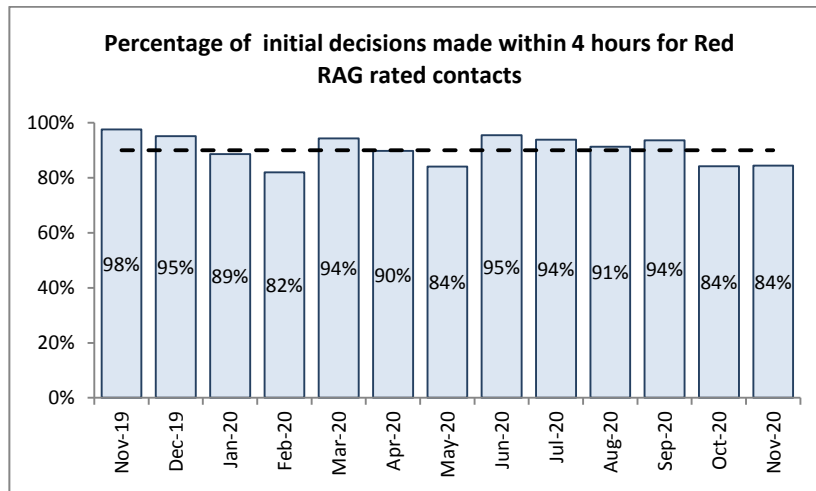


In November, just under a third of all contacts underwent a MASH enquiry (32%, 915 contacts).

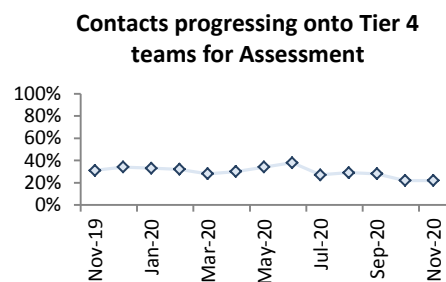
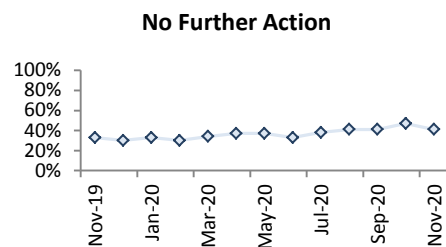
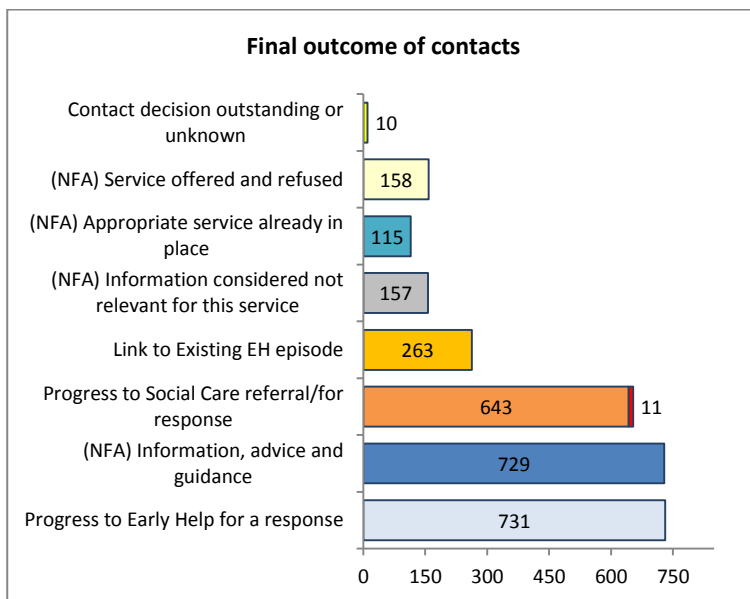
Just under one-quarter of MASH enquiries were completed within 24 hours (24%, 223 contacts); this is a decline for the second month and continues to impact decision timeliness overall.

Following an initial decision and MASH enquiry where applicable, the final outcome for 75% of contacts (2114) was decided upon within 48 hours. This is below target (95%).

The trend in overall timeliness continues to correlate with the trend in timeliness for MASH enquiries. 91% of contacts where the final decision was overdue underwent a MASH enquiry (634 of 693 contacts). Although timeliness of initial decisions will also have impacted overall decision making performance in November.



It is our aim to make decisions quickly for children where clear risk is evident. Timeliness of decision making for red rated contacts remained at 84% in November, this is however against a larger number of red rated contacts overall (135 contacts compared to 82 in October). This is the highest level of contacts RAG rated red in more than 12 months. Performance is below target (90%) and is monitored in the **Accelerated Improvement plan**.

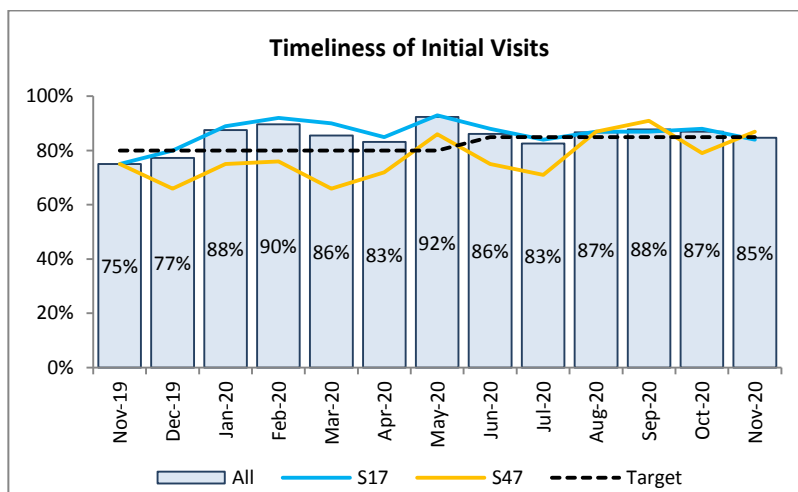


654 contacts initially progressed to Social Care for a response. The outcome for 643 of these was to proceed to referral. 21 referrals were subsequently closed by the MASH following Strategy Discussions. Just over one-fifth of contacts were therefore referred to teams for assessment (22%, 622 contacts). This is the same level as October and remains the lowest level in more than 12 months.

Just over a quarter of contacts progressed to Early Help for a response (731, 26%), this is a decrease from 34% in October and is also lower than the levels seen prior to lockdown in March 2020 (31%). A further 9% of contacts related to an existing Early Help Episode (263 contacts).

Just over two-fifths of all contacts received by MASH resulted in No Further Action (41%, 1159 contacts). In 729 cases where the outcome was NFA, information, advice and guidance was provided (63% of contacts NFA'd). In 10% of cases it was identified appropriate support was already in place and for 14% of contacts a service was offered and refused.

Referrals



Initial visits for 85% of children (465 of 549) were within timescale in November. Performance is on target (85%).

Timeliness of seeing children progressing under S17 dropped to within tolerance of target this month (84%). However timeliness of seeing children progressing under S47 was above target, increasing from 79% to 87%. These measures are monitored in the **Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP)**.

Initial visits for 8% of children were completed but overdue (45 children), while 7% of children referred in November had not been seen and were overdue a visit at the time of reporting (39 children).

There were no referrals started prior to the current reporting month where an initial visit had not taken place.

We continue to adjust the way in which contact is undertaken with a small number of children i.e. where Coronavirus symptoms may be present within the home. In November, of the 510 initial visits that were undertaken, recording indicated that 28 children were seen virtually i.e. via Skype, What's App, Facetime (5%).

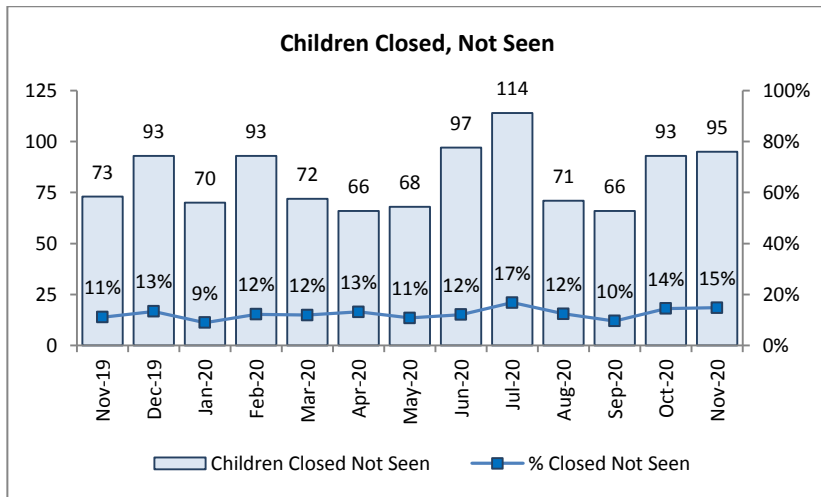
Timeliness of initial visits

| In Time – September | | In Time – October | | In Time - November | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| Cotswolds | 94% | DCYPS* | 100% | DCYPS* | 100% |
| Cheltenham | 93% | Stroud | 98% | Cheltenham | 99% |
| Tewkesbury | 92% | Gloucester | 91% | Stroud | 89% |
| Stroud | 89% | FoD | 89% | FoD | 86% |
| FoD | 85% | Cotswolds | 86% | Cotswolds | 86% |
| Other | 85% | Cheltenham | 78% | Tewkesbury | 86% |
| Gloucester | 84% | Other | 78% | Gloucester | 79% |
| DCYPS* | 25% | Tewkesbury | 77% | Other | 44% |

*DCYPS – September relates to 4 referrals, October relates to 1 referral and November relates to 1 referral.

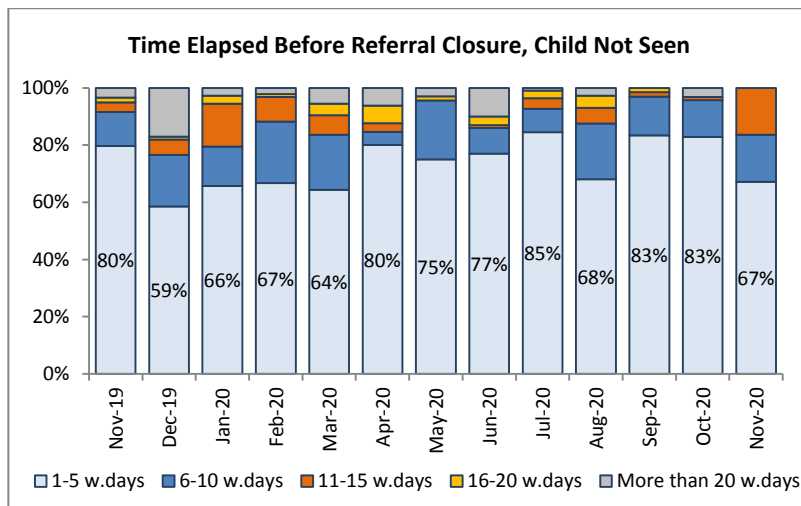
Improvements in performance were seen for Cheltenham (21% points) and Tewkesbury (9% points) both of which were above target in November.

Gloucester's performance decreased 12% points and is the only locality performing below target.



15% of children for whom MASH had decided that a referral and assessment were required were closed within the month without the child being seen (95 children).

Children whose referral is closed without a visit taking place continue to experience a higher chance of being re-referred than those children who are seen (on average 29% compared to 20%).



Pace of decision making for children whose referral was closed without them being seen declined in November, with 67% of referrals closed within 5 working days (down from 83% in October).

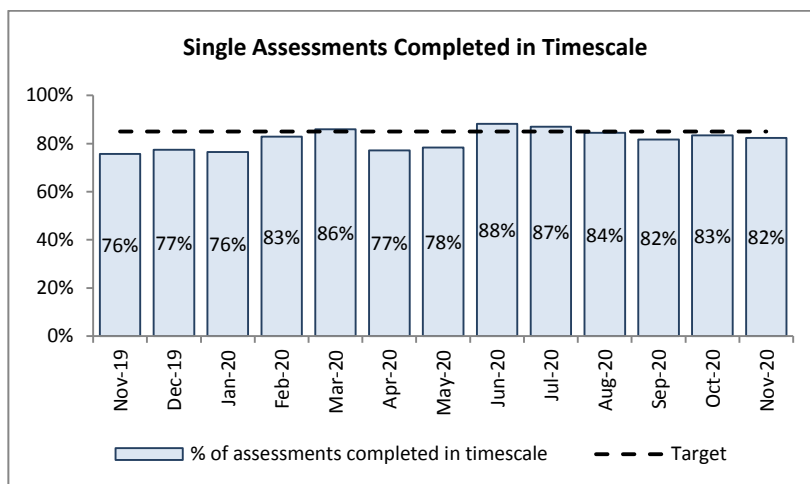
Re-referrals by Locality

| | Last 12 months | | | Sept | | | Oct | | | Nov | | |
|------------|----------------|-----|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|---------|-----|
| | Sept | Oct | Nov | 1st | 2nd/sub | % | 1st | 2nd/sub | % | 1st | 2nd/sub | % |
| Cheltenham | 31% | 30% | 29% | 80 | 45 | 36% | 68 | 26 | 28% | 47 | 25 | 35% |
| Cotswolds | 42% | 36% | 40% | 45 | 11 | 20% | 45 | 13 | 22% | 30 | 27 | 47% |
| FoD | 25% | 28% | 30% | 61 | 24 | 28% | 75 | 26 | 26% | 68 | 32 | 32% |
| Gloucester | 35% | 34% | 34% | 148 | 84 | 36% | 145 | 57 | 28% | 123 | 58 | 32% |
| Stroud | 25% | 24% | 24% | 60 | 33 | 35% | 61 | 22 | 27% | 79 | 26 | 25% |
| Tewkesbury | 31% | 28% | 23% | 59 | 6 | 9% | 65 | 12 | 16% | 66 | 16 | 20% |
| DCYPS | 23% | 29% | 11% | 2 | 2 | 50% | 1 | 0 | 0% | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| County | 29% | 29% | 28% | 477 | 209 | 30% | 467 | 160 | 26% | 427 | 195 | 31% |

Tewkesbury had lower than target levels of re-referrals for the third consecutive month in November (albeit that re-referrals have increased for the locality month on month), and this is now reflecting in their rolling 12 month re-referral level which is better than target (23% against a target of 24%).

The Cotswolds had the highest proportion of re-referrals in November (47% of referrals) as well as over the last 12 months (40%).

Single Assessments



Peer Group (Mar 19): 81.7% ★

The majority of assessments completed in November were within timescale (82%). Timeliness remains below but within tolerance of target (85%). Performance is in line with peer comparators (82%).

Assessments completed in November were overdue for 141 children (18%).

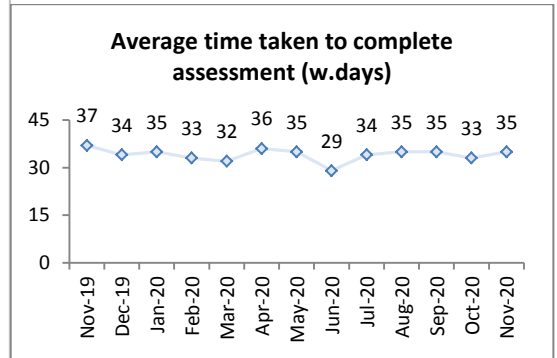
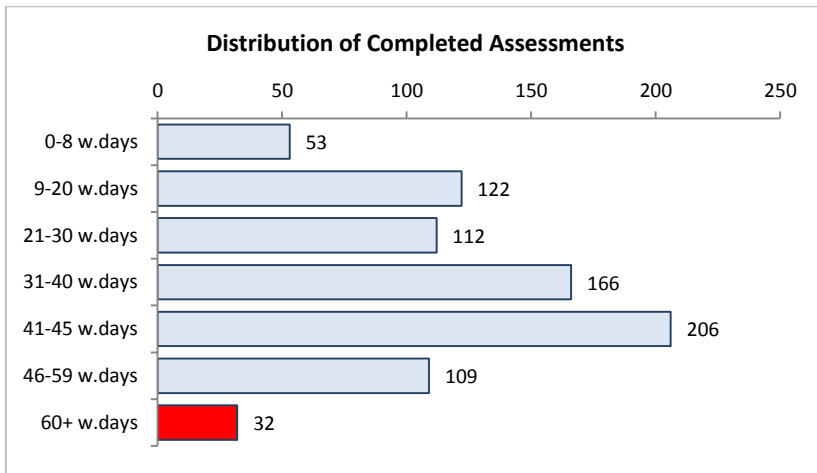
Completed Assessments in Timescale

| In Time – September | | In Time – October | | In Time - November | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
| Forest of Dean | 99% | Gloucester | 91% | Cheltenham | 93% |
| Tewkesbury | 96% | Forest of Dean | 90% | Tewkesbury | 88% |
| Gloucester | 87% | Tewkesbury | 90% | Stroud | 88% |
| Stroud | 81% | Cheltenham | 88% | DCYPS | 83% |
| Cheltenham | 80% | DCYPS | 80% | Cotswolds | 80% |
| Cotswolds | 56% | Stroud | 74% | Forest of Dean | 77% |
| Other | 48% | Other | 68% | Other | 74% |
| DCYPS | 0% | Cotswolds | 61% | Gloucester | 71% |

*DCYPS – September relates to 6 assessments, October relates to 5 assessments and November relates to 6 assessments.

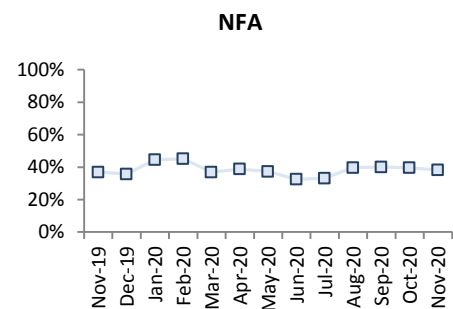
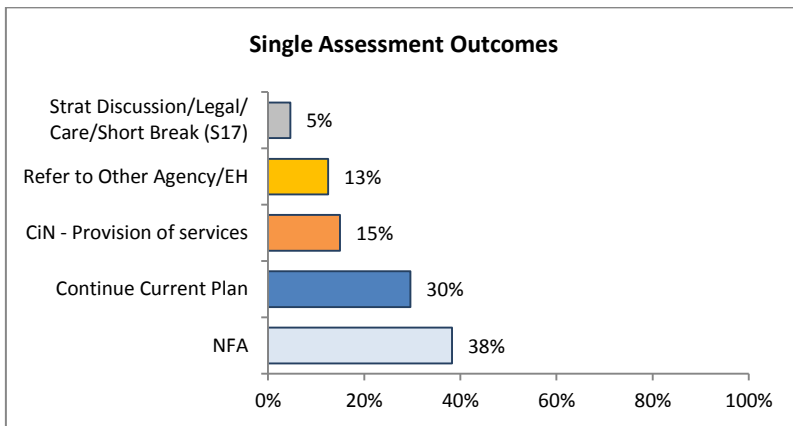
Timeliness in Gloucester (71%) and the Forest of Dean (77%) decreased in November and is impacting overall performance.

Performance improved to above target in Cotswolds and Stroud in November (up 19% points and 14% points respectively).



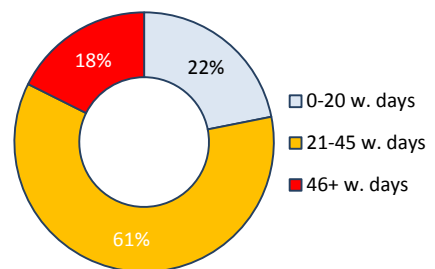
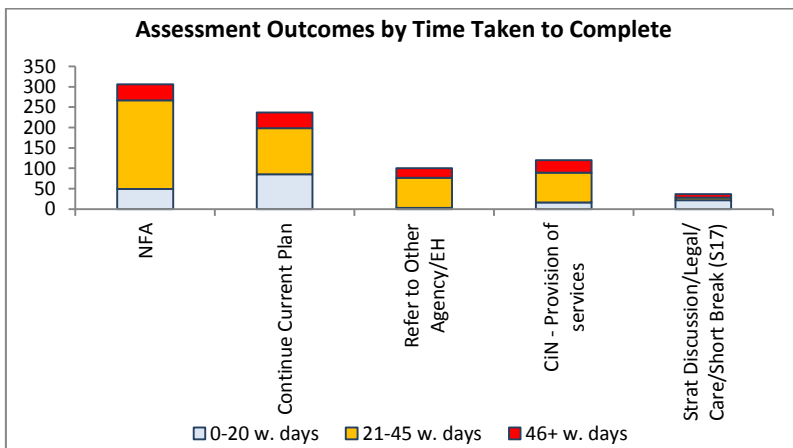
Just over a quarter of assessments were completed between 41-45 working days (26%), this raises questions about pace for children prior to impending deadlines and increases the risk of assessments becoming overdue.

32 assessments took 60 or more working days to complete; 7 of these took 90 or more working days.



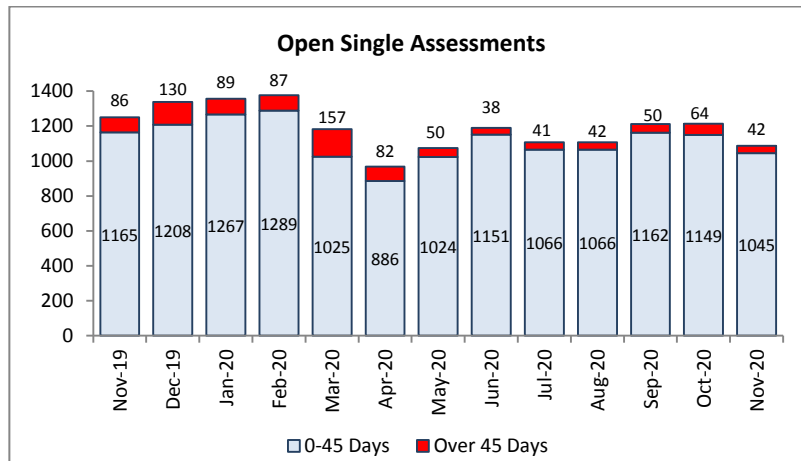
The proportion of completed assessments resulting in No Further Action remained similar for the fourth month (38%, 306 of 800 assessments).

