CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15 November 2023

Democratic and Members' Services
Emma Duncan
Service Director: Legal and Governance

16:00

New Shire Hall
Alconbury Weald
Huntingdon
PE28 4YE

Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald PE28 4YE
[Venue Address]

AGENDA

Open to Public and Press

Meeting theme: Education

1.	**Apologies for absence and declarations of interest** *Guidance on declaring interests is available at http://tinyurl.com/ccc-conduct-code*	
2.	**Minutes - 12 July 2023 and Minutes Action Log**	**1 - 10**
3.	**Petitions and Public Questions**	
4.	**Participation Report**	**11 - 14**
5.	**Foster Carer Update**	**15 - 18**

6.	**Cambridgeshire Fostering Service**	**19 - 34**
7.	**Virtual School Annual Report 2022-23**	**35 - 106**
8.	**Children in Care and Care Leavers Education, Employment and Training Action Plan Update**	**107 - 112**
9.	**Corporate Parenting Scorecard September 2023**	**113 - 136**
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The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee comprises the following members:

Councillor Anna Bradnam (Chair) Councillor Michael Atkins (Vice-Chair) Councillor Alex Bulat Councillor Anne Hay and Councillor Mac McGuire

Clerk Name:	Richenda Greenhill
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Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee: Minutes

Date: Wednesday 12th July 2023

Time: 4.00pm – 5.40pm

Venue: Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall

Present: Councillors A Bradnam (Chair), A Bulat and P Slatter

Non-voting observer:
T Stephenson – Chair, Cambridgeshire Foster Carers' Association

Meeting theme: Homes

72. Notification of the Chair and Vice Chair 2023/24

Councillor Anna Bradnam was appointed Chair of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee and Councillor Michael Atkins was appointed Vice Chair for the municipal year 2023/24 by the Children and Young People Committee on 27th June 2023.

73. Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed Martin Purbrick, the recently appointed Executive Director for Children, Education and Families and Director of Children's Services, to the meeting as an observer. Brian Relph, Interim Service Director for Fostering, Regional Adoption and Specialist Young People's Services, was also welcomed to his first meeting.

74. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Atkins, substituted by Councillor P Slatter, and Councillor A Hay.

There were no declarations of interest.

75. Minutes – 29th March 2023 and Minutes Action Log

The minutes of the meeting on 29th March 2023 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair. The minutes action log was noted.

76. Petitions and Public Questions

No petitions or public questions were received.

77. Participation Report

Members were updated on the summer activity programme and wider participation activity since the last meeting. Three workshops had been arranged to produce pieces for the summer art exhibition in response to feedback from children and young people, and this year's event would be held in person. The Young Recruiters Group had been involved in interviewing newly qualified social workers for Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) places and Young Trainers had delivered their first training session for this cohort. The 'Every Word Matters' project had sought children and young people's views on the language used around the social care experience. The output would be published in around a month's time and would be used as a key training resource for professionals and to inform the language used around children and young people and in documentation.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- welcomed the work being done to support and engage with the children and young people in the Council's care, and to listen and learn from their experience.

- noted the creation of a new social worker academy to support newly qualified practitioners and to provide continued professional development opportunities to more experienced staff.

- welcomed the 'Every Word Matters' project, commenting that Members would want to reflect on its recommendations in relation to the language used in committee meetings and documentation. **Action required**

The Chair emphasised the importance of the programme of activities arranged by the Participation Team in enriching the lives and experience of the children and young people in the Council's care.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) Note the contents of the report.

b) Raise any queries with the lead officers.

78. Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association and the Fostering Service report

The report was a collaborative document prepared jointly by the Fostering Service and the Cambridgeshire Foster Carers' Association (CFCA), reflecting the open and constructive relationship which existed between them. Their representatives met regularly with the shared aim of improving services for the children and young people in their care. A number of working groups had been established to support the recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers. Work on bringing together foster carer recruitment and retention activity was on-going, and the Fostering Recruitment Ambassadors were doing proactive work to raise the awareness of fostering

opportunities. The peer mentoring scheme was continuing to grow and develop, providing support to both new and established foster carers. Within the Council, the Fostering Service was entering a period of transformation to support best practice and to enable it to be competitive within the commercial market.

