

<b>Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy Executive Director - Children's Services</b>
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Report to:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>17 September 2020</b>
Subject:	<b>Quarter 1 Performance Report for Children in Care</b>

**Summary:**

The accompanying appendices to this report provide key performance information for Quarter 1 2020/21 that is relevant to the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

**Actions Required:**

The Panel is invited to consider and comment on the performance information contained in the appendices of this report and recommend any actions or changes to the Executive Councillor for Adult Care, Health and Children's Services.

## **1. Background**

Appendix A provides a full and detailed report that covers the measures that are relevant to Looked after Children used by Children's Service. This is available for questions.

There are 12 measures in total that relate to Looked After Children that are reported on in Quarter 1. Of these measures 5 are outside of the target set by the services. These are:

**Fostering/adoption of Looked After Children aged 10 to 16 year olds** - This performance remains under target. The vast majority of children looked after within this age group are placed in foster care settings but this has been impacted by the pandemic as placement options have been reduced as a result of foster carers shielding and unable to take additional placements. However, there has been an increase in the numbers of younger children in residential placements in the past year. These are often children who have experienced a number of foster placement moves who struggle to adhere to the expectations of living in a family. Residential care has provided a nurturing environment for this group and has enabled them to settle. There has also been a concentrated focus on reunifying children with their birth families this year and some of this group are awaiting revocation of their care orders.

**Percentage of Looked after Children in the same placement for at least two years** - Performance is at 68.9% at year end and continues to gradually improve. Considerable work has been undertaken to ensure that foster carers are well supported and that potential problems are identified early. Nevertheless we have continued to see that some stable placements disrupt unexpectedly and this can have a significant impact upon this indicator. We have also seen an increase in the number of children with care plans for long term fostering and this will present challenges in achieving placement stability for some children due to the local and national shortage of foster carers who want to care on a long term basis. The fostering service has implemented a recruitment strategy to attract permanent foster carers with the ambition of offering improved placement opportunities for this group of children.

**Percentage of Looked after Children with up to date routine immunisations** - Throughout the majority of this quarter there has been significant restriction and changes to the way in which health services are delivered to the public and more specifically our children who are looked after. We have had a number of refusers including parents who have their children placed under placement with parent regulations. In addition it has been an on-going challenge to encourage older young people to engage with medical services to have their immunisation. As we move out of such severe Covid restrictions all managers have been requested to ensure that workers are focused on ensuring that these medical needs are prioritised.

**Percentage of Looked after children with an up to date dental check** - Performance in respect of dental checks has been lower than the target for the last three consecutive quarters. This is in a large part to older children resisting appointments with the dentist. As a service area we recognise the need to renew our efforts to ensure that we can increase the number of children particularly older children who are engaging positively in engaging with dental care. The recent lockdown measures implemented for Covid 19, has resulted in dentists being closed for business and this has further impacted on performance.

**Stability of placements of looked after children : Number of moves –**

This is a cumulative indicator identifying those children who experience 3 placement moves. The target is challenging and slipped under target last year although our performance is generally better than other East Midland authorities where an average of 10% of looked after children experienced 3 placement moves in a year. The stability of placements has been good during the Covid 19 pandemic but is likely to be affected as children readjust as they return to school. In addition the numbers of children entering care is rising and this increased demand will make the identification of the right placement at the point of admission more challenging.

## **2. Conclusion**

This report summarises the Quarter 1 performance for Looked after Children and Young People, and the Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to raise any questions on the content of the report.

### **3. Consultation**

#### **a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

N/A

#### **b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

### **4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Looked after Children Measures

### **5. Background Papers**

This report was written by Simon Hardcastle, who can be contacted at [simon.hardcastle@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.hardcastle@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

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