13% of children for whom an assessment was completed in November were referred to Early Help or another agency (100 children).



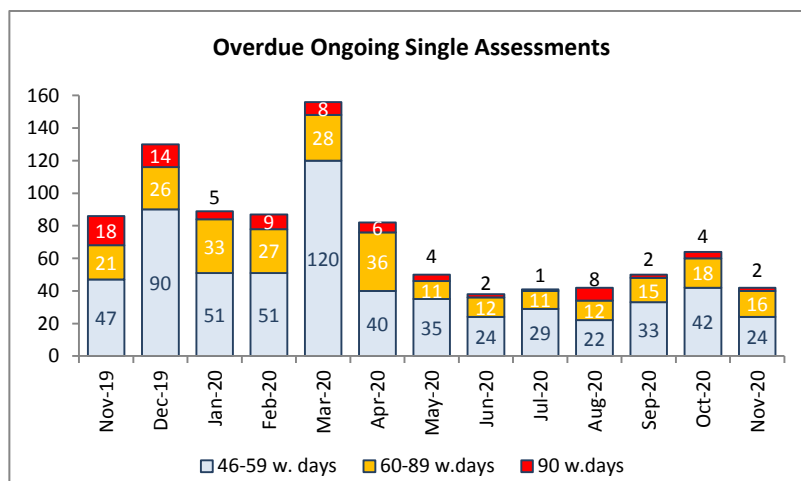
Just over one-fifth of assessments completed in November were concluded within 4 weeks (22%, 175 assessments), while just over three-fifths of assessments took between 21-45 w.days to complete (61%, 484).

Just over half of assessments completed in November were directed out of the Tier 4 system to Early Help, other agencies or did not require a service (51%, 406 assessments), with 354 of these taking more than 20 working days to complete. Management oversight discussions at 8, 20 and 30 working days need to strengthen in order to increase the number of proportionate assessments completed and the speed of completing them.



There were 1,087 assessments open at the end of November; this has decreased since October.

The majority of open assessments were within timescale at the end of November (96%, 1,045).



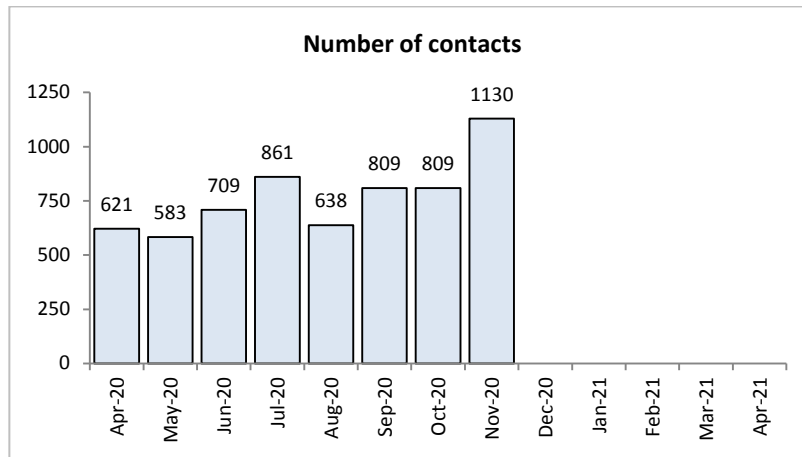
The number of assessments that are ongoing and already overdue decreased this month (42, down from 64 in October). This performance needs to continue to improve and be maintained to stem further drift and delay.

The extent to which ongoing assessments are overdue has improved slightly with assessments for 18 children ongoing for 60 or more working days, down from 22 children in October, and of these, assessments have been ongoing for more than 90 working days for 2 children, down from 4.

Early Help and Targeted Support

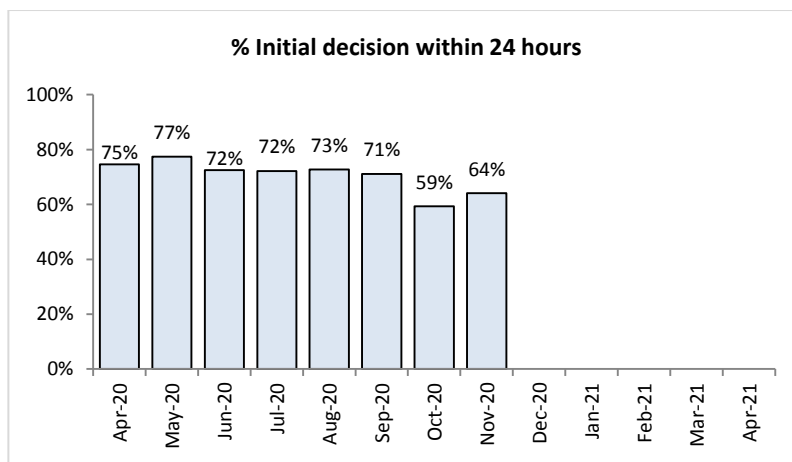
This section provides a summarised overview of Early Help activity comprising of the Family Support Service, Children and Family Centres, work with DCYPS and support provided by other agencies. More detailed dashboards are available to the service leads.

Contacts



The number of contacts progressing to Early Help increased significantly in November (1,130, from 809).

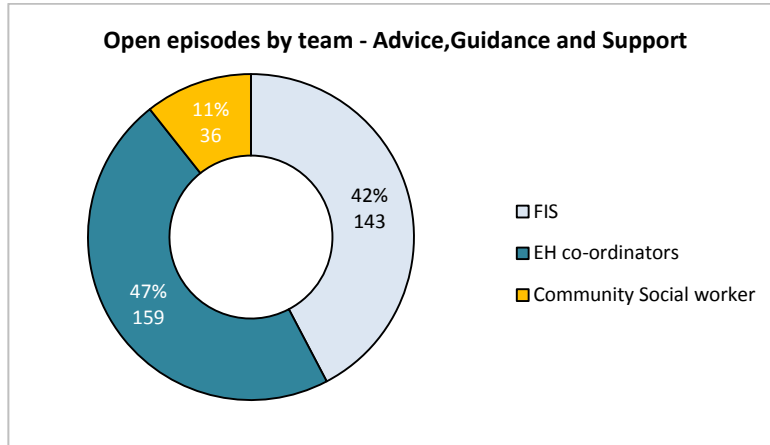
89% (994) of contacts progressing to Early Help were received via the MASH.



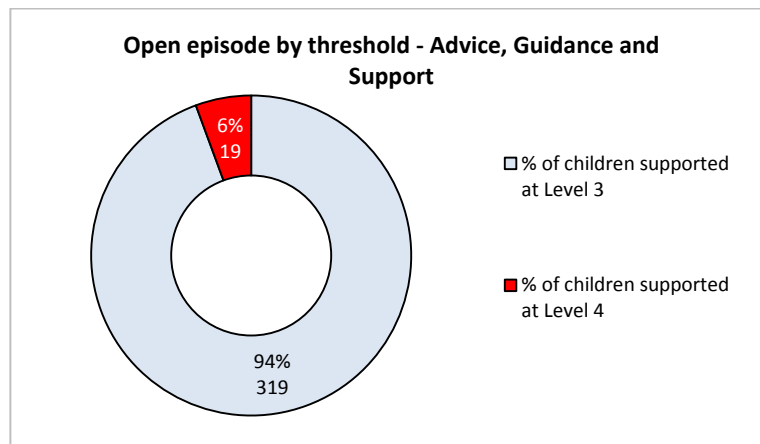
A decision for a referral to Early help was made for 64% of contacts within 24 hours (724 contacts).

73% of contacts had a new episode or their contact linked to an existing episode within 72 hours (823 contacts).

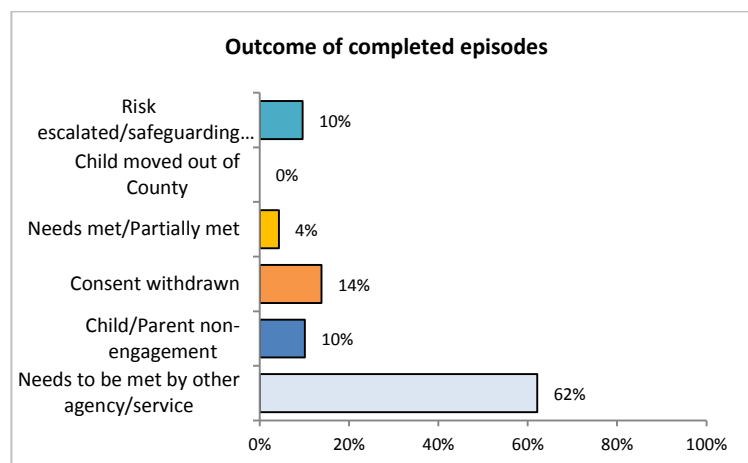
Advice, Guidance and Support



At the end of November there were 338 episodes open requiring advice, guidance and support. Just under 90% of these episodes are held by the Family Information Service and Early Help Co-ordinators.

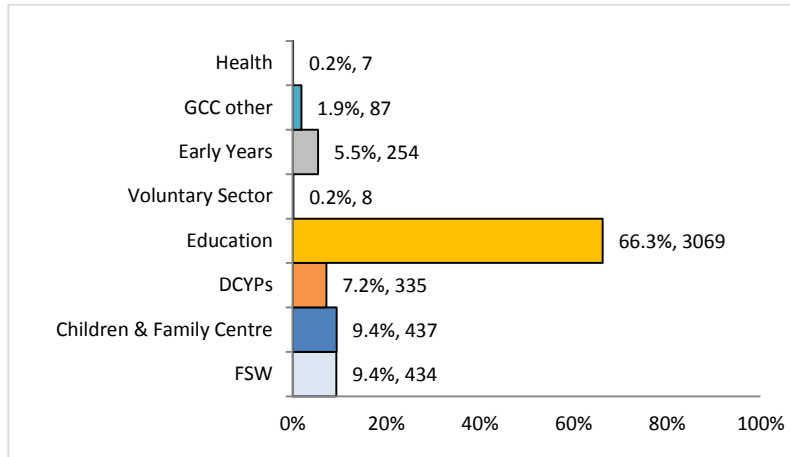


The majority of episodes open where advice, guidance and support is being given, are providing Level 3 support (94%, 319 episodes).



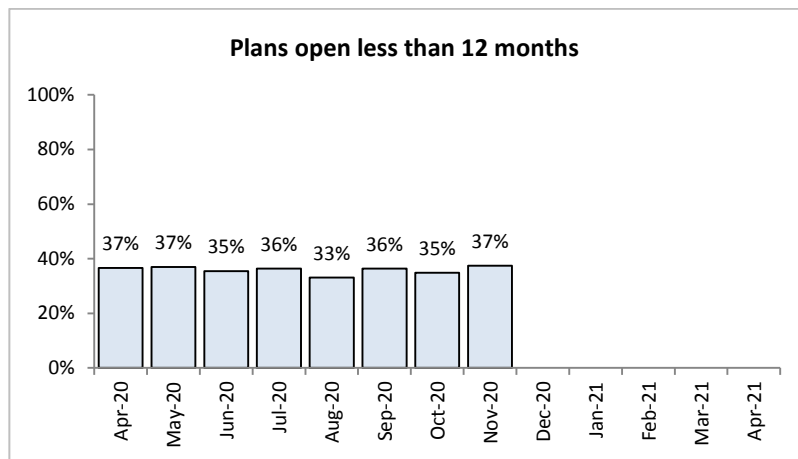
375 episodes were closed in November. Just over three-fifths episodes closed were due to their needs being met by another agency/service (62%), while a quarter of episodes closed due to non-engagement or consent being withdrawn (24%).

My Plan/My Plan Plus



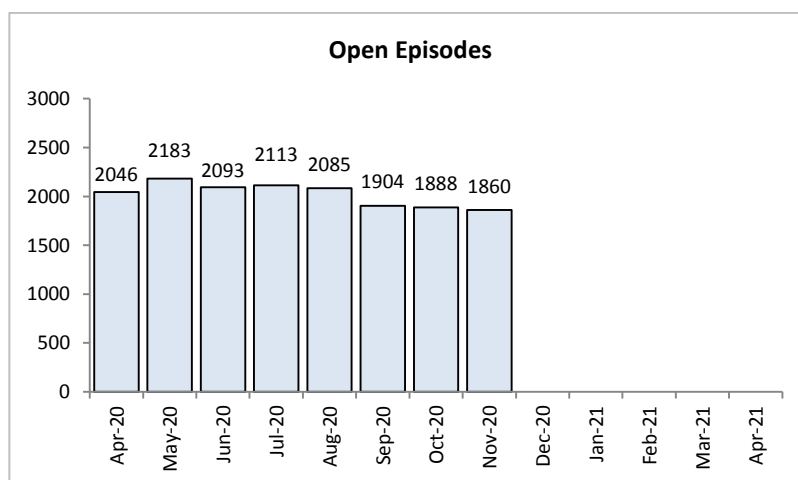
At the end of November there were 4,631 open plans: 2,828 My Plans and 1,803 My Plan Plus.

The majority of My Plan/My Plan Plus were allocated to Education (66% 3,069 children). Many of these plans have been open for a long period of time (over 12 months) and need review.

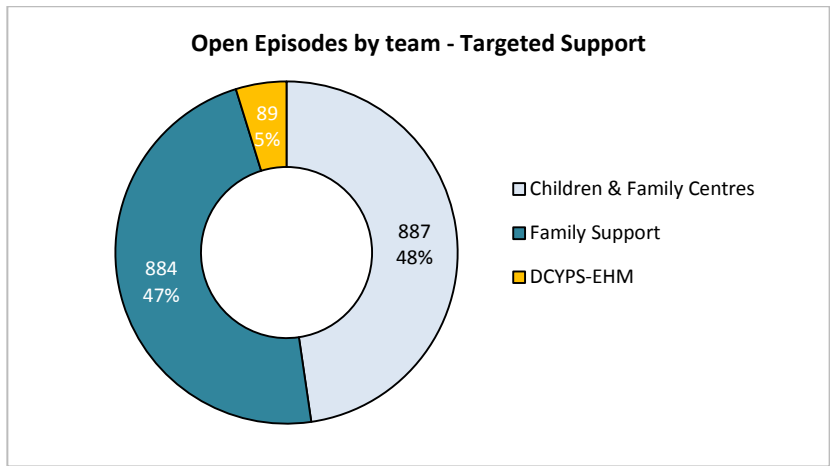


Just under two-fifths of plans had been open for less than 12 months (37%, 1,734 plans). 2,897 plans have been open for more than 12 months (63%).

Delivery – Targeted Work

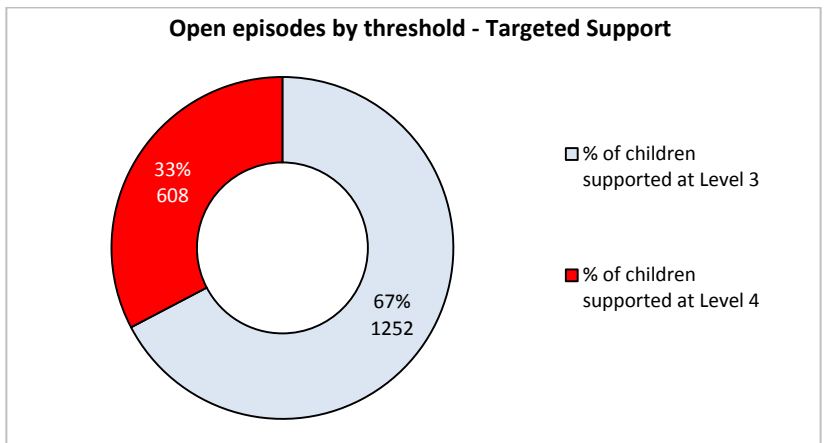


At the end of November, there were 1,860 open episodes for children receiving a Targeted Support service. This has followed a reducing trend since May (down 15%).

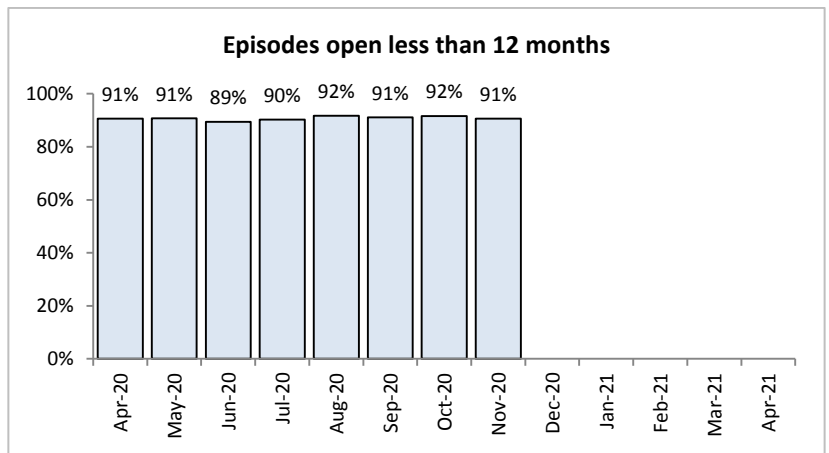


Family Support and Children and Family Centres hold a similar proportion of open episodes where targeted support work is being delivered (47% and 48% respectively).

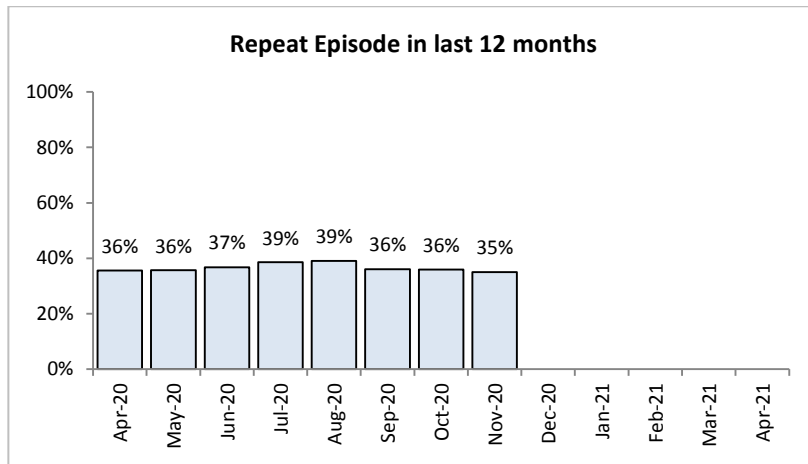
There are 89 children with an open episode as well as 195 children open to review within the DCYPS Early Help service.



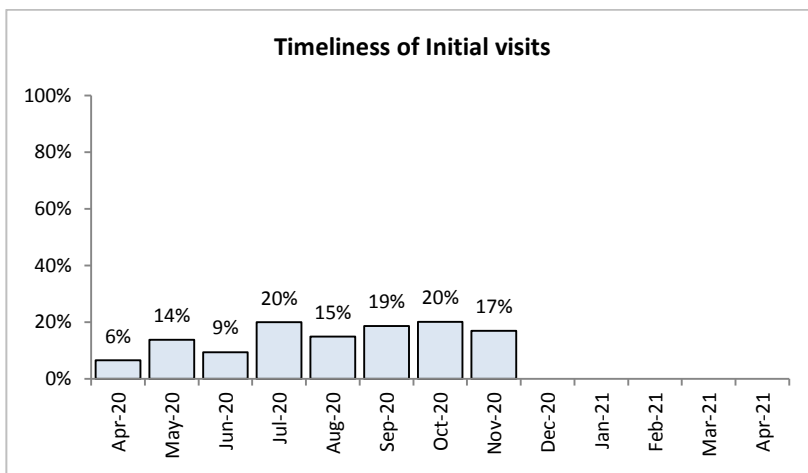
One-third of the episodes open are supporting children who are open to a Social Care intervention (33%, 608 episodes). 298 of these children are allocated to Children and Families Centres, 309 to a Family Support team and 1 child to DCYPS Early Help service.



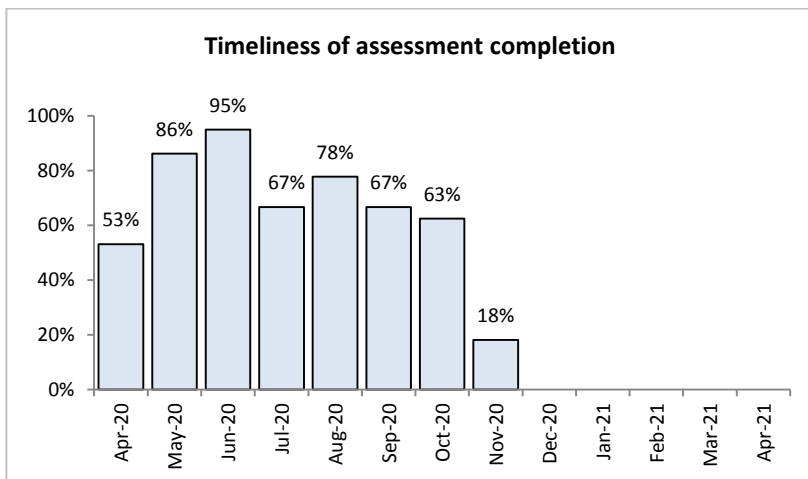
The majority of the open episodes where Targeted Support is being delivered have been open for less than 12 months (91% 1,685 episodes).