The Chair of the CFA noted that Government guidance on an increase to national minimum payments had been issued in April, but that this had not yet been actioned by the Council. She highlighted the impact of the cost of living crisis on foster carers, and that some might now feel the need to take on additional work which would mean that they could not always be available to the children in their care. The Interim Service Director apologised to the Council's foster carers for the delay. Discussions were taking place with the newly appointed Director of Children's Services and Peterborough City Council about the uplift, and he gave an assurance that this would be resolved by the end of the month. Any payments would be backdated. **Action required**

The Interim Service Director spoke of the opportunity which was presented by the appointment of a new senior leadership team and management structure within Children's Services. The purpose of corporate parenting was to deliver children to a happier future. He wanted to see the Council continue to grow as a fostering-orientated organisation, with foster carers feeling part of the Cambridgeshire family. There was a need to provide foster carers with competitive remuneration packages, excellent training opportunities and wraparound support. The transformation work was at an initial information-gathering stage, but there would be opportunities for foster carers and children and young people in care to be involved in subsequent stages of the process.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- welcomed the increasing recognition of caring as a career, and an appreciation of the work done by carers.

- asked for an update on Fostering Service recruitment and retention activity. **Action required**

- asked what improvements could be made to the in-house foster carer offer. Officers stated that this would be explored in conjunction with the Commissioning team as part of the Fostering Service's transformation work. For the first time, independent fostering agencies had been unable to attract enough foster carers. The larger houses often needed by fostering families were growing increasingly expensive and post-pandemic children were coming into care with greater and more complex needs. The traditional fostering model was not designed to cope with this situation. The service transformation would take account of this changing landscape and would include looking at the offer from other local authorities in relation both to allowances and value-added offers. The Chair welcomed this bench-marking activity, and spoke of the need to ensure that foster carers were not left out of pocket in providing support to the children in their care.

  The Chair of the CFCA emphasised the importance of retaining experienced foster carers. The financial allowance was an important element of this, but so was the wider support which was available to foster carers. The Association was looking forward to seeing the refreshed offer.

- asked about the out of hours support available to fostering families on Friday afternoons and evenings and over weekends. Officers confirmed that out of hours support was available from the Fostering Service. Work would also be taking place to look at the feedback from foster carers on what support they wanted to see.

- requested a structure chart for Children's Services, which included officer names. It was recognised that this would need to be updated as the transformation programme progressed. **Action required**

It was resolved unanimously to note the contents of the report.

79. Fostering Service Annual Report 2022/23

The Fostering Service Annual Report 2022/23 covered the second full year of operation for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fostering Service. During this period 11 new fostering households were recruited to Cambridgeshire, with 22 households resigning. Although it was regrettable to lose any fostering households this represented a reduction over previous years and related to changes in personal circumstances, ill health and an aging population of foster carers rather than dissatisfaction with the support they received. There were 112 referrals for Special Guardianship assessments during this period, and 14 assessed private fostering arrangements in place. As of 31 March 2023, 51% of children in the Council's care were living in in-house foster homes and there were 169 fostering households in total.

Investment had been made into a dedicated foster carer support team, alongside focused recruitment and retention activity and a continued focus on delivering a child-centred approach. There had been seven marketing campaigns during 2022/23, and Foster Carer Ambassadors had been involved at each stage of their planning and delivery. One of the most powerful recruitment tools was the recommendation of existing foster carers, and officers would be looking how best to share and showcase this. The number of enquiries had reduced, but the number of applications had remained relatively stable with a conversion rate of 14.5% of enquires to applications. Two complaints had been received during 2022/23, one of which was partially upheld and one which was not upheld.

In response to questions from individual members, officers:

- confirmed that an Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) was expected. Foster carers would have an opportunity to contribute to the inspection if they wished.