Repeat work with children and families remains high, with just over one-third of children with an open episode receiving targeted support having had a previous Early Help episode in the last 12 months (35%, 651 children).

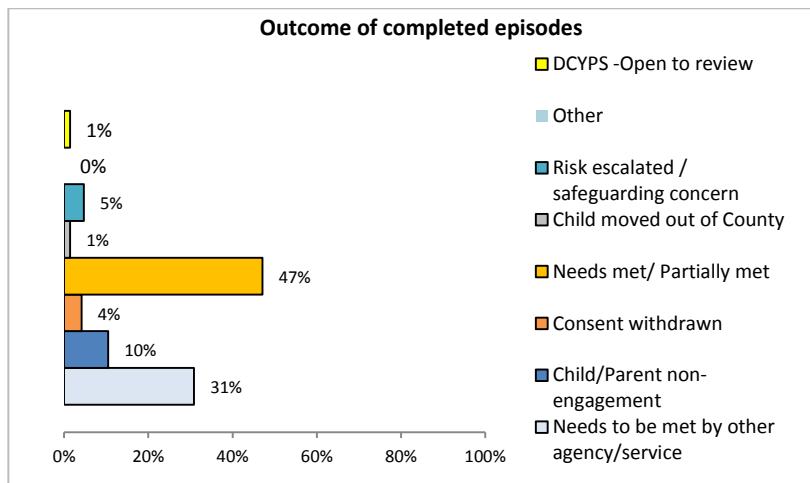


Of the children receiving or awaiting their initial visit, only 17% were within timescales. Performance is mainly being impacted by the Children and Family Centres (9% seen within 10 working days).



18% of assessments completed in November were completed within 30 working days. Timeliness has followed a declining trend since June (down from 95%).

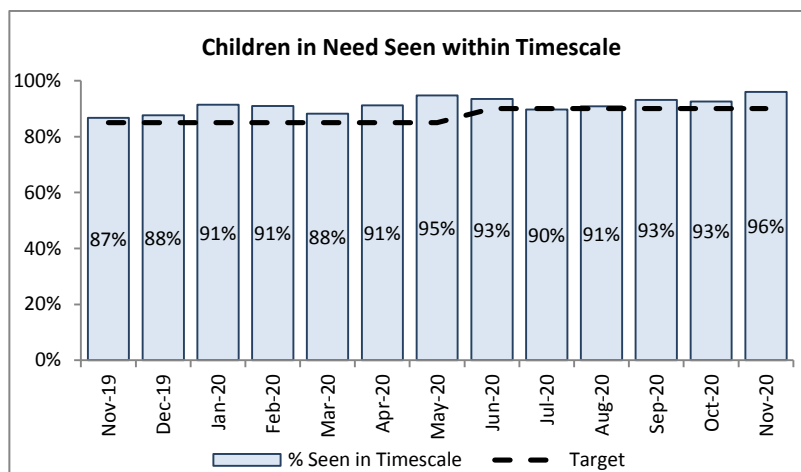
Of the assessments currently ongoing, only 19% have been open for less than 30 working days. This is being impacted by Children and Family Centres and DCYPs recording incorrectly within the My Plan form.



363 episodes were closed in November. Just under half of these were closed due to the needs of children and families being met or partially met (47%).

Just under one-third were closed due to their need being met by another agency/service (31%).

Children in Need

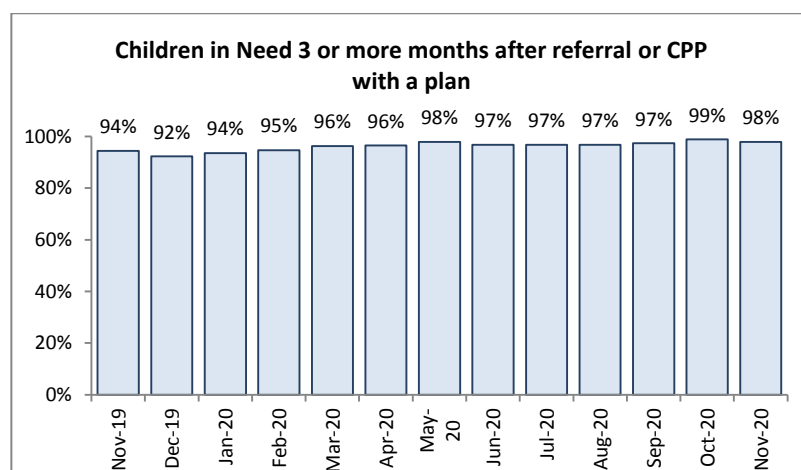


The majority of Children in Need continue to be seen in a timely way (96%). Performance is above target. This is a measure in the **Accelerated Improvement Plan**. Of these, 104 children were seen virtually (6% of children seen in a timely way).

There were 87 children who had not been seen within timescales (4%). 25 children do not appear to have been seen for 6 weeks or more.

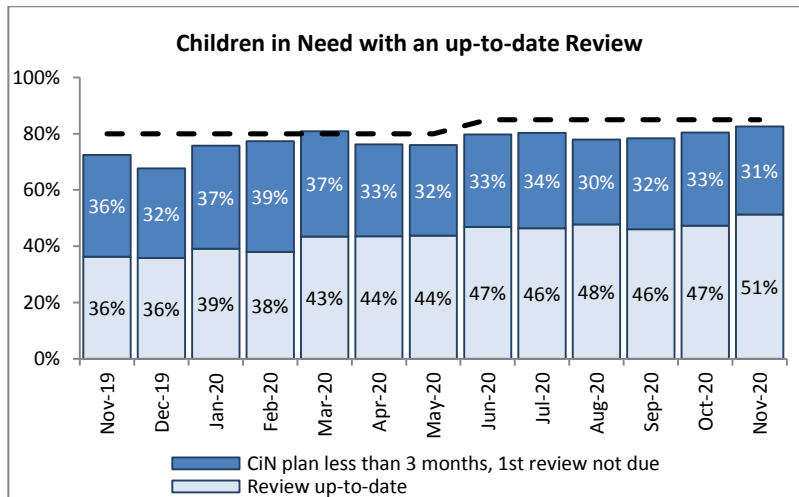
| In Time -September | | In Time -October | | In Time -November | |
|--------------------|-----|------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| Tewkesbury | 96% | Cotswolds | 95% | Cotswolds | 99% |
| Cotswolds | 95% | Gloucester | 94% | Cheltenham | 97% |
| Gloucester | 95% | Stroud | 94% | Gloucester | 96% |
| FoD | 95% | Cheltenham | 93% | FoD | 95% |
| Stroud | 93% | Tewkesbury | 93% | Stroud | 95% |
| DCYPS | 90% | DCYPS | 92% | DCYPS | 94% |
| Other | 89% | Other | 90% | Other | 94% |
| Cheltenham | 87% | FoD | 85% | Tewkesbury | 93% |

Timeliness of seeing children continued to improve at a locality/service level, with all areas performing above target.



There are 742 children who had been categorised as a Child in Need for 3 or more months following referral or since stepping down from a child protection plan. Of these, 726 had a CiN plan in place (98%); performance has remained consistently high (95% or above) for 10 months.

16 children did not have a CiN plan in place in a timely way at the end of November (2%).



Note: The review process for Children in Need has been tightened. Work is being undertaken to define and adjust reporting to reflect new standards.

There were 1,109 Children in Need with a plan at the end of November.

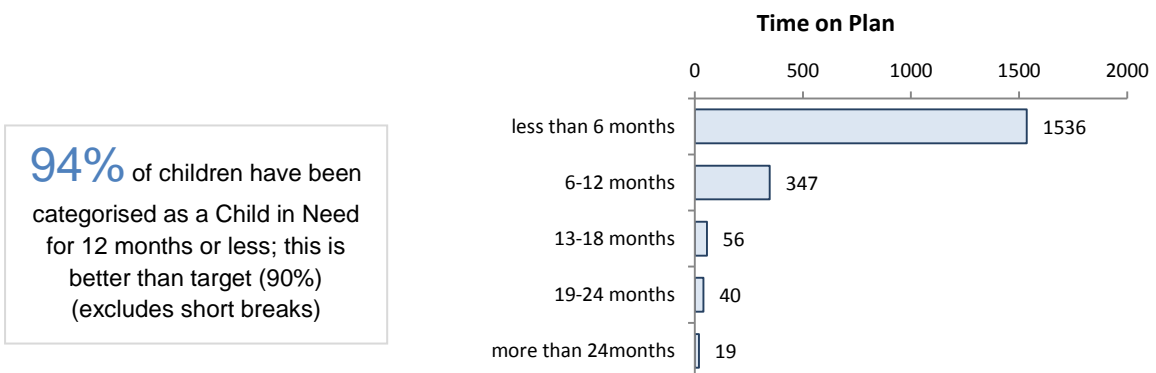
82% of these children had a timely review or were not yet due a review (916 children). Timeliness of reviews is within tolerance of target (85%) and continues to be an area where improvement is needed.

7% of those children who had a Child in Need plan for 3 or more months and children on short breaks for 6 or more months had not had a review of their plan (83 children).

10% of Children in Need with a plan had had at least one review but were overdue their next review (110 children).

Stroud and Cotswolds are the only localities performing above target. Gloucester and Tewkesbury are within tolerance of target.

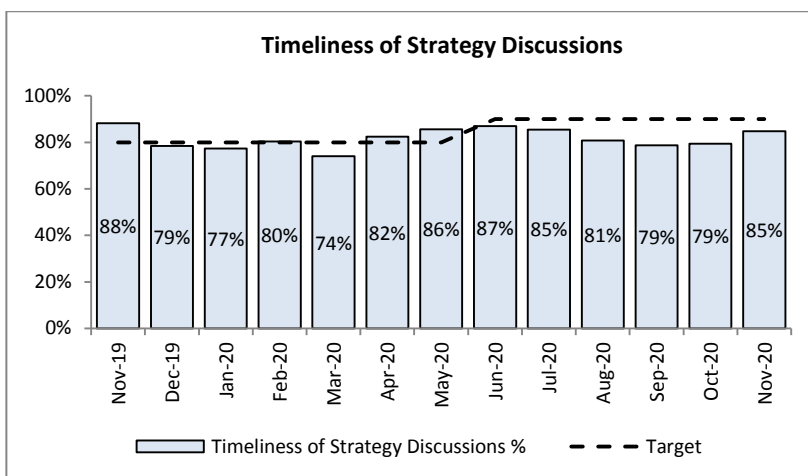
The lowest performing areas are Forest of Dean, Cheltenham and DCYPS (80%,76% and 74% respectively) with a total of 102 children not having had a timely review (53% of all children in need of review).



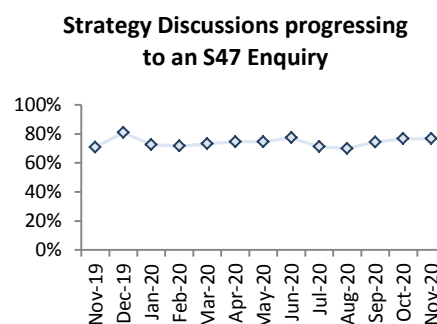
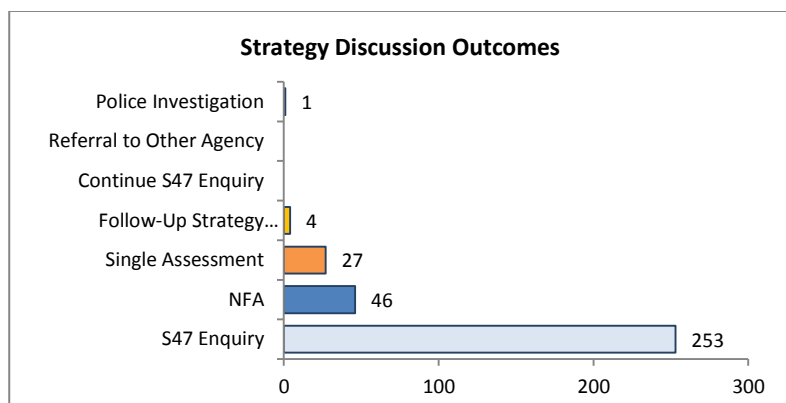
The number of children who have been on a plan for more than two years remains low (19, 1%) (excludes short breaks).

Child Protection

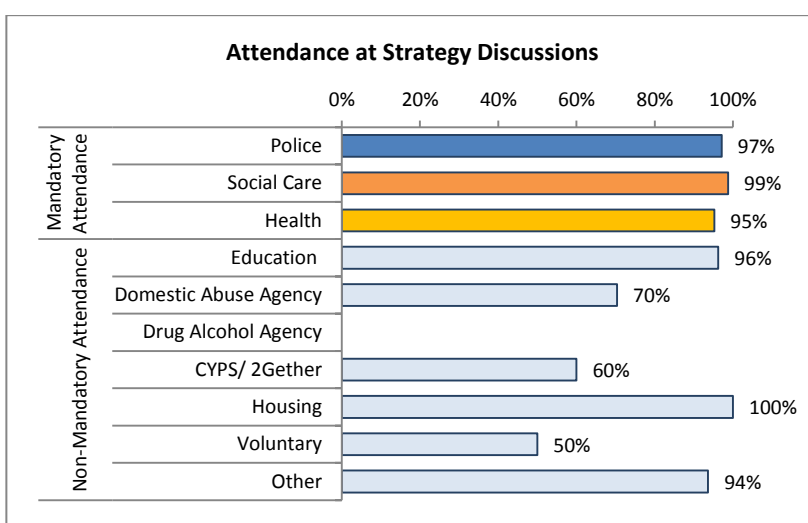
Strategy Discussions



Timeliness of initial Strategy Discussions improved in November but remained below target (85%, 261 of 308 children against a target of 90%).



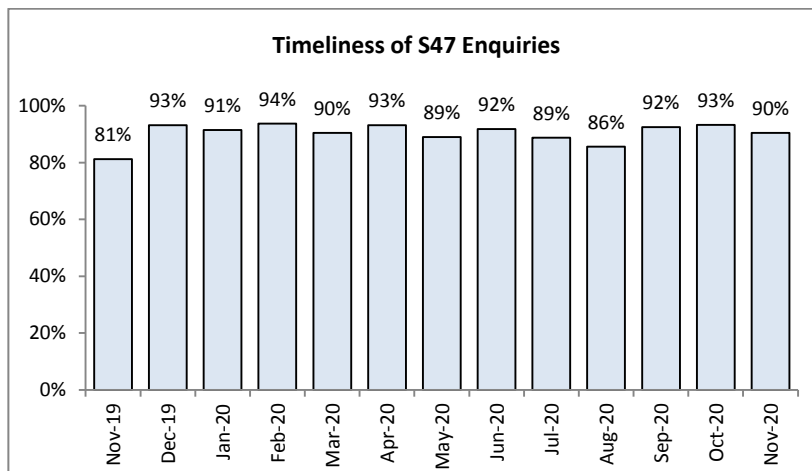
The majority of Strategy Discussions continued to progress to an S47 enquiry (77%, 253 of 330).



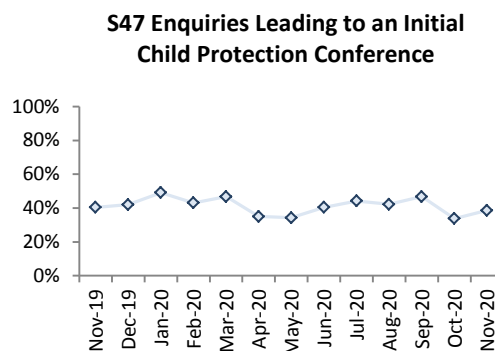
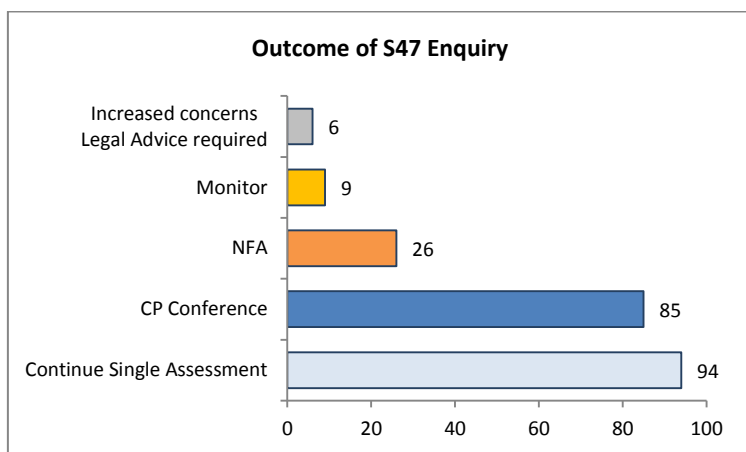
Attendance at Strategy Discussions by mandatory partners was good in November. There were 13 Strategy Discussions that don't appear to have benefitted from Health participation, where Health partners were invited. There were also 9 Strategy Discussions that Police were invited to but which they did not attend and 4 where a Social Care worker does not appear to have attended .

There were a number of discussions between multi-agency partners that were recorded as Strategy Discussions where one of the mandatory partners was recorded as not invited (86): Health (57), Police (19) and Social Care (10).

S47 Enquiries



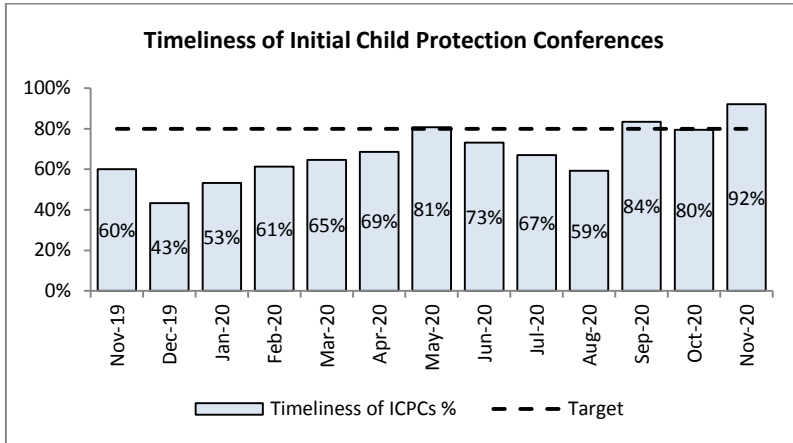
Timeliness of S47 Enquiries was high in November (90%, 199 of 220 children).



Almost two-fifths of children progressed to an initial child protection conference following an S47 enquiry in November (39%, 85 children of 220).

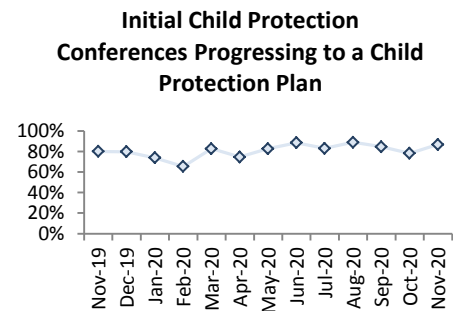
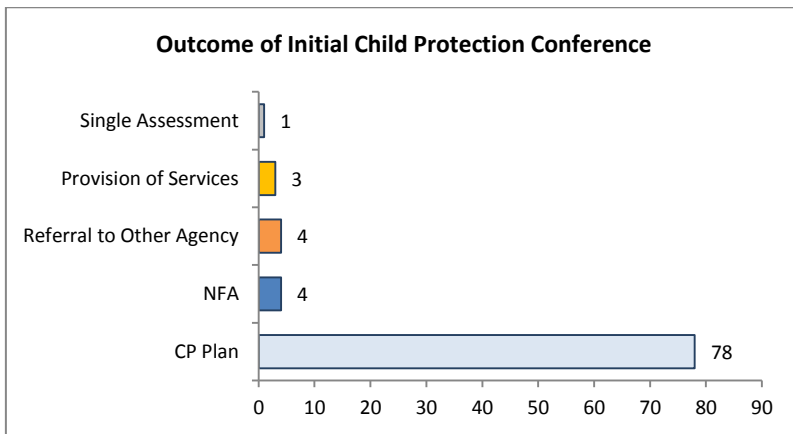
The outcome for a high proportion of S47 enquiries was to proceed with a single assessment (42%, 94 children).

Initial Child Protection Conferences



★ Performance is better than the peer comparator average: **73.1%** (Mar 2019)

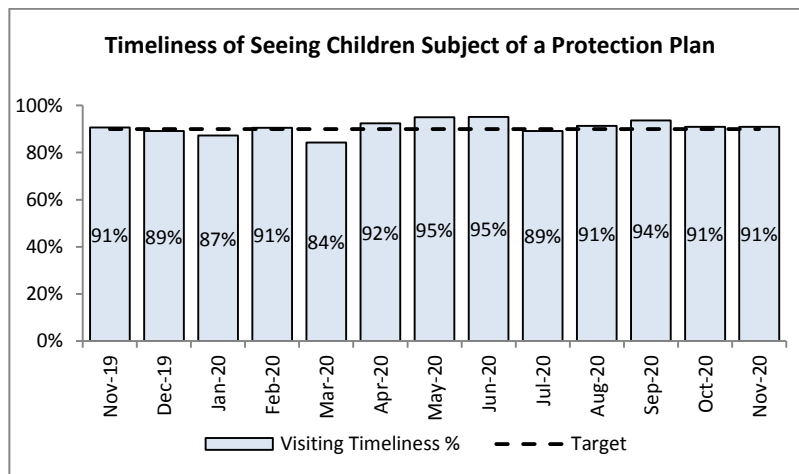
Conferences for 83 of 90 children were timely in November (92%). This is an improvement and performance is above target.



The majority of children who had an initial child protection conference in November were made subject of a protection plan (87%, 78 children).

For 12 children undergoing an ICPC a protection plan was not deemed to be required.

Children Subject to a Protection Plan



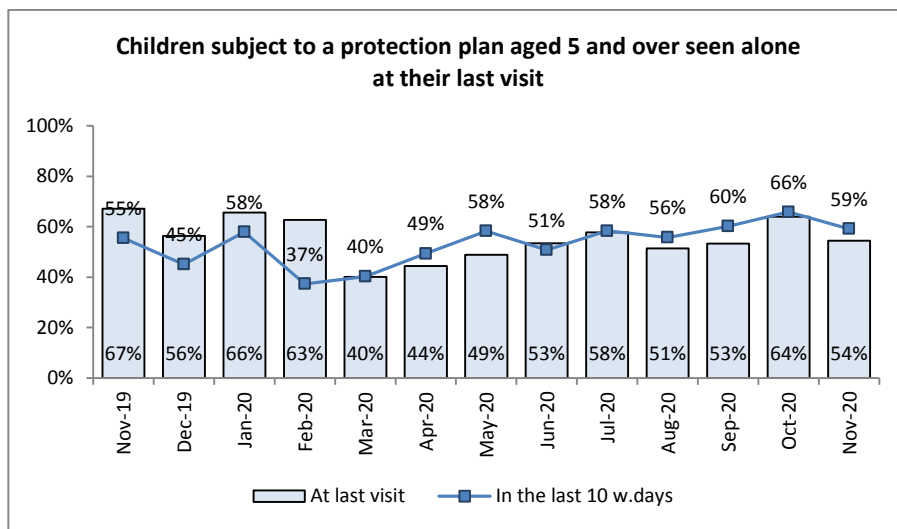
The majority of children subject to a protection plan were seen in a timely way in November (91%, 649 children) and performance was above target (90%). This measure is monitored in the **Accelerated Improvement plan**.

30 children were seen virtually in November (4% of children subject to a plan).

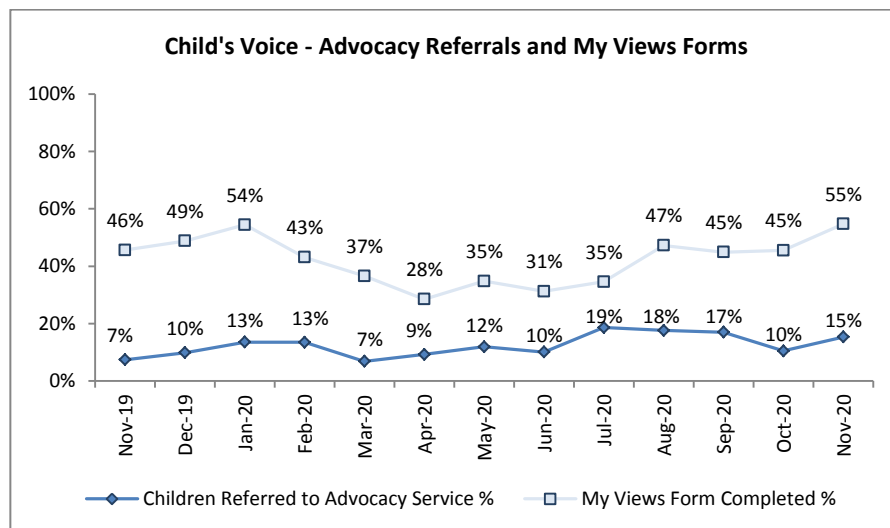
65 children had not been seen within 10 working days at the end of November (9%); 13 of these had not been seen in more than 20 working days.

| In Time - Sept | | In Time - Oct | | In Time - Nov | |
|----------------|------|---------------|------|---------------|------|
| Cotswolds | 100% | Stroud | 100% | DCYPS | 100% |
| Stroud | 100% | DCYPS | 100% | Other | 100% |
| DCYPS | 100% | Other | 100% | Cotswolds | 98% |
| FoD | 99% | Tewkesbury | 94% | Cheltenham | 94% |
| Gloucester | 94% | Cotswolds | 93% | Stroud | 93% |
| Tewkesbury | 92% | Gloucester | 89% | Tewkesbury | 92% |
| Cheltenham | 87% | FoD | 89% | Gloucester | 88% |
| Other | n/a | Cheltenham | 87% | FoD | 85% |

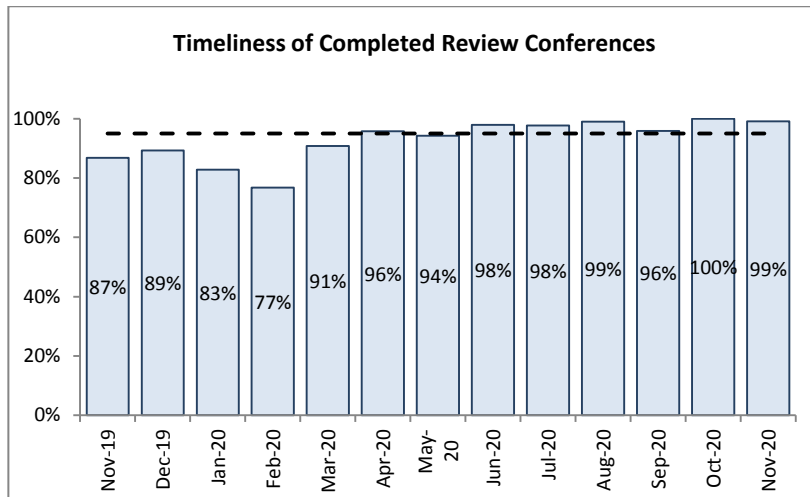
Timeliness of seeing children in the Forest of Dean declined for a second month, from 99% in September to 85% in November and was below target.



Of the 470 children subject to a protection plan aged 5 and over, three-fifths had been seen alone within the last 10 working days (59%). This is a decline from last month.

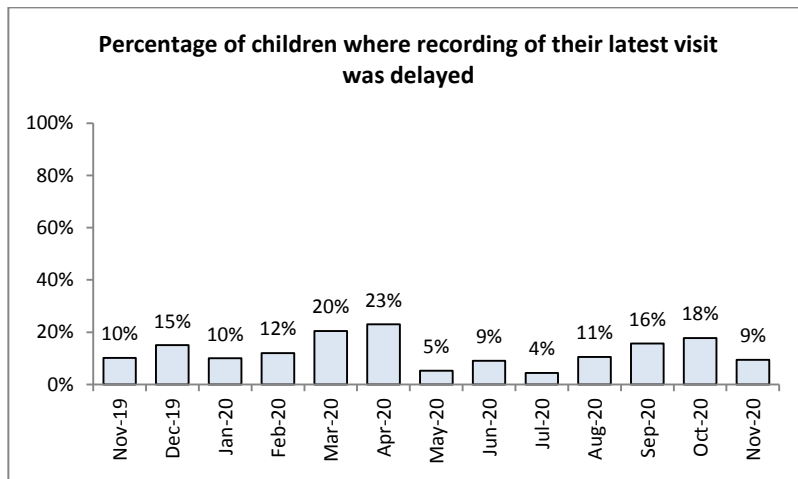


The proportion of children undergoing a conference in November who completed a My Views form increased (up 10% points to 55%). 15% of children who had a conference in November were referred to the Advocacy service.

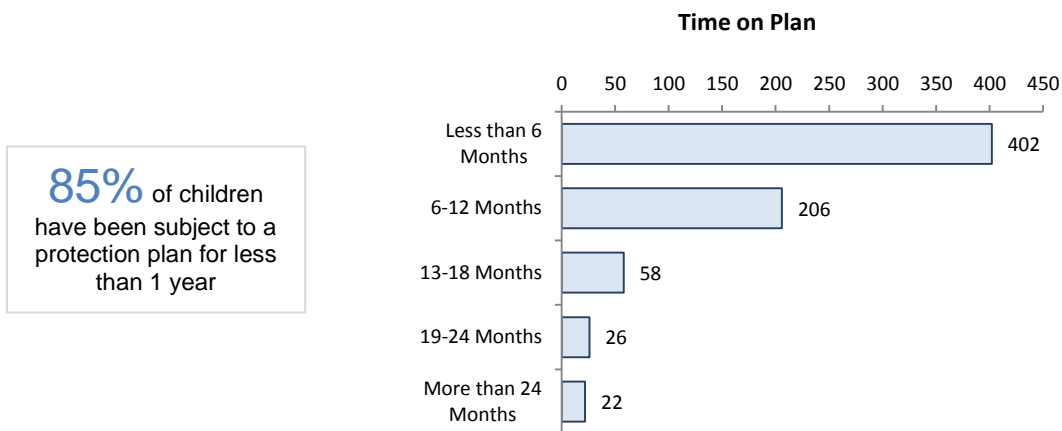


The overwhelming majority of review conferences took place within timescale in November (99%, 215 children). Performance is above target (95%)

Of the 592 children who have been subject to a protection plan for more than 3 months, all children have a review that is up-to-date (100%).



There was a reduction in the number of children for whom the recording of a visit was delayed in November (9%), down from 18%.



The number of children who have been subject to their plan for more than two years increased for the third month (22, up from 14 in August, 3.1%. This is slightly higher than our Peer Group comparators (2.4%) and target (2%).

All of these children are in pre (3) or court (19) proceedings.

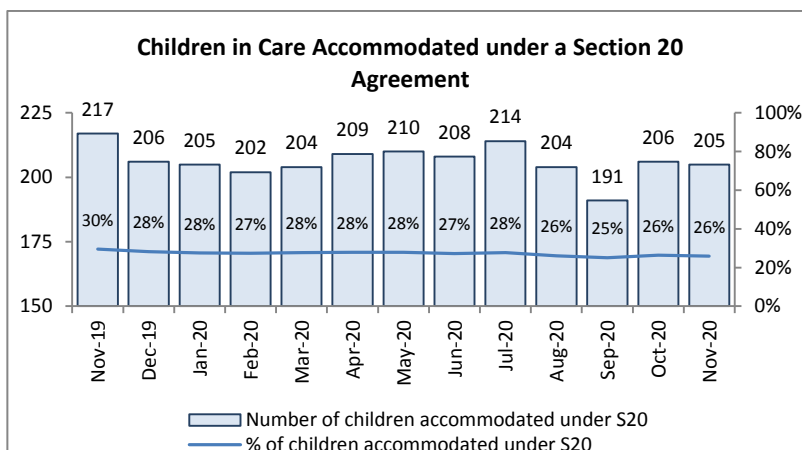
3 children have been subject to a protection plan for 4 years and 3 months; court proceedings for these children have been ongoing for 25 weeks.

| | Second and subsequent protection plans | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|--|------|-----|------|---------|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|---------|-----|
| | Sept | Oct | Nov | Sept | | | Oct | | | Nov | | |
| | Overall | | | 1st | 2nd/sub | % | 1st | 2nd/sub | % | 1st | 2nd/sub | % |
| Cheltenham | 39% | 39% | 37% | 18 | 4 | 18% | 10 | 3 | 23% | 18 | 1 | 5% |
| Cotswolds | 46% | 45% | 46% | 5 | 3 | 38% | 3 | 2 | 40% | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| FoD | 35% | 33% | 34% | 10 | 1 | 9% | 12 | 1 | 8% | 5 | 2 | 29% |
| Gloucester | 31% | 36% | 34% | 27 | 2 | 7% | 5 | 14 | 74% | 20 | 3 | 13% |
| Stroud | 46% | 42% | 43% | 2 | 4 | 67% | 6 | 0 | 0% | 4 | 9 | 69% |
| Tewkesbury | 34% | 37% | 39% | 3 | 0 | 0% | 2 | 3 | 60% | 9 | 6 | 40% |
| DCYPS | 17% | 17% | 17% | | | n/a | | | n/a | | | n/a |
| Other | n/a | 100% | 50% | | | n/a | | | n/a | 1 | 0 | 0% |

All localities are holding worse than target proportions of children subject to a second or subsequent plan overall.

Tewkesbury had the highest level of children returning to plans in November 9 of 13 children starting plans).

Children in Care

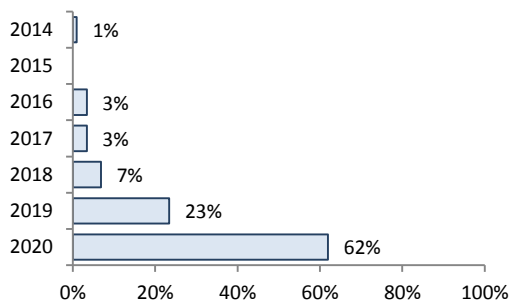


Just over a quarter of children in care were accommodated under a Section 20 agreement at the end of November (26%, 205 children). This is within tolerance of target (25%) but remains an outlier compared with the national average (18%, March 2019).

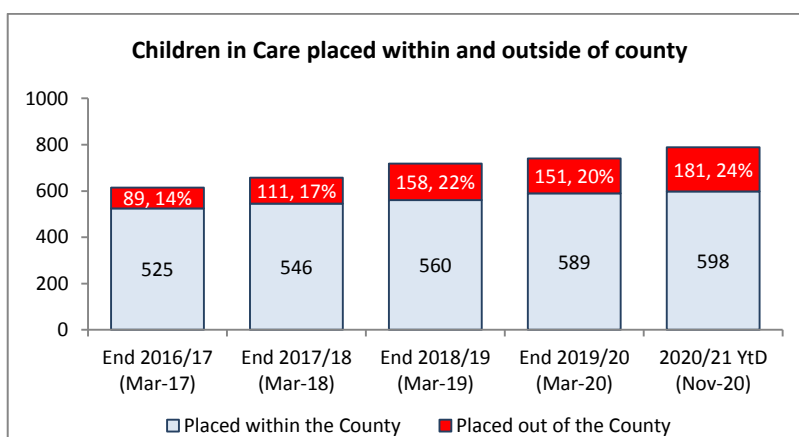
Just under one-fifth of children accommodated in care under an S20 agreement are in proceedings (18%, 37 children), down from one-third in September:

- 17 children are in pre-proceedings (8%)
- 20 children are in court proceedings (10%)

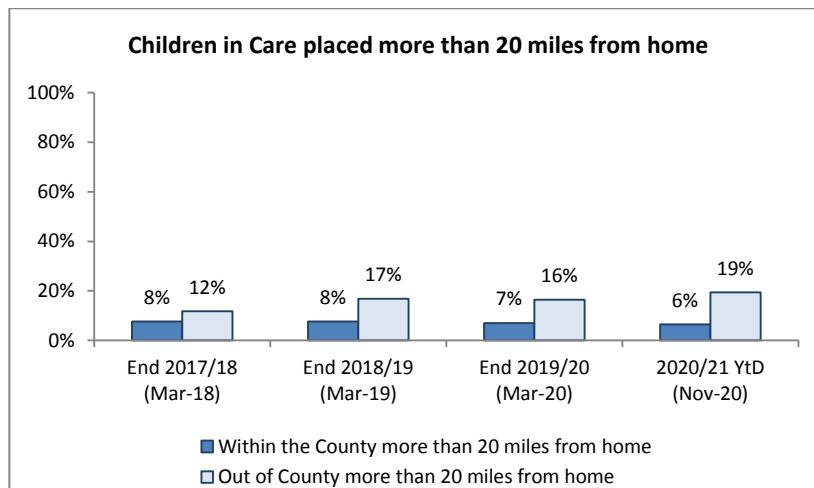
Time Since S20 Start Date



Nearly two-thirds of the children accommodated under a Section 20 agreement came into care this year (62%, up from 57% last month).



While the volume of children in care has continued to increase year on year, we are accommodating more children each year within Gloucestershire. However, there are a growing proportion of children being accommodated out of County: just under a quarter of our children in care (181 children, 24%), up from 20% in March.

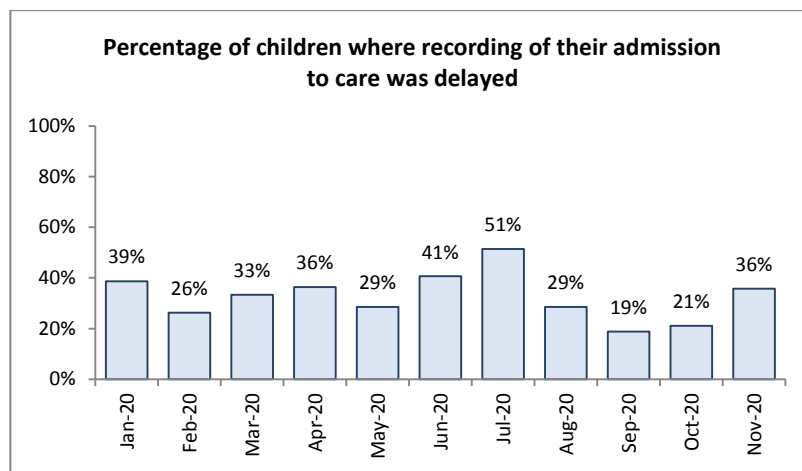


A quarter of children in care are living more than 20 miles from their home (25%, 205 children, up from 173 children at the end of March).

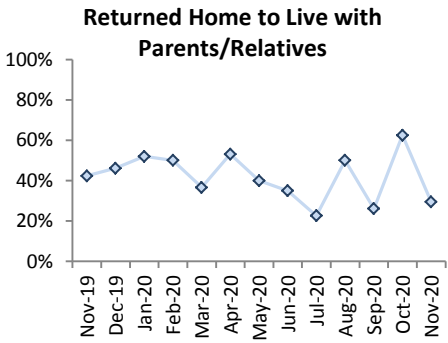
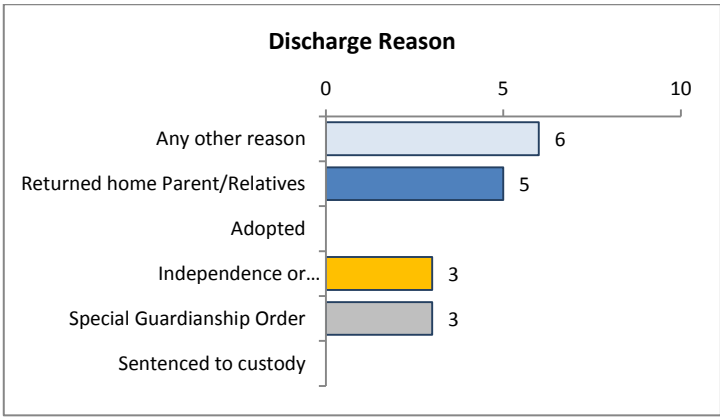
There were another 29 children (4%) where it is not possible to report if they live more than 20 miles from home, this is because the child's home post code is not recorded.

154 children living more than 20 miles from home were in out of County placements (19.4%); this is within tolerance of our peer group and target (19.1%).

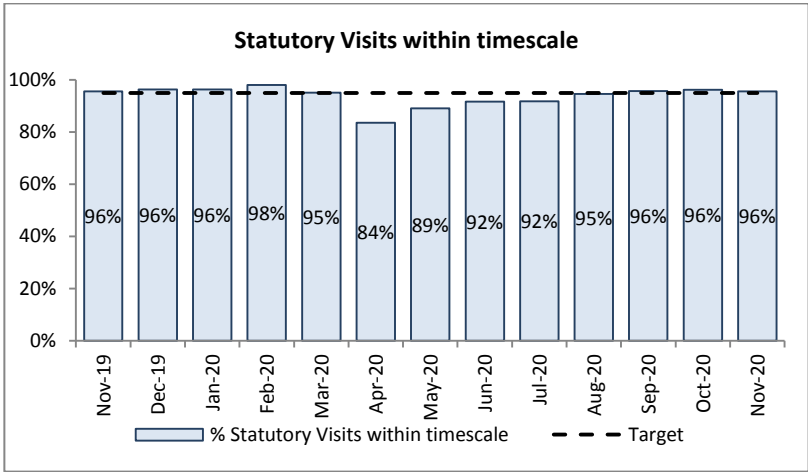
For 51 children, their placement was within Gloucestershire but more than 20 miles from their home (6%).



Recording admission to care was delayed for just over a third of children in care in November (36%). This is an increase similar to the levels seen at the start of 2020 and requires improvement to ensure that case recording is reflective of a child's circumstances in a timely way.

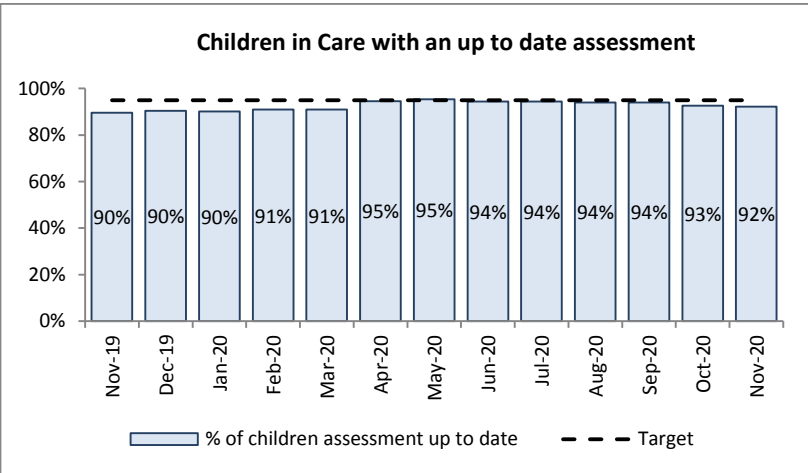


Children being discharged from care to return home to parents/relatives has seen greater levels of fluctuation (29% in November).