- confirmed that exit interviews were conducted with foster carers who left the Council.

- stated that the Fostering Service felt stable and that there had been good internal communications around the transformation programme. There was no significant churn amongst social workers.

- explained that private fostering arrangements for students attending language schools were mainly located in Cambridge. There had been a reduction in these arrangements due to covid, but it was expected that numbers would increase again over time. Payment rates were generally good and much of the children's time was occupied by the language schools, making this an attractive option to potential foster carers and leading to less fostering households being available in Cambridge.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- welcomed the balanced approach to complaints.

- welcomed the flexibility being shown to offering online or in-person meetings.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) Note the content of the report.

b) Raise any queries with the lead officer.

80. Performance Scorecard – May 2023

The figures for Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) had been omitted from the published report. These were reported as a full time equivalent (FTE) of 9.6 IROs, with an average caseload of 64, which was within recommended guidelines.

In response to questions from members, officers:

- acknowledged that the targets relating to the timeliness of the adoption process were both below target, with time to placement at 568 days (target of below 400 days) and time to match 313 days (target of below 183). Work was continuing around early permanency, which was designed to limit the number of moves a child made before finding their permanent home. However, the figures also reflected a conscious decision to persevere with looking for permanent homes for less easy to place children.

- undertook to provide a response outside of the meeting on the reasons behind the drop in the number of care leavers with a pathway plan in place over recent months. **Action required**

The Chair endorsed the performance scorecard as a useful document for members to track and monitor performance.

It was resolved unanimously to note the Performance Scorecard for May 2023.

81. Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 222/23

The submission of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) annual report was a statutory requirement. The purpose was to identify good practice and any areas for

further development. The stability of the staff team was good, providing continuity of support to children and young people.

The Chair welcomed the clear format of the report and the inclusion of anonymised case histories, which gave good insight into the IRO's work. She noted their significant workload and expressed her thanks for their work, noting that feedback received on the IRO service during the period covered by the report was overwhelmingly positive.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) Note the content of this report.

b) Raise any queries with the Lead Officers.

82. Sub-Committee Workshop/ Training Plan

It was resolved to note the Sub-Committee workshop and training plan.

83. Sub-Committee Agenda Plan

Work would be progressed outside of the meeting to populate the Sub-Committee's agenda plan, including looking at how its business aligned with the work of the Children and Young People Committee. **Action required**

It was resolved unanimously to note the agenda plan.

[Chair]

Action Log

Summary
The Action Log is a list of all of the things that people have been asked to do at earlier meetings. It is included at each meeting so that members can check that everything is being done. It was last updated on 6th November 2023.

Minutes – 16th November 2022

	Report title	Officer	Action	Update	Status
60.	Performance Scorecard	Louisa Kay	Requested sight of the pathway planning workshop presentation for social workers. A report on this would be taken to the next meeting or a workshop arranged.	22.06.23: The Service Manager for Leaving Care is developing further training in the writing of Pathway Planning. Following the roll-out of this new training the slides will be shared with members. 06.11.23: Slides shared electronically with Sub-Committee members.	Completed
61.	Sub-Committee Workshop and Training Plan	Louisa Kay	To consider the inclusion of a possible workshop on Care Leaver Pathways.	22.06.23: Online training will be shared with Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee members.	On-going

Minutes – 29th March 2023

		Katie Liddle	The Designated Nurse offered to share data from the NHS England national audit with the Sub-Committee when it became available.	22.06.23: Results from the Pilot Audit for Health Assessments has not yet been shared. They will be shared with the Sub-Committee when available.	On-going

69.	Performance Scorecard	Jo Banks	The Chair noted that the time taken to achieve adoption had increased and asked whether there was a strategy in place to improve this. Officers advised that the service aimed for permanent placement where possible, although for some children a long-term placement took more time, and this impacted permanency figures. The Head of the Regional Adoption Agency was asked to provide an update to the sub-committee on permanent placements.	06.11.23: Updated circulated electronically to Sub-Committee members.	Completed

Minutes 12th July 2023

77.	Participation Report	~~Shalina Chandoo~~	To share a copy of the 'Every Word Matters' document with Sub-Committee members when available.	06.11.23 Link available on YouTube to the video by young people about this.	Completed
78.	Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association and the Fostering Service report	Brian Relph	The uplift in payments to in-house foster carers would be resolved by the end of July. Any payments would be backdated.	06.11.23. This has been done.	Completed
78.	Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association and the Fostering Service report	Anita Hewson/ Amanda Carter	To provide an update on Fostering Service recruitment and retention activity.	13.07.23: An update circulated electronically to Sub-Committee members.	Completed
78.	Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association and	Brian Relph	To provide a structure chart for Children's Services, which included officer names. It was recognised that this would need to be	26.10.23: Circulated to Sub-Committee members.	Completed

	the Fostering Service report		updated as the transformation programme progressed.		
80.	Performance scorecard	Louisa Kay	Officers undertook to provide a response outside of the meeting on the reasons behind the drop in the number of care leavers with a pathway plan in place over recent months.	06.11.23: Performance regarding Pathway Plans is closely monitored and Louisa Kay completes monthly monitoring reports. An update will be provided at the next Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee.	Completed
83.	Sub-Committee agenda plan	Brian Relph	Work would be progressed outside of the meeting to populate the Sub-Committee's agenda plan, including looking at how its business aligned with the work of the Children and Young People Committee.	06.11.23: On-going due to the new Service Director joining in November 2023.	On-going

Participation Report

To:	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
Meeting Date:	15 November 2023
From:	Service Director, Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	No
Outcome:	To ensure children and young people in care are empowered to express their voices and experiences to improve services.
Recommendation:	The Sub-Committee is recommended to: a) Note the contents of the report. b) Raise any queries with the lead officers.

Officer contact:
Name: Emma Dawes
Post: Interim Service Manager Quality Assurance and Participation
Email: emma.dawes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:

1. Background

1.1 The Participation Team continues to promote the voice of children and young people in care by offering a variety of opportunities for engagement and feedback, supporting Participation groups with projects and consultations, and ensuring action is taken as a result of feedback from children and young people.

2. Main Issues

2.1 The Participation Team promotes the voice of children and young people in care, by offering a variety of opportunities for engagement and feedback. All feedback, including suggestions and ideas from children and young people is communicated to services on a regular basis, and responses on action taken is shared with the CiCC for final review.

2.2 The Participation Team continues to promote opportunities for children and young people under the care of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) through regular newsletters, creating event-specific publications to encourage engagement. Recent newsletters have updated young people on the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC), Care Leaver Forum (CLF) and other participation groups including the Young Inspectors, Young Recruiters and Young Trainers, and have promoted other relevant opportunities with external organisations such as *IMO* (the Children's Commissioner's digital offering for teenagers in care and care leavers) and *Become* (the national charity for children in care and care leavers).

2.3 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Peterborough City Council (PCC) Participation Team are no long operating as a joint Participation Team, following the separation in August 2023. The separation of the joint CCC and PCC Participation Team is likely to impact on the feasibility and capacity for future events and activities. The CCC Participation Team has been reduced to two Participation Officers. The team continue to work on projects and activities.

2.4 The Participation Team organised fun face to face and virtual engagement activities in the summer holidays for children and young people across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. These engagement activities enabled children and young people to meet members of the CiCC and Participation Team and learn about different participation opportunities, make friends with other children in care and have fun.

2.5 Based on the feedback from Children and Young people, three Art workshops were held over the summer holidays. Feedback was obtained from the Art workshops with Children and Young People saying:

> *"Wow, that is so cool" (in reference to the effect created by adding silicone oil to the paint)……"I'm going to come to the exhibition"……"This was really good fun"…."I want to come again".*

2.6 Following the success of the Art workshops, an art exhibition is scheduled for October half term. This will be held at the Cambridge Central Library and will be open to the public to view the artwork on display. Following the art exhibition, some of the artwork will be donated to the Supervised Contact Service.