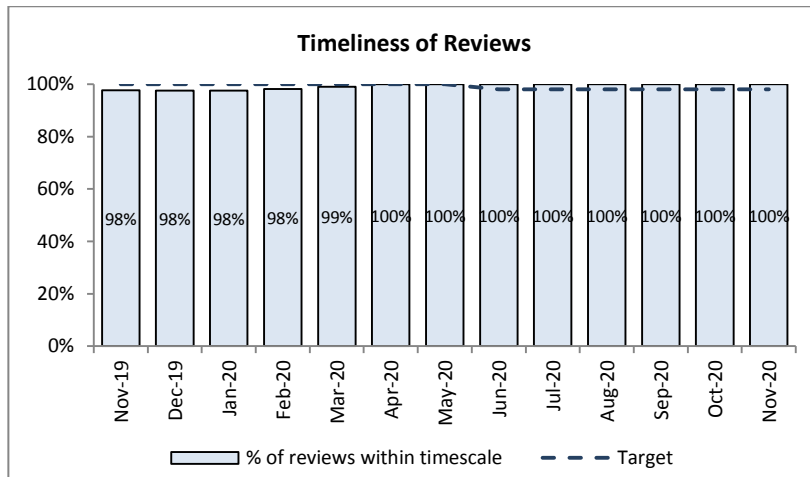
96% of children in care had an up to date Statutory Visit at the end of November (757 children). Performance is above target (95%). This is a measure in the **Accelerated Improvement plan**.

A further 7 children were also seen virtually in a timely way in November (0.9% of children in care).

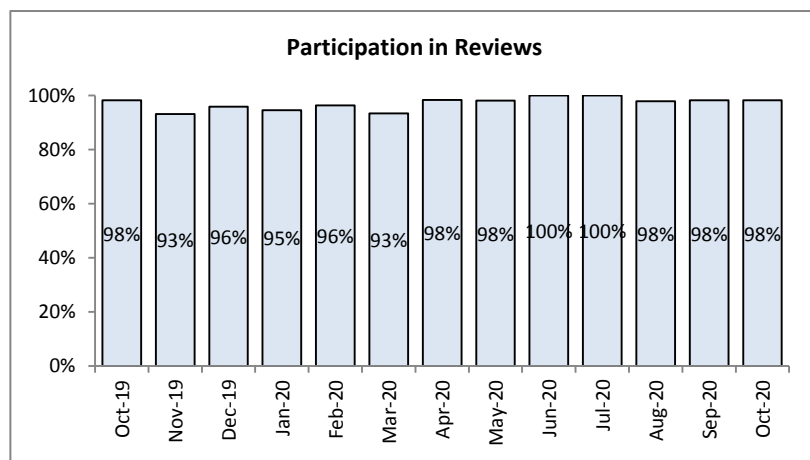


The proportion of children in care with an up to date assessment has continued to decline from 94% in September (660 out of 702 children) to 92% in November (672 out of 729 children), this does however relate to a higher number of children. Performance remains below but within tolerance of target (95%).

There were 57 children for whom an assessment was overdue.

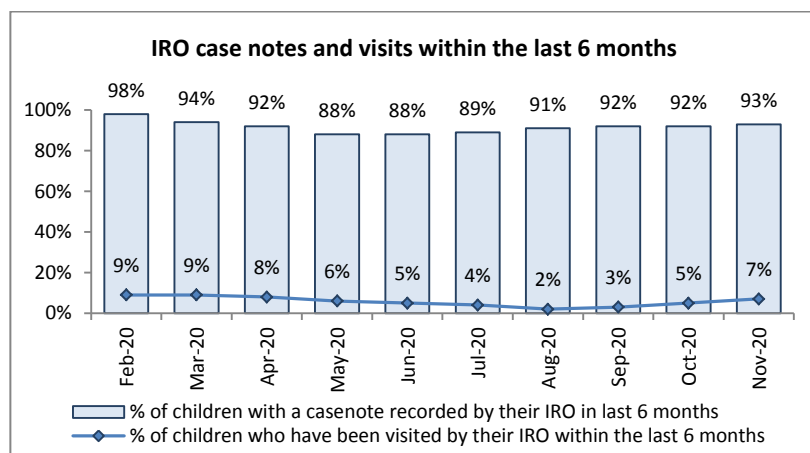


Reviews took place for 172 children in November, all of which were completed within timescale for the eighth month. Performance is above target (98%).

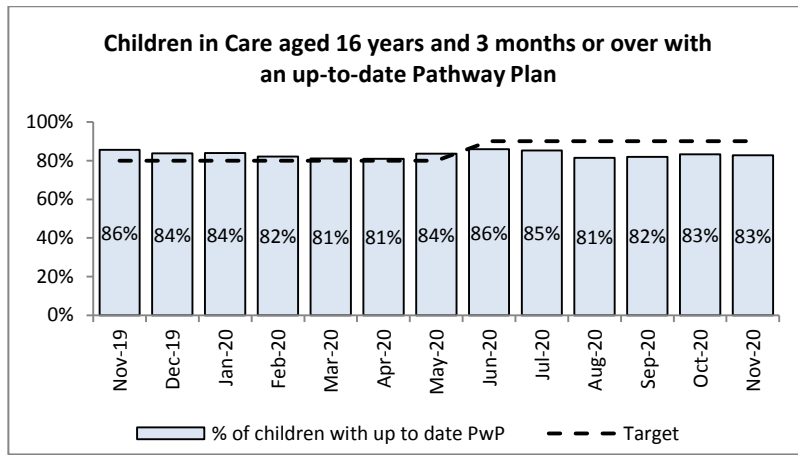


Note: Graph excludes children aged under 4 years and young people who have a Pathway Plan as participation in their review is not captured. Participation cannot be recorded for all reviews as the form for young people on a Pathway Plan does not allow this information to be captured. These young people equate to the 13% of reviews (22 young people) in November.

98% of children had their views represented in their review either by attending or via an Advocate, IRO or other media (110 children).

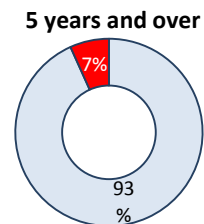
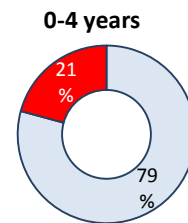
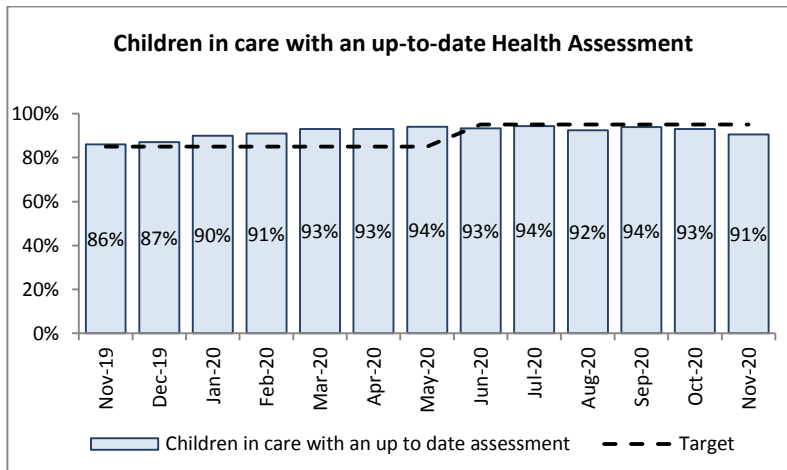


A high proportion of children had evidence of the IROs footprint on their case notes in the last 6 months (93%). Only 7% of children in care have had a visit from their IRO in the last 6 months. Performance remains very low.



83% of children in care aged 16 years and 3 months who have been in care for more than 3 months, had an up-to-date Pathway Plan in place. Performance remains below target (90%).

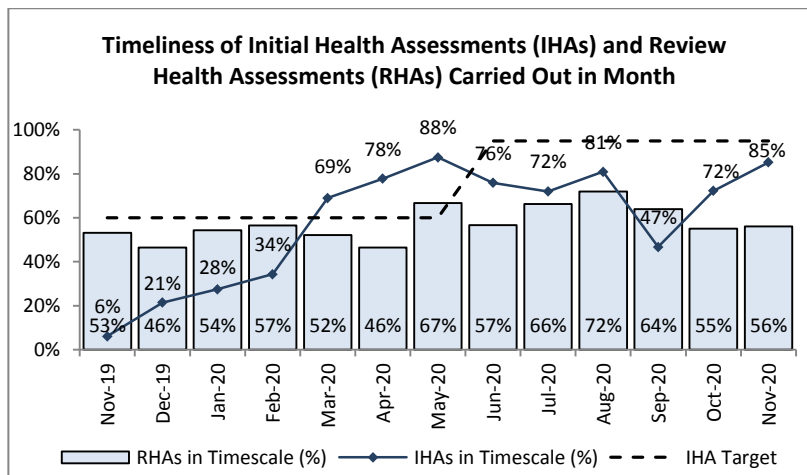
There were 33 young people who have no Pathway Plan in place. There were no young people whose Pathway Plan hadn't been reviewed in the last 6 months.



The proportion of children with an up-to-date health assessment declined for the second month, from 94% to 91% (717 children). Performance is within tolerance of target.

Timeliness of health assessments for our younger children in care (Under 5 years) has also continued to decrease from 89% in September to 79% and remains below target (95%). Performance for our older children in care (aged 5 years and over) has declined from 95% to 93% and is below but within tolerance of target (95%).

A health assessment for 75 children in care (9%) was overdue at the end of November. For 9 children their Initial Health Assessment was overdue. For the remaining 66 children their Review Health Assessment was overdue.

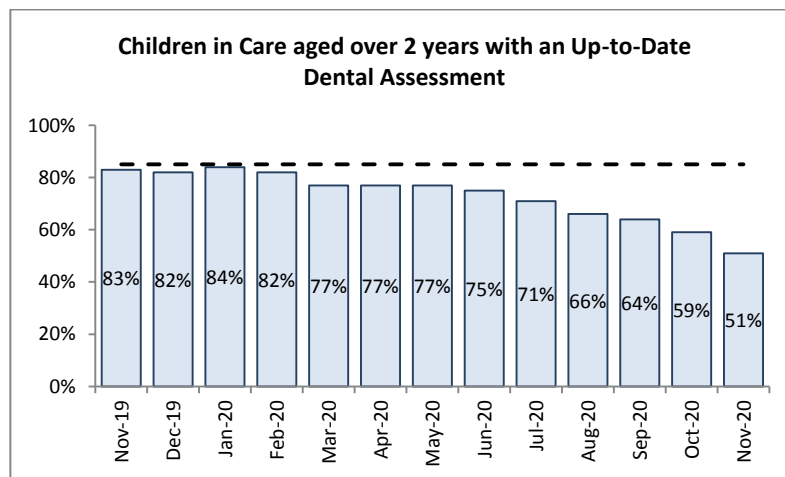


27 children in care received an IHA in November; 23 of these were within timescale (85%). This is a continued increase from 47% in September but remains below target (90%).

IHA timeliness for children entering care in November

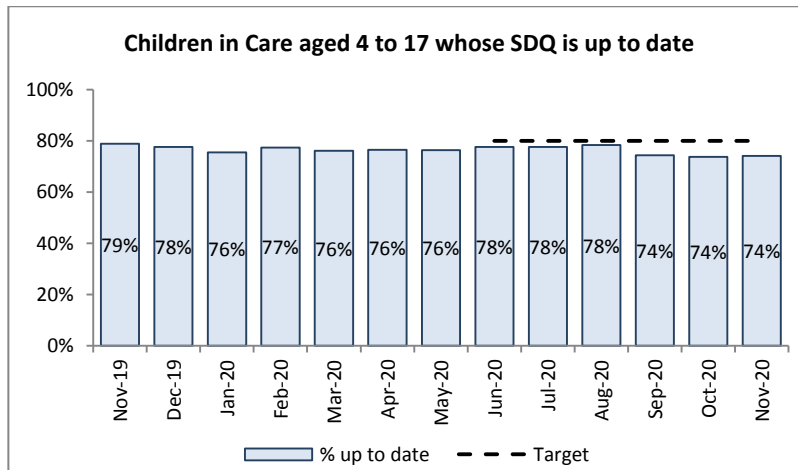
| | | |
|---|---|-----|
| Entered and left care in-month before an IHA could take place | 1 | n/a |
| Received an IHA in timescale | 9 | 31% |
| IHA appointment planned within timescale | 8 | 28% |
| IHA appointment planned out of timescale | 3 | 10% |
| IHA requested, no appointment recorded | 6 | 21% |
| No appointment request recorded | 3 | 10% |

41 children in care received an RHA in November. For 23 children, their RHA took place in timescales (56%). This is a marginal increase from 55% in October and remains below 72% in August.



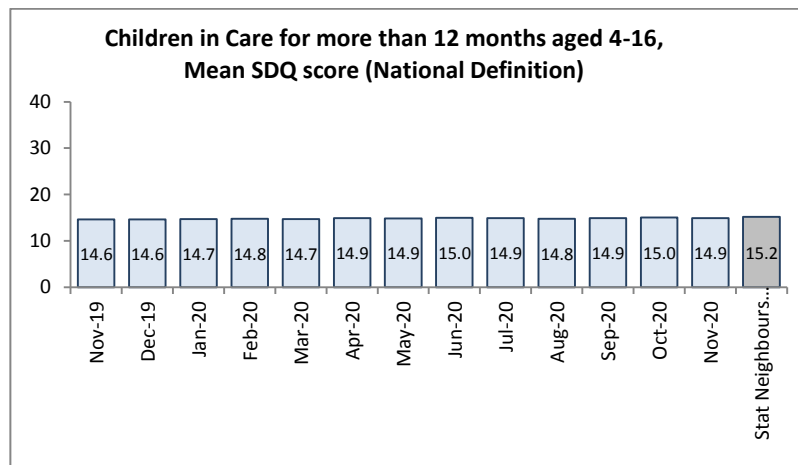
The proportion of children in care aged 2 or older with an up to date dental assessment continued to reduce in November, down to 51% from 84% in January. Performance is below target (85%).

There are 354 children whose dental check is overdue (49%).

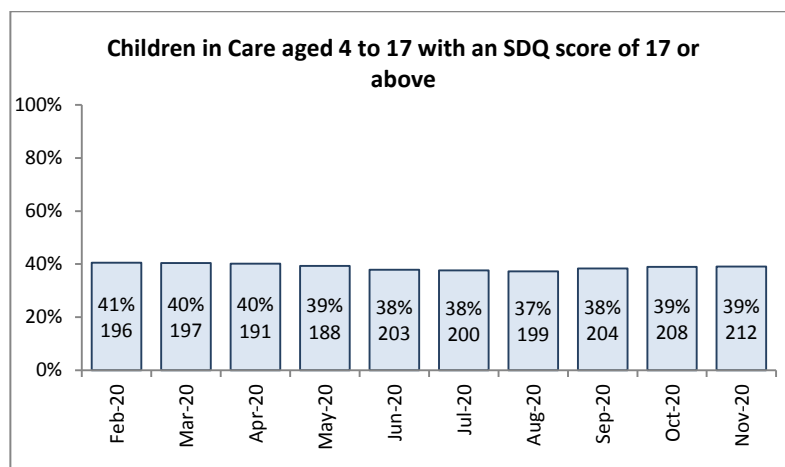


Three-quarters of children in care aged 4-17 had an up to date Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) or were awaiting their first SDQ (74%, 490 of 661 children). Performance remained static for the third month and is below target (80%).

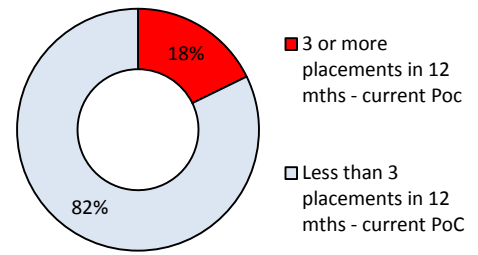
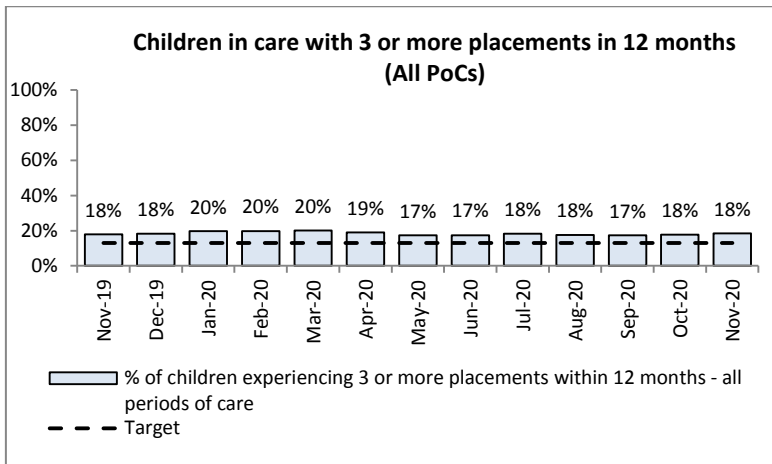
We do not have timely sight of the emotional health of just over a quarter of our children in care aged 4 to 17 (171 children, 26%).



The average emotional health score for our children in care aged 4-16 (age group as defined by the national measure) who have been in care over 12 months is marginally better than our statistical neighbours.



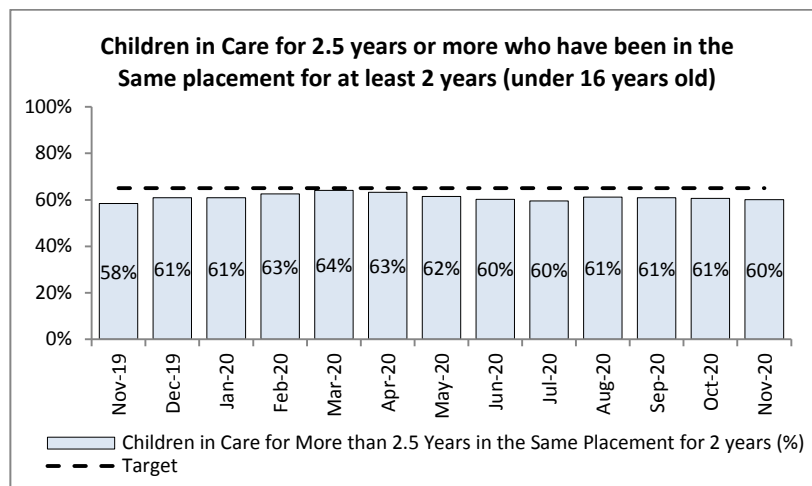
Almost two-fifths of our children in care aged 4-17 had an SDQ score of 17 or above following their latest SDQ, indicating that their emotional well being is a cause for concern (39%). This equates to the highest number of children in 10 months (212 children).



Peer Group – All PoCs (Mar 2019): 9.8% ▲

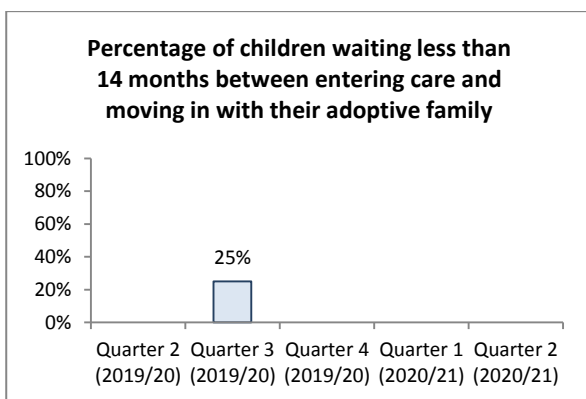
18% of children in care have had 3 or more placements in the last 12 months across all periods of care (145 children). Short-term instability is worse than target (13%) and almost double that of our peer group comparators (9.8%). This is an **Accelerated Improvement plan** measure.

18% of children in care have had 3 or more placements within the last 12 months during their current period of care (140 children).



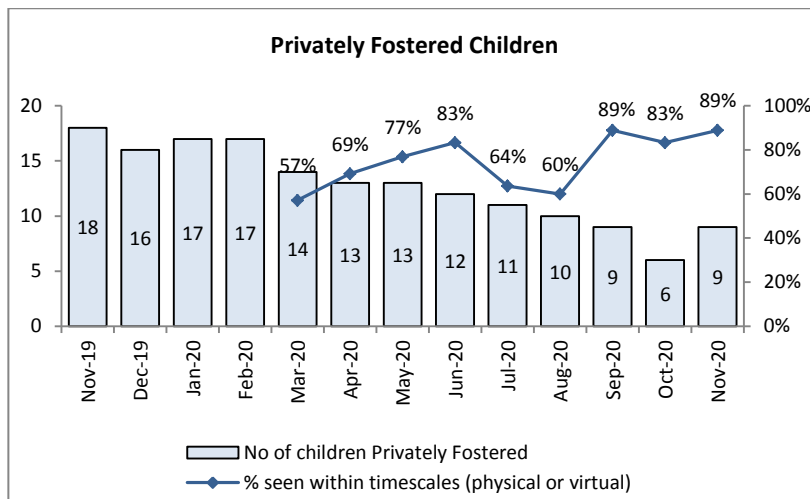
Peer Group (Mar 2019): 70.1% ▲

The number of children in care experiencing Long-term stability has remained the same (128 children, 60%). This is below target (65%) and our peer group (70.1%). This is an **Accelerated Improvement plan** measure.



12 children were placed with their adoptive families between September-December 2019. For 3 children (25%) this was within 14 months of the date they came into care.

Note: No data is available for the latest three quarters; pressures relating to the COVID-19 pandemic have been cited. Current adoption timeliness data is not reflective of the national definition. Work is being carried out to understand the full definition and what data is required to be able to report to the exact definition.

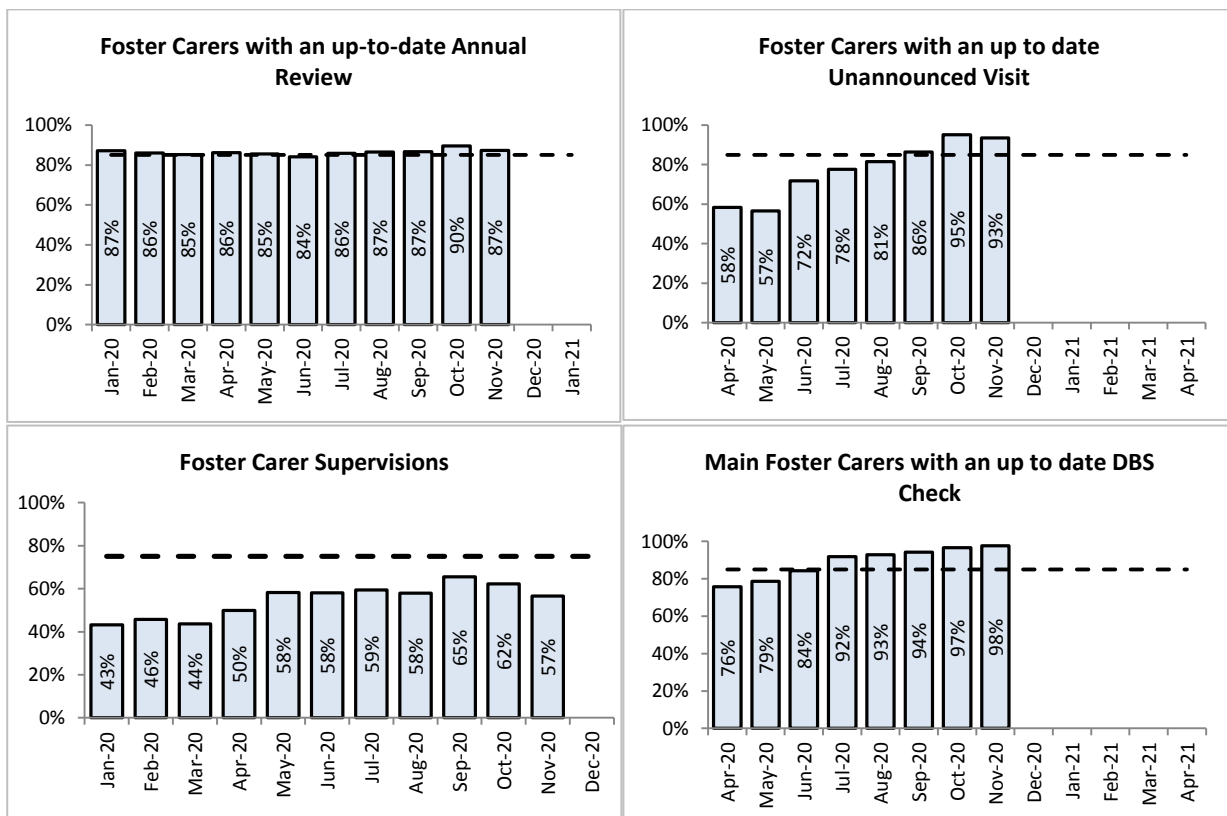


The number of Private Fostering arrangements remains low, with 9 children being privately fostered at the end of November.

8 children received a Statutory Visit within timescales in October (89%). The one child who did not receive a Statutory Visit in timescale was seen virtually within timescales.

Foster Carers

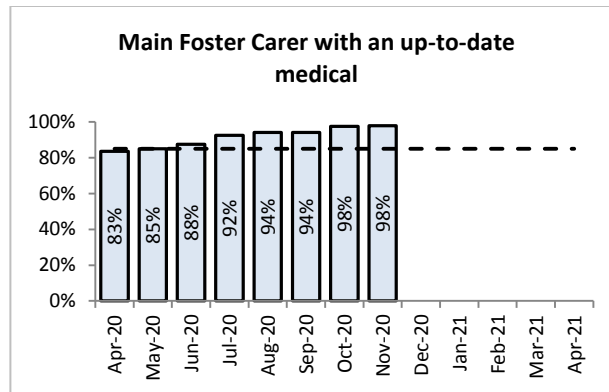
There remain some data quality issues that need to be resolved i.e. Foster Carers with no allocated team.



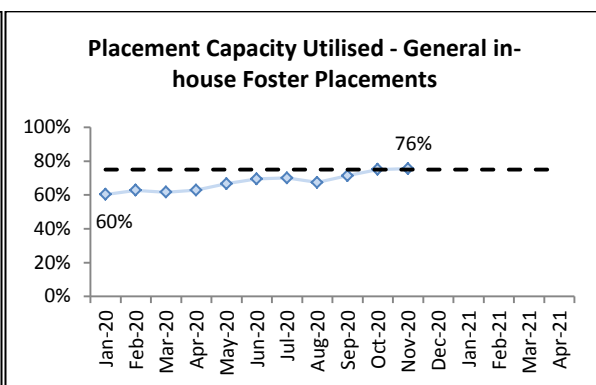
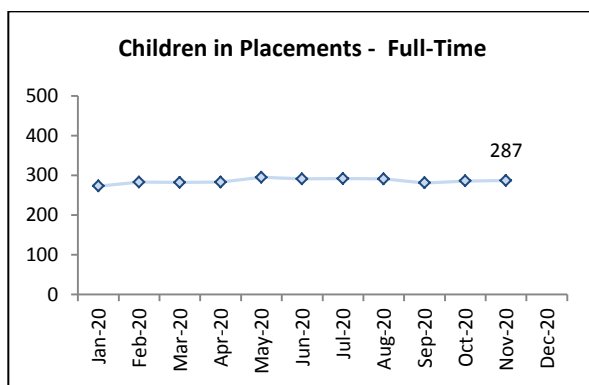
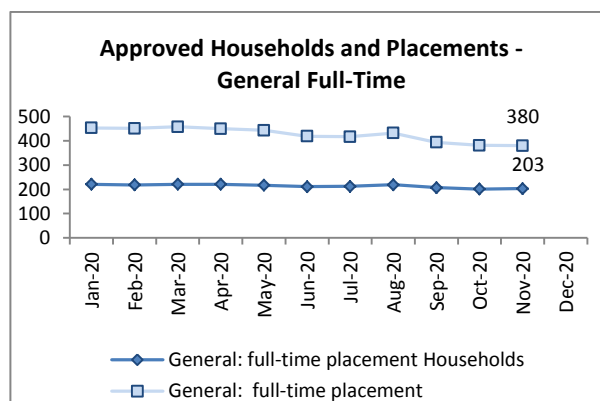
A high proportion of Foster Carers have an up-to-date Annual Review (87%), have received and unannounced visit within timescales (93%) and have an up-to-date DBS check (98%). Performance is above target (85%).

Of the measures relating to oversight and risk management for Foster Carers, of most concern is Foster Carer supervisions. Delays in recording are impacting on reporting, however, once data is refreshed, performance still remains significantly below target with 57% of Foster Carers receiving a monthly supervision in November against a target of 75%.

80% of Foster Carers had received a supervision within the last 2 months; this is also below target (90%).



The vast majority of main Foster Carers also had an up-to-date medical at the end of November (98%); performance is above target (85%).

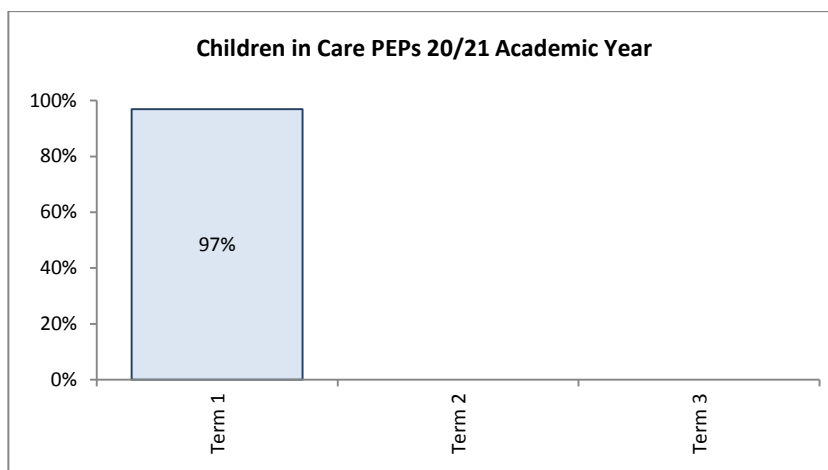


Note: After investigation of the Fostering Children’s register it was identified that the register was not reflective of all children who had been placed with In-house Foster Carers. This error has now been corrected and data refreshed.

There were 203 approved general full-time foster care households at the end of November, with the capacity to offer 380 placements to children. There were 287 children living in these placements, equating to just over three-quarters of in-house foster placement capacity being utilised (76%). Performance has followed an improving trend, rising from 60% in January and is above target (75%).

The current data doesn't take into consideration Foster Carers who are taking a break or unable to accommodate children and the reasons for this. A solution is currently being implemented on the case management system which will give a much better understanding of capacity, as well as of the foster carers who can't currently accommodate children and the reasons why.

Education – Children in Care



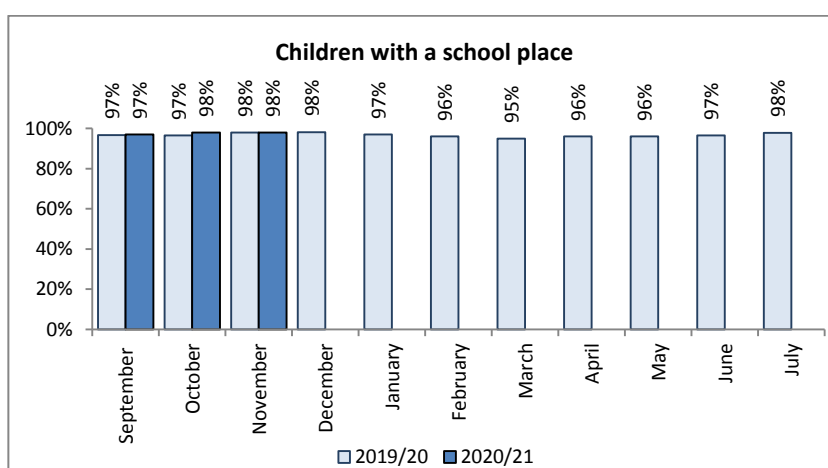
At the end of November, PEP meetings had taken place or were planned to take place for 97% of Early Years, Reception to Year 11 and Post 16 children in care (628 of 648 children) in the current term.

PEPs taken place or planned to take place by the end of Term

| | Term 1 | |
|----------------------|--------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Early Years | 24 | 69% |
| Reception to Year 11 | 447 | 96% |
| Post 16 | 157 | 94% |

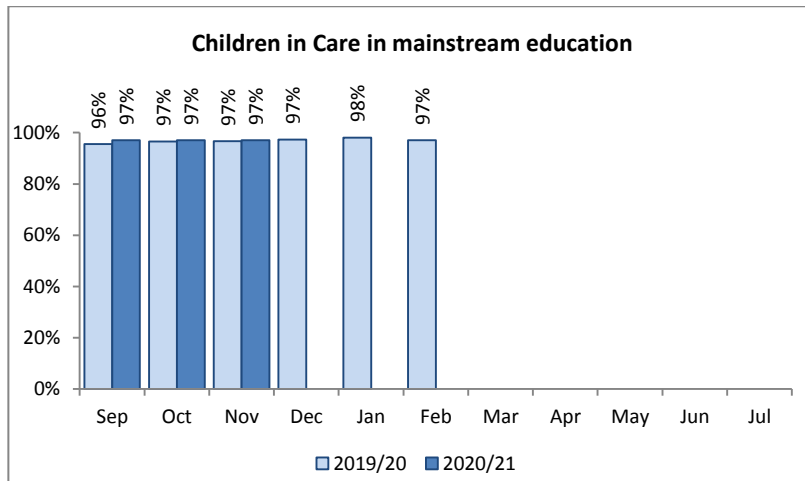
69% of Early Years PEPs, (24 out of 35 Children), 96% of Reception to Year 11 PEPs (447 out of 466 children) and 94% of Post 16 PEPs (157 out of 167 children) are anticipated to take place within timescales by the end of term based on the PEPs completed and planned so far.

For 9 Early Years children, 19 Reception to Year 11's and 20 Post-16's there is no PEP planned to take place, at the time of writing there were 3 weeks left before the end of term during which the Virtual School can work alongside Social Workers to support this taking place.



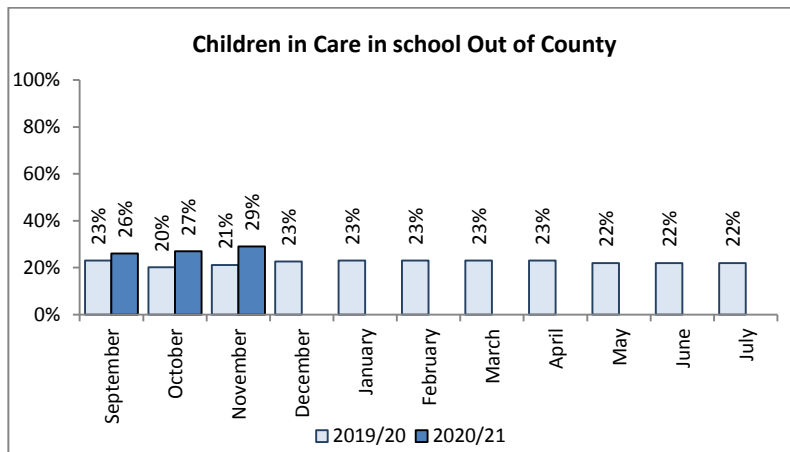
The majority of school aged children in care had a school place at the end of November (460 of 470 children).

There are 10 children who did not have a school place. All of these children had been without a school place for over 20 days. This included 1 child who has not had a school place since November 2019 but Education provision was planned to start on 1st December 2020.

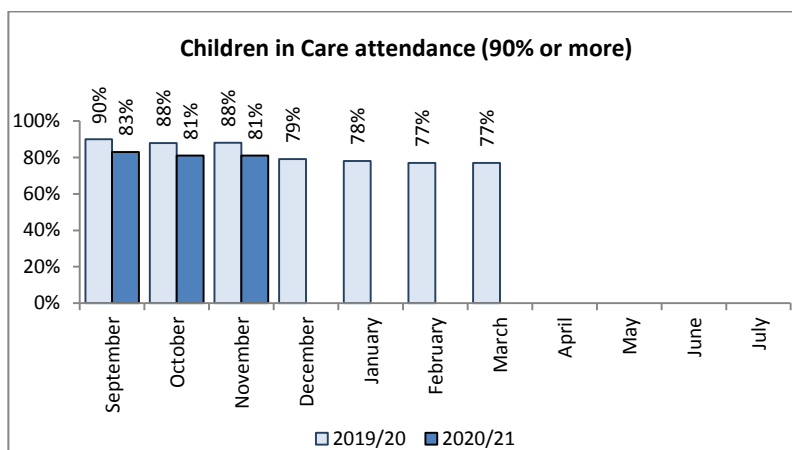


The majority of school age children in care with a school place were attending mainstream provision at the end of November (97%, 446 children).

14 children were attending alternative provision.



There were 133 students receiving education out of County in November (29%). This is a growing proportion of children against an increasing number of children in care.

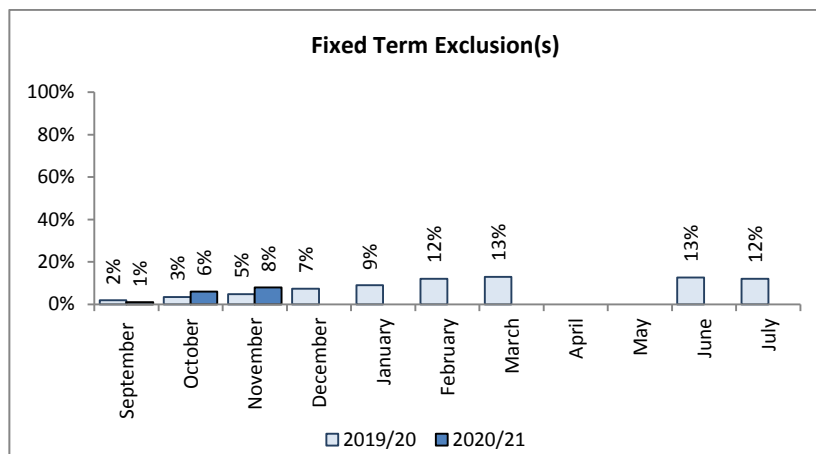


At the end of November, 81% of school age children in care had an attendance rate of 90% or more (382 out of 470 children). This is lower than the same time last academic year (88%) but is likely to be due to some children remaining at home due to COVID, self-isolation or shielding etc.

The majority of children open to Social Care have been risk assessed to understand whether they are safer at home and to determine whether increased interim support and protection is required.

| Attendance Rate | Number of school aged children in care | % attendance of school aged children in care |
|--------------------|--|--|
| 90% or over | 382 | 81.3% |
| 89% - 76% | 25 | 5.3% |
| 75% - 31% | 34 | 7.2% |
| 30% - 16% | 8 | 1.7% |
| 15% or below | 10 | 2.1% |
| Attendance Unknown | 1 | 0.2% |
| No School Place | 10 | 2.1% |
| | 470 | |

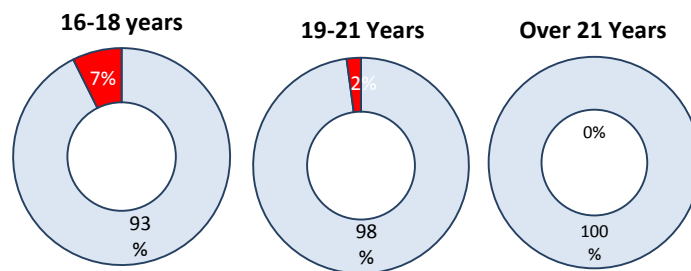
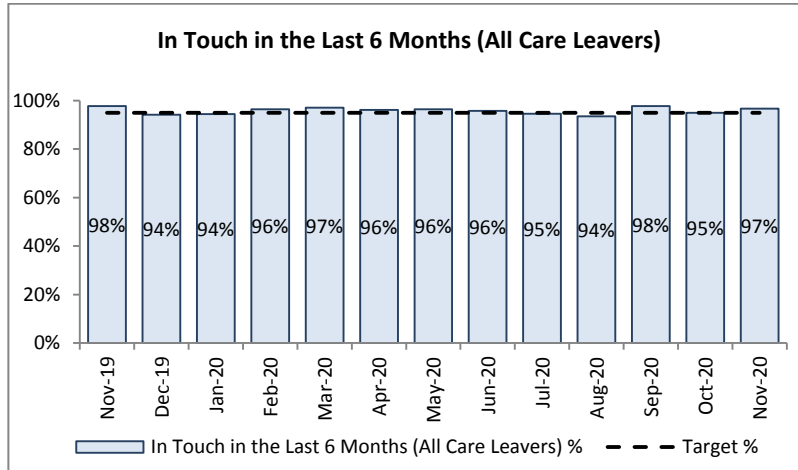
Of those school aged children in care with a school place, 52 children (11%) had attended fewer than three-quarters of school days of the academic year to date. For 10 of these children attendance was below 15% of school days. The attendance rate for 1 child was unknown.



At the end of November, 8% of school aged children in care had been fixed term excluded (39 children). This is higher than the same time during the 2019/20 Academic year (5%, 22 children).

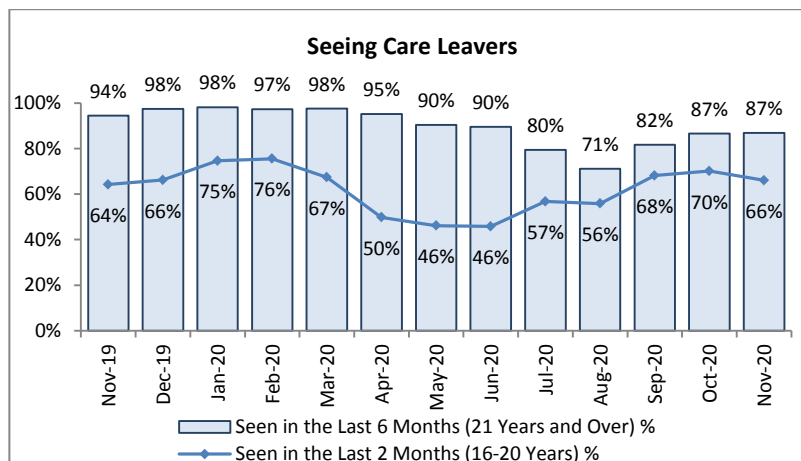
A total of 168 school days have been lost up until the end of November, this is also higher than the same time during the 2019/20 academic year (65 days).

Care Leavers



Overall, we have been in touch with 97% of our Care Leavers (428 of 443 Care Leavers); this is better than target (95%) and our peer group (87.1%).

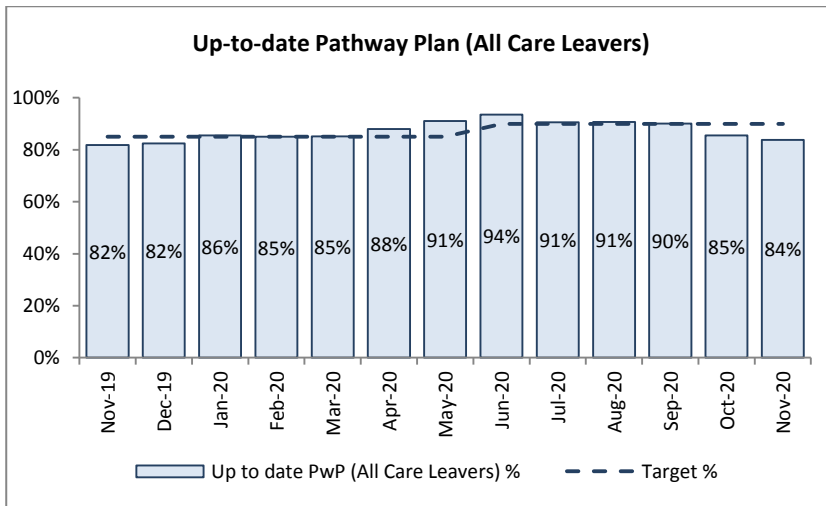
Contact with our younger Care Leavers improved (93%, up from 90%) and is within tolerance of target.



We have an increased duty to see our younger care leavers more regularly (up to their 21st birthday).

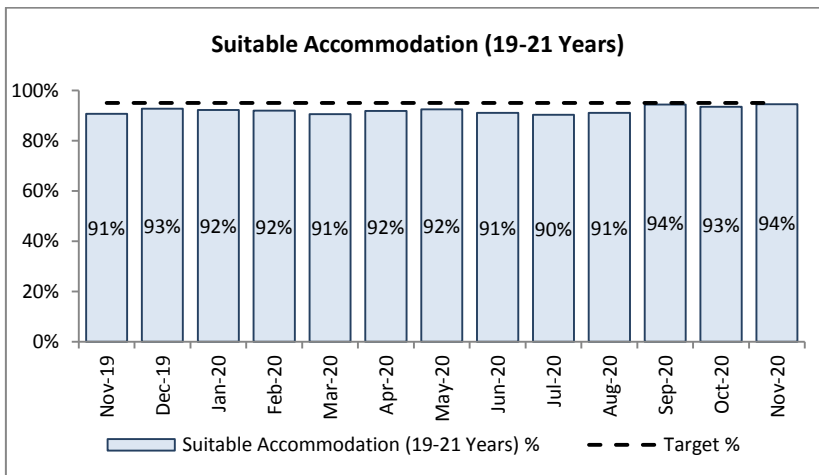
The proportion of Care Leavers aged 16-20 years seen within the last 2 months declined in November and remains low (66%, from 70% in October, 212 of 321 Care Leavers).

Timeliness of seeing our older Care Leavers (aged over 21) is better (87%, 106 of 122 Care Leavers). However, performance remains much lower than at the start of 2020 when older Care Leavers had almost universally been seen within timescale.

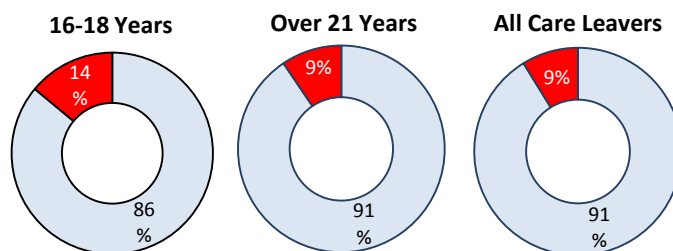


Pathway planning for our Care Leavers has followed a declining trend since June (94%, down to 84% in November (371 of 443 Care Leavers). This is an **Accelerated Improvement plan** measure. Performance is below target (90%).

There are 72 Care Leavers who do not have a Pathway Plan or whose plan is overdue review.



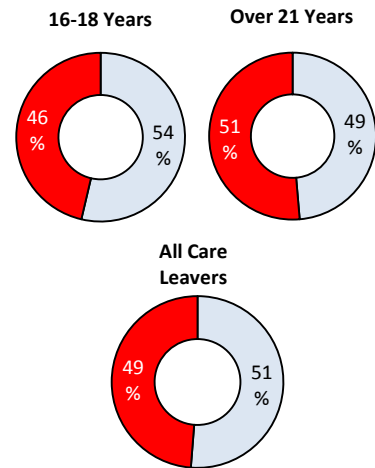
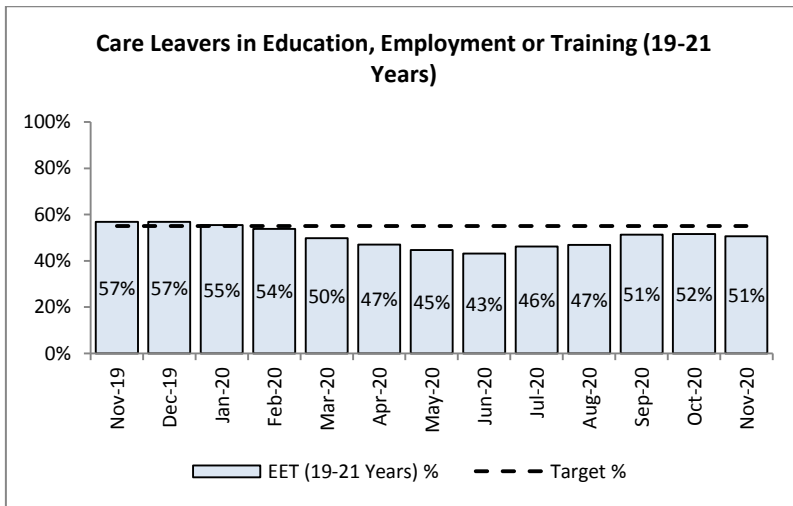
Peer Group (Mar 2019)
19-21 Year Olds: 83.8% ★



Overall, 91% of Care Leavers were living in suitable accommodation at the end of November, down from 94% in September. Performance for Care Leavers overall, as well as for older Care Leavers, (19-21 years and over 21 years) is below but within tolerance of the target (95%).

Living arrangements for our younger Care Leavers are not as good, with 86% living in suitable accommodation; performance remains below target (95%).

Overall there were 39 young people who were classified as living in unsuitable accommodation or where accommodation suitability had not been recorded.

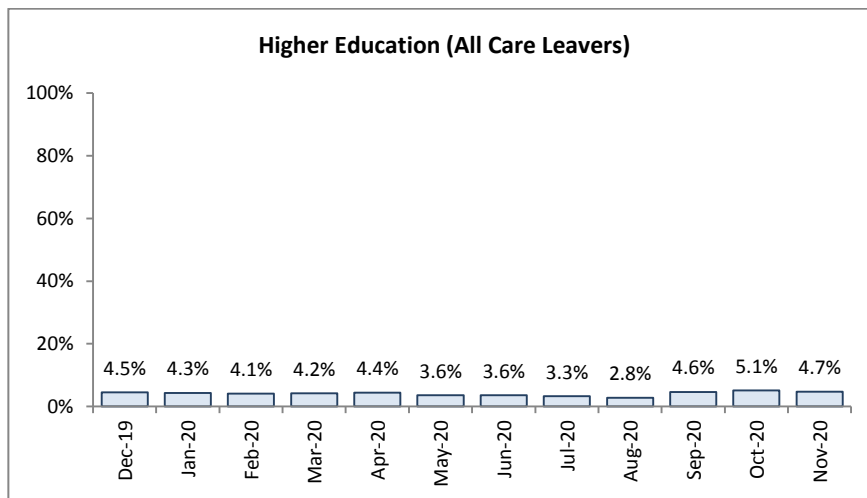


Half of our Care Leavers are in employment, education or training (51%); performance is below target (55%).

216 of our Care Leavers are not in employment, education or training.

51% of our 19-21 year old Care Leavers are in education, employment or training; this is below target (55%). However, performance is within tolerance of our peer group (53.9%). This is an **Accelerated Improvement plan** measure.

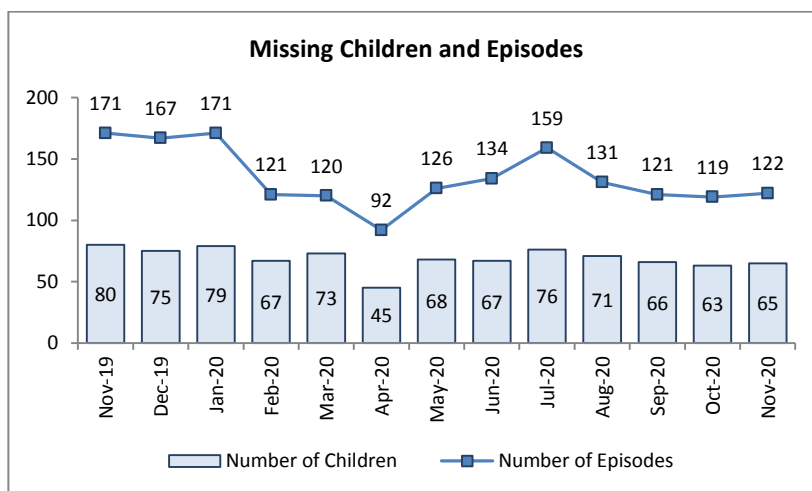
More of our younger Care Leavers are in employment, education or training (54%); this is within tolerance of target.



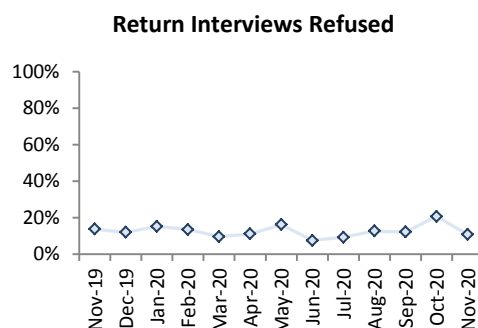
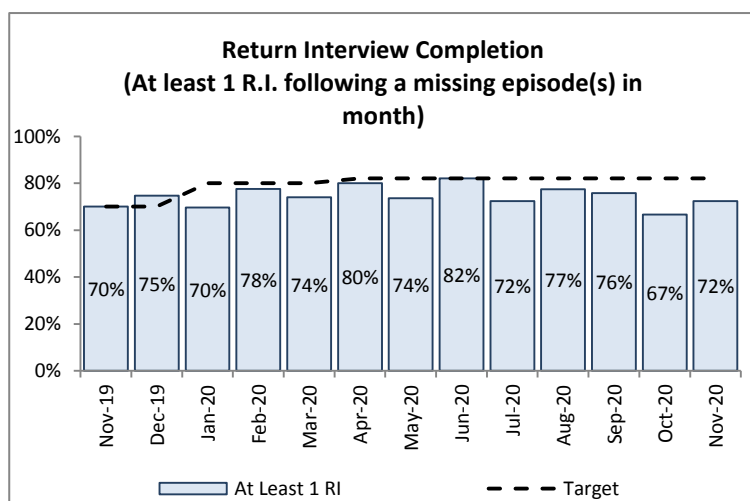
Care Leavers progressing to full-time higher education decreased slightly, (4.7%, 21 young people). This is in line with our peer group (4.7%) but remains below the South West and England (6.0%).

Missing Children and Child Exploitation

Missing Children



The number of children who went missing and the number of times children are going missing has remained relatively static for the past 3 months (around 65 children and 121 episode on average). Both the number of children and episodes have been within standard levels of variation throughout the majority of 2020/21 raising questions about the effectiveness of work to prevent children going missing, particularly where there are multiple missing episodes.

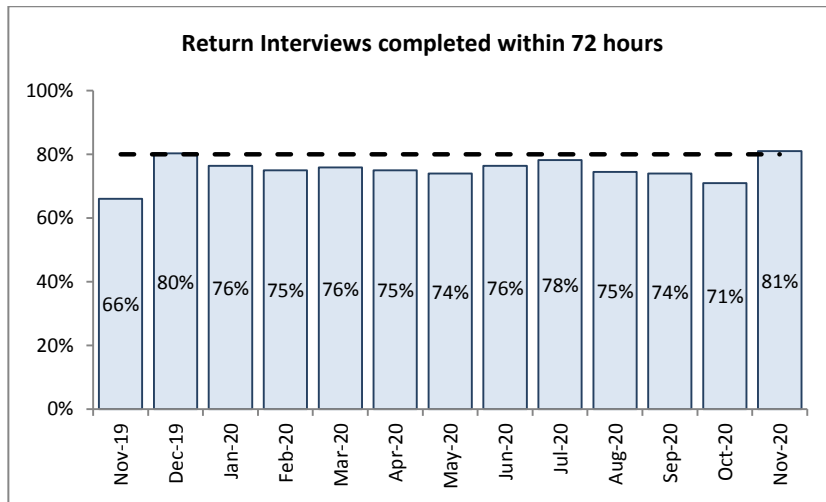


We spoke with 47 children who went missing in November (of 65 children, 72%); this is below target (82%).

Overall performance was impacted by Forest of Dean Locality, Gloucester North and South 11+ teams where return interview completion was below target.

11% of children who went missing in November refused to speak to a Social Worker following their missing episode (7 children).

45 of the 47 children who had had at least one return interview, had been spoken with following their most recent episode of missing (96%).

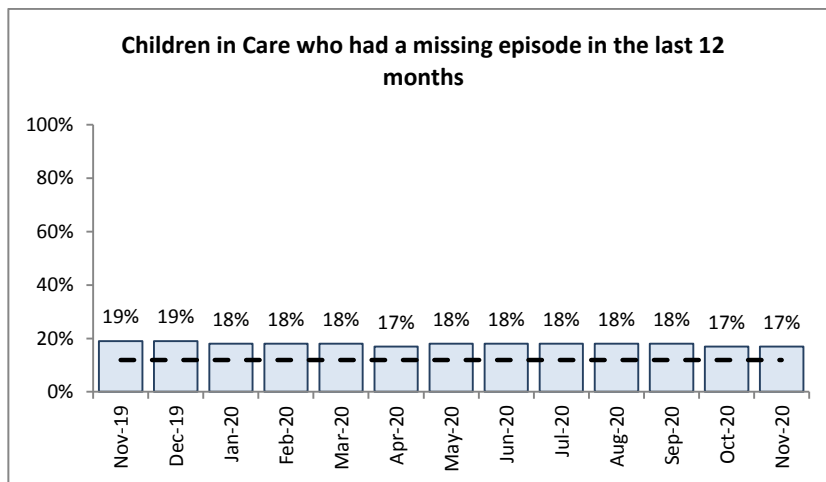


Conversations with 38 of the 47 children who have been spoken to following a missing episode were timely (81%); this is above target for the first time in 12 months (80%).

| | Number of Children | Number of Episodes |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Total | 65 | 122 |
| Children in Care | 35, 54% | 69, 57% |
| Under 12's missing more than 4 hours | 0 | 0 |
| Missing overnight for more than 8 hours | 27, 42% | 65, 53% |

In November, two-fifths of children who had a missing episode went missing overnight for more than 8 hours (27 children, 42%).

Over half of the children who went missing in November were children in care (35 children, 54%). 19 of these young people were missing overnight for more than 8 hours.

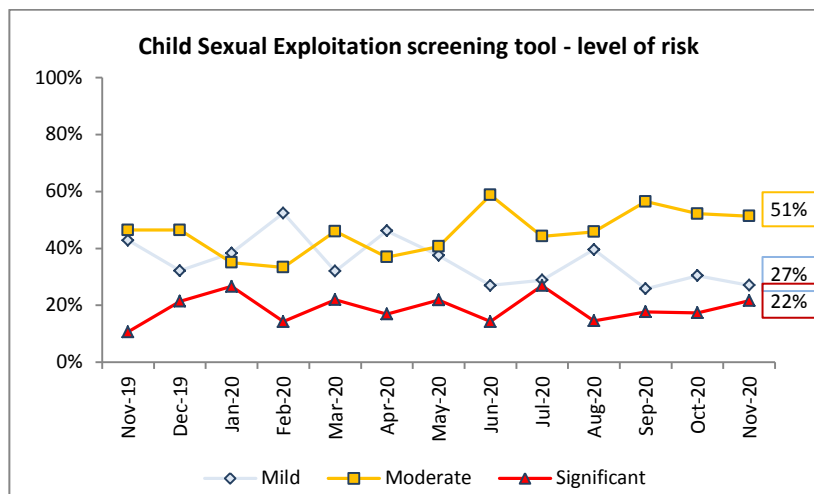


Almost one-fifth of our children in care have had a missing episode in the last 12 months against a growing proportion of children in care (137 children, 17%). This is worse than our peer group comparators and target (11.9%).

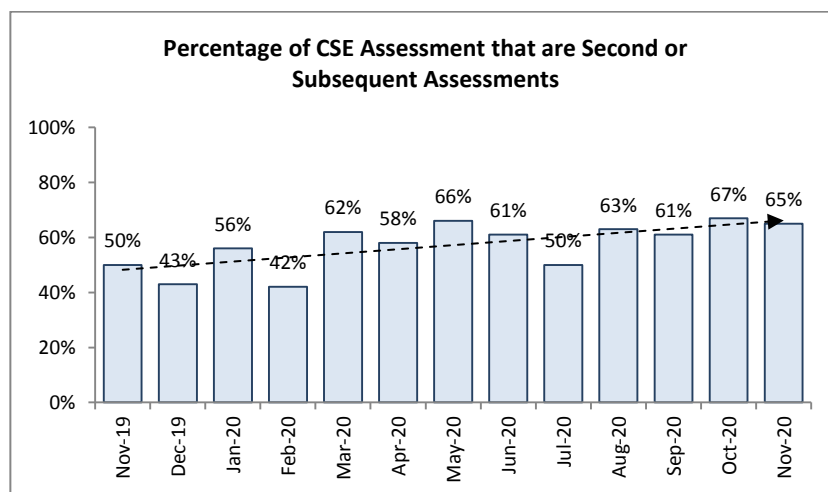
Note: performance may not be comparable as Gloucester constabulary categorises all children who are not where they are supposed to be as missing. This includes children whose whereabouts are known but are absent from their care placement etc.

Child Exploitation

Note: This section currently refers to CSE. Work is underway to implement a new area in the Case Management System which will enable increased data capture which will support reporting on CE in line with the national approach.



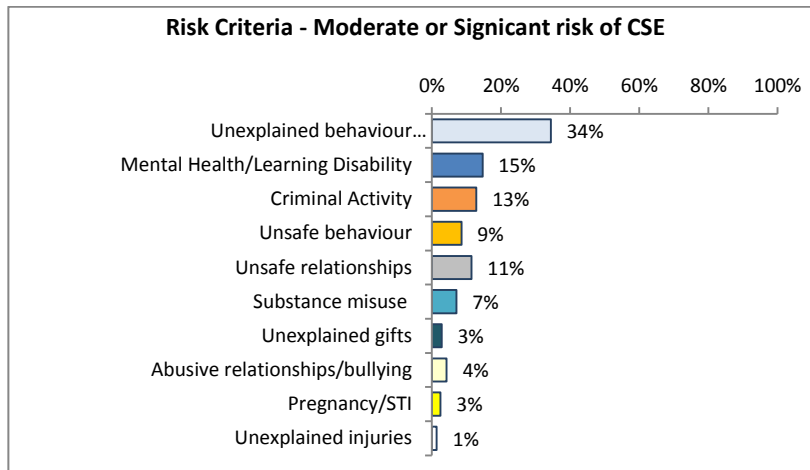
There were 37 children for whom a Child Sexual Exploitation screening tool was completed in November. Just under three-quarters of these children were assessed as being at moderate or significant risk (73%, 27).



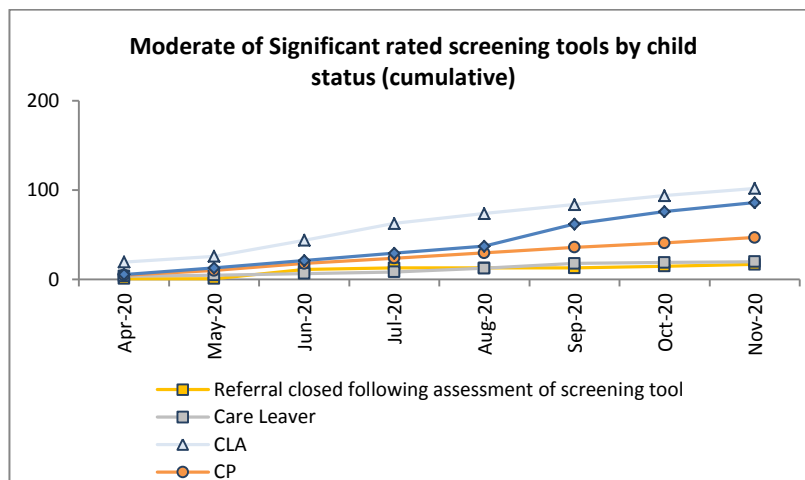
Just under two thirds of the children who were assessed as at risk of CSE in november, had been assessed before (24 children, 65%). 19 of these children remained rated at moderate or significant risk of CSE.

We are undertaking an increasing proportion of repeat assessments and following which, the majority of children which continue to be rated as at Moderate or Significant risk. This raises questions about the impact of work to support the reduction of risk and protection in place for these children.

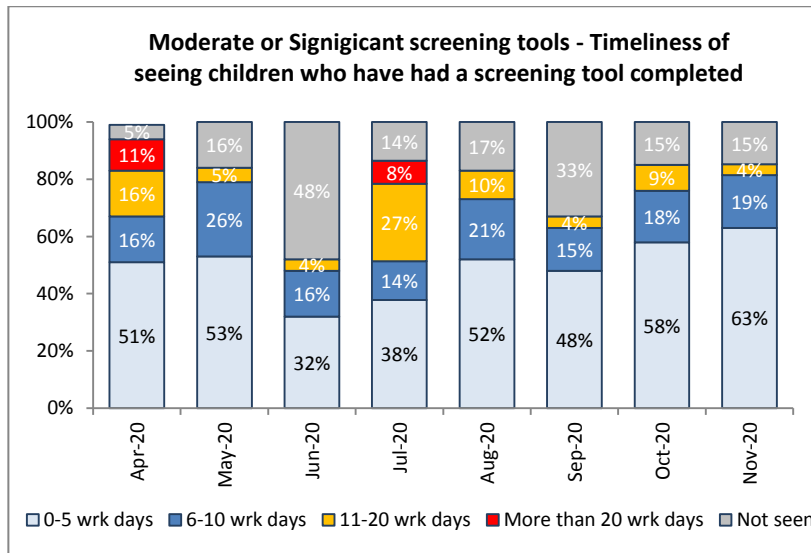
Screening tools – Moderate or Significant risk



Of the 27 children for whom a screening tool was completed in November rated at Moderate or Significant risk, the most commonly identified risk criteria were Unexplained Behaviour Changes/Absences/Family Breakdown (34%) and Mental Health/Learning Disability (15%).



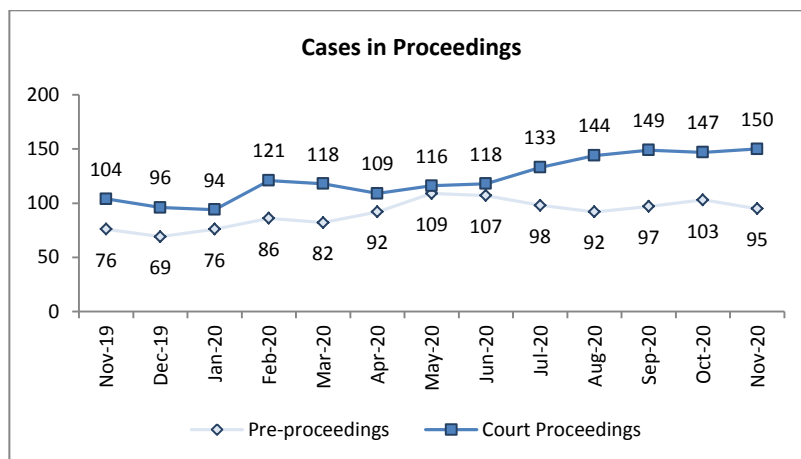
In 2020/21, over almost two-fifths of screening tools rated moderate or significant have been for children in care (38% FYtD, 102 children). However, in November, there was a further increase in Children in Need rated as at Moderate or Significant risk (32%, 86 FYtD children), resulting in a narrowing of the gap between this cohort and children in care; although this remains a small proportion of the Children in Need cohort overall.



Just over three-fifths of children with a screening tool rated at Moderate or Significant risk were seen within 5 work days following the completion of their screening tool in November (63%). This is an improving trend, up from 32% in June.

Of those children with a Moderate or Significant assessment of risk, 15% had not been seen at the time of reporting.

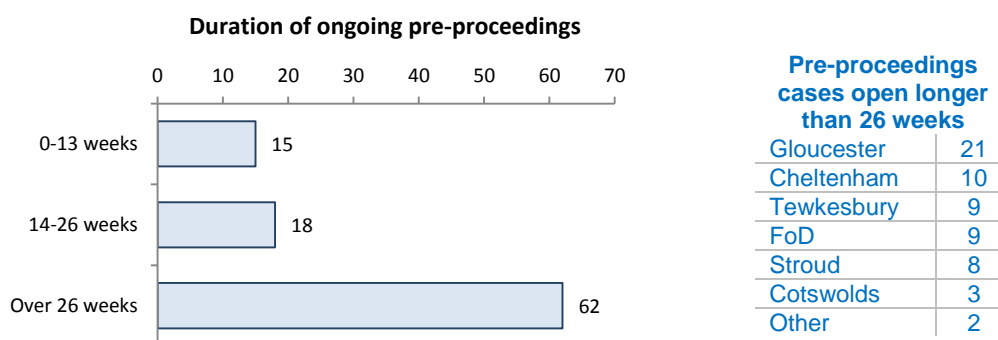
Legal Proceedings



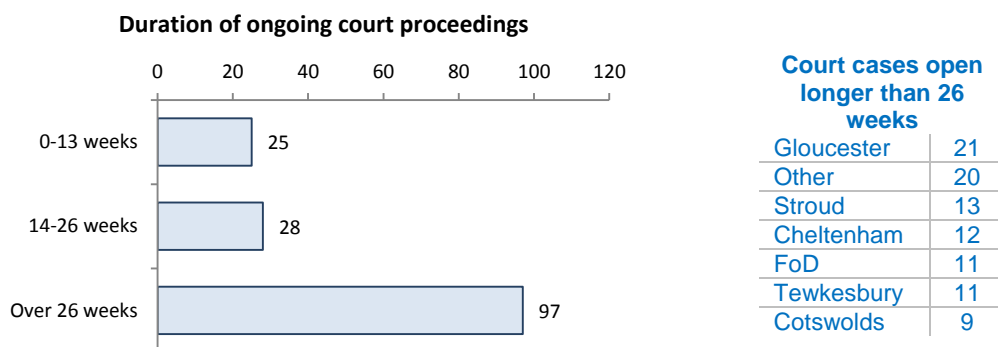
Ongoing court caes are at the highest level to date (150), while the number of pre-proceedings decreased slightly resulting in a diverging picture in terms of the make up of proceedings.

There were 95 cases in pre-proceedings at the end of November, equating to 39% of proceedings overall; these related to 147 children.

150 cases (equating to 61% of proceedings), for 268 children were in court proceedings at the end of November.



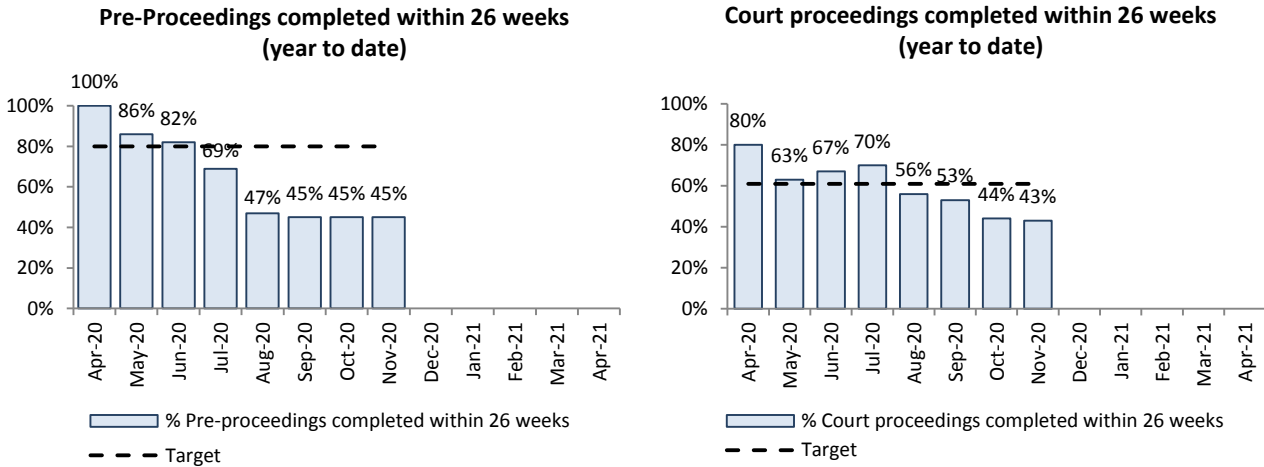
Almost two-thirds of pre-proceedings cases are overdue (65%, 62 cases; 104 children). The longest case has been ongoing for 81 weeks. Gloucester holds the highest proportion of overdue cases (21 cases; 36 children, 34%).



A significant proportion of court cases were overdue at the end of November (63%, 97 cases, 180 children). Gloucester also held the highest number of overdue court proceedings (21 cases; 41 children, 22%).

Caseload

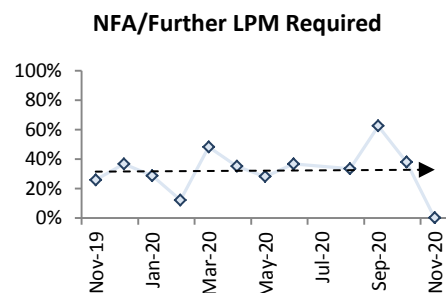
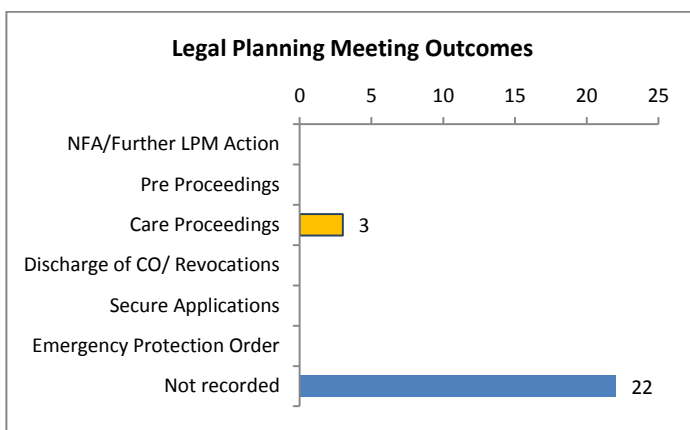
We aim for each Solicitor to have a caseload of 12 cases. The average caseload per Solicitor at the end of November was 10 cases. However, there are data quality issues which may be suppressing the actual caseload level of Solicitors, information is out-of-date and cases are being reported as held by Solicitors who have left.



The percentage of proceedings completed within timescales can fluctuate due to low numbers of cases being completed in-month.

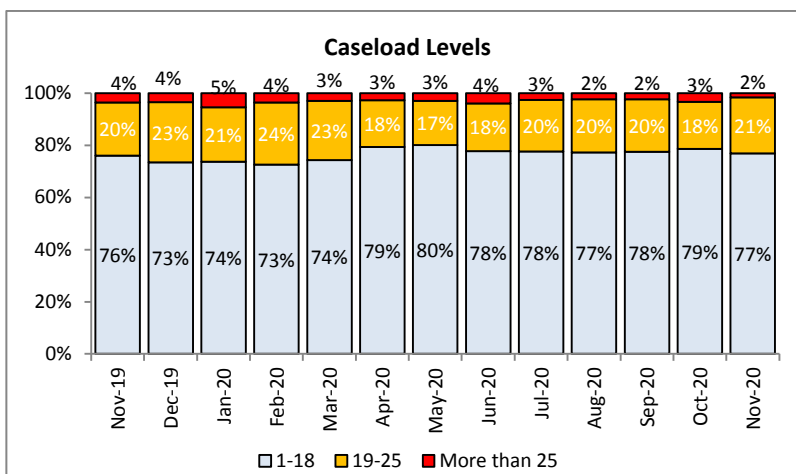
Since April 2020, under half of pre-proceedings (45%, 20 cases; 16 children) and court proceedings (43%, 13 cases; 15 children) were completed within timescales. This is significantly below target performance (80% and 61% respectively).

Timeliness of court proceedings is being impacted by delays arising as a result of the COVID pandemic. Some hearings have been heard virtually but some require in-person hearings and there is a backlog of these cases in the courts.



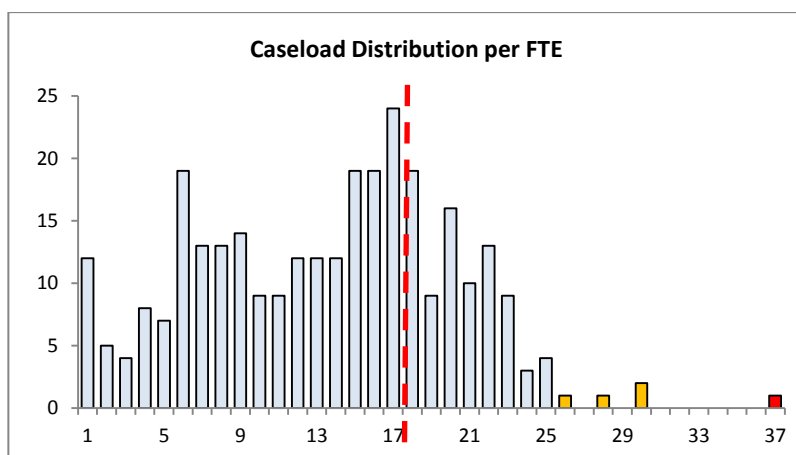
There were 25 legal planning meetings held in November for 26 children. Data quality declined significantly in November, with the outcomes recorded for only 3 LPMs.

Workforce



Children’s Services remains committed to achieving a caseload level for Social Workers of 18 children or fewer per fte. In November, 77% of workers were responsible for 18 children or fewer per fte (230 workers); this is below target (95%).

One-third of teams have workers who all hold a caseload of 18 children or fewer (32%, 15 teams).



23% of workers have higher caseloads (69 workers). However, the greater majority of workers continue to hold 22 children or fewer per fte (93%).

The proportion of workers holding more than 25 children has decreased marginally since last month (2%, 5 workers); this is worse than target (0%).

At the end of November, there was one worker holding the equivalent of more than 30 children per fte, this was with a full time worker in Gloucester Assessment Team 1 (37 children).

Inactivity for Children

| Nov-19 | Dec-19 | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 | Jul-20 | Aug-20 | Sep-20 | Oct-20 | Nov-20 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 99.1% | 98.4% | 98.9% | 99.6% | 99.7% | 99.6% | 99.9% | 99.8% | 99.3% | 99.0% | 99.6% | 99.8% | 99.2% |

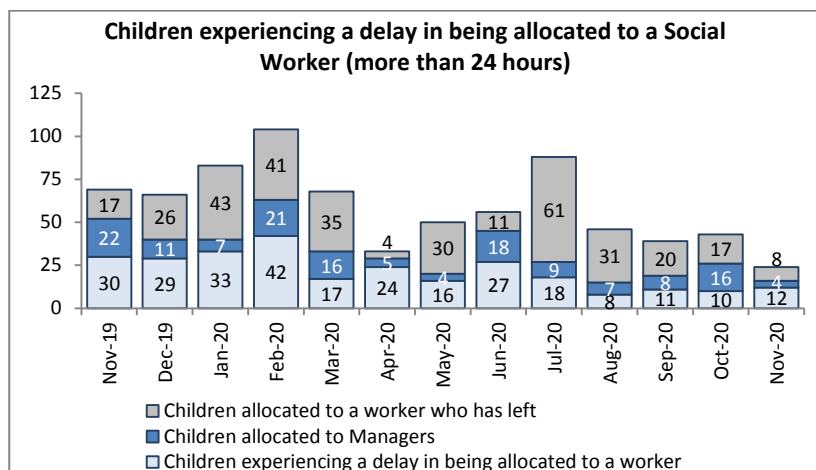
There is activity within relevant timescales for the vast majority of children (99.2%, 3876); performance is within tolerance of target (100%).

There were 33 children for whom there had been no activity within relevant timescales at the end of November; 31 of these children are held by 11-25 teams. The remaining two are held by DCYPS and FFAST.

Allocating a Social Worker

| Nov-19 | Dec-19 | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 | Jul-20 | Aug-20 | Sep-20 | Oct-20 | Nov-20 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 98.7% | 99.0% | 99.1% | 98.5% | 99.2% | 99.2% | 99.5% | 98.9% | 99.3% | 99.6% | 99.7% | 99.3% | 99.6% |

The overwhelming majority of children have an allocated Social Worker, with performance levels remaining consistently high (99.6%).



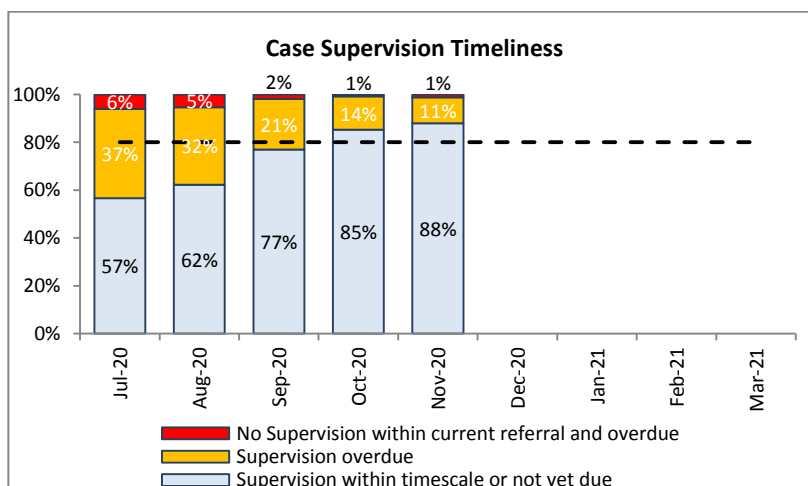
4 children have been allocated to a Manager for more than 2 weeks

There was 1 child who have not had an allocated worker for more than two weeks

At the end of November, 16 children were experiencing a delay in being allocated to a Social Worker. For a small number of children (5) the delay in allocation had exceeded two weeks.

In addition, 8 children continued to be allocated to workers that had left during November, this increases the total number of children without an allocated worker to 24. This is the lowest level of children with no allocated worker in more than 12 months.

Case Supervision



At the end of November, 3,428 children had a case supervision recorded within the timescale appropriate to their status, or were not yet due a supervision (88%). This is an improving trend and performance is above target (80%). This is an **Accelerated Improvement Plan** measure.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of children for whom a supervision is overdue, down from almost 1,500 children in July to 425 children in November (11%).

The number of children who do not have a case supervision recorded during their current referral for whom an initial supervision is overdue, increased this month; up from 33 to 47 children (1%). 28 of these were held in Gloucester Assessment Team 1. 7 children in this group were referred more than 6 months ago.

Almost three-quarters of teams are performing above target (32 of 43 teams). 11 teams had undertaken a timely supervision for all of the children held (100%).

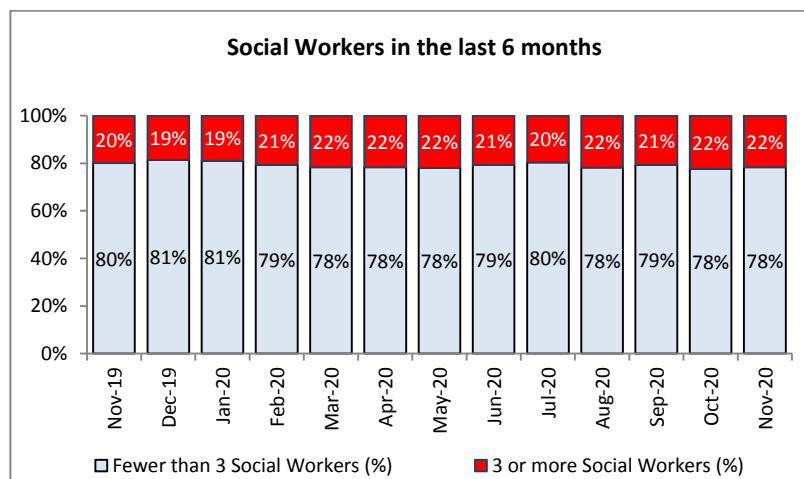
Mind of My Own

Children open to Social Care using the Mind of My Own app

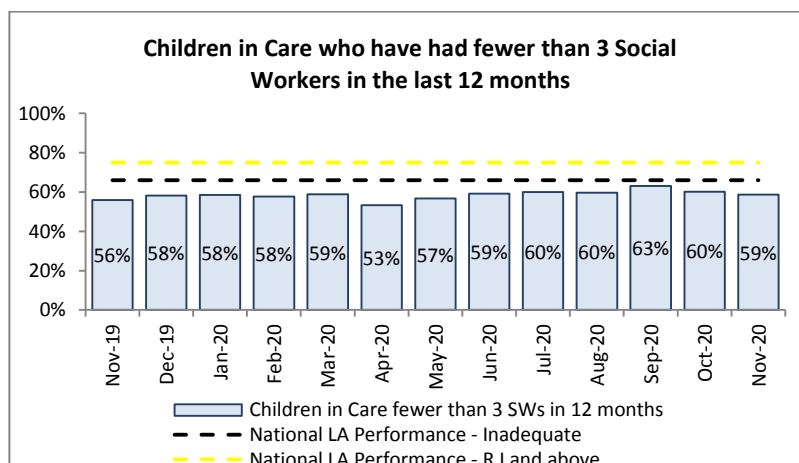
| Nov-19 | Dec-19 | Jan-20 | Feb-20 | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 | Jul-20 | Aug-20 | Sep-20 | Oct-20 | Nov-20 |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 0.6% | 0.4% | 0.6% | 0.6% | 0.9% | 1.6% | 1.4% | 1.0% | 0.7% | 0.6% | 0.9% | 0.5% | 0.5% |

The number of children using the Mind of My Own app and the number of statements received from children both remained the same in November, 20 young people with 21 statements received.

Social Worker Stability



78% of children had fewer than 3 Social Workers allocated in the last 6 months. Performance has remained broadly over the last 12 months.



Just under two-fifths of our children in care have had stability of Social Worker (fewer than 3 Social Workers in the last 12 months). This is a decrease for the second month (59% down from 63% in September); this is lower than other LAs which have been rated as inadequate by Ofsted where around 2 in 3 children have fewer than 3 Social Workers in a 12 month period and LAs rated R.I. and above where 3 in 4 children have fewer than 3 Social Workers.