2.7 The Children in Care Council (CiCC) continues to meet in person monthly, to work on projects and consultation requests, meet professionals and give feedback on services. It is positive that there are a number of new young people who have been recruited to join the CiCC following the summer activities.

2.8 Recent guests at the CiCC have included the new Director of Children's Services Martin Purbrick, the new Principal Social Worker Tapiwa Julius and Kerry Louise Bishop Head of Service, who talked about the new Social Work Academy.

2.9 The CiCC has been developing a project on frequently asked questions (FAQ) that young people have for their social workers. Through discussions, the CiCC members found many similarities in the questions they want to ask, but differences in how much information they receive. They agreed that it would be useful for general information to be available for all young people, so they do not always need to ask their social workers. Work has started on developing an FAQ resource for children and young people who are in care.

2.10 Care Experience Forum members have been discussing their experiences and focusing on improving the support and preparation for young people leaving care. The group will be working with the Virtual School on their project of improving awareness of what it means to be care experienced, which is currently being piloted at a primary school within the county. Following discussions between the group members, the name of this group going forward has been changed to 'VOICE – Care Experience Network'.

2.11 The Young Trainers group continues to deliver training for prospective foster carers across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire as the service is still delivered jointly, as part of the Foster Carer Training programme. The Young Trainers will be looking at the overall training programmes for foster carers and social workers, to select other areas that they can contribute towards from a young person's perspective, and to explore ways to develop their current training sessions.

2.12 The Young Recruiters have worked with the Principal Social Worker in interviewing for the Practice Educator role for the Social Work Academy. The Young Recruiters have also been involved in the recruitment of management roles within the Fostering and Adoption Service.

2.13 Children and Young People across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire have worked on the 'Every Word Matters' project, looking at the language used about children with social care experience, sharing views and feelings on certain words and suggesting alternatives. Children and Young People recorded audio in a podcast format and shared views on what the final animation should look like. This will be used as a key training resource for professionals, as well as informing language used when meeting children and young people and in documents from policies to job descriptions.

2.14 A new Youth Club has been established for Children and Young People aged between 8-12 years. The Youth Club will be held monthly at a local Youth Centre, and it is hoped that this will give Young People the opportunity to engage and participate in future groups, meet each other and form new relationships.

2.15 Seasonal event planning is in progress. CCC Participation Team are looking to hold events at several offices during the month of December; where hot drinks, biscuits and food parcels will be provided to our Care Leavers. It is hoped that by holding such events, this will reduce

isolation, financial pressures and lead to better engagement and participation with our Care Leavers.

3. Alignment with the Council's ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes.
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable.
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced.
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs.
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality.
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised.
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive.
The report above sets out the implications for this priority in section 2.

4. Significant Implications

N/A

5. Source documents guidance

5.1 None.

Foster Carer Update

To:	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
Meeting Date:	15 November 2023
From:	Cambridgeshire County Council Fostering Service
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	No
Outcome:	The Committee is being asked to note the work of the Cambridgeshire Foster Carer's Association and the Fostering Service.
Recommendation:	The Sub-Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.

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Name: Jo Spender
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1. Background

1.1 This is an update to the Corporate Parenting Committee from the Cambridgeshire County Council Foster Carer's Association and the Fostering Service.

1.2 As of 1st October 2023, there are 169 registered Foster Carers to Cambridgeshire County Council.

1.3 This report has been prepared to update the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on the continued participation activity and collaborative working between Cambridgeshire County Council's Fostering Service and the Cambridgeshire Foster Carers.

2. Main Issues

Overview of activity

2.1 National Minimum Payments/annual uplift

2.2 The Government national minimum standard for foster carer fee's related to children was increased by 12.43% with effect from 6 April 2023. The Fostering Service did not implement a blanket 12.43 increase as they have historically paid above the minimum anyway. However, it was agreed to raise the total fostering allowance which is made up of the child maintenance and the foster skills element to an increase 7% which was announced to foster carers on the 31 July and backdated to 6 April.

2.3 There was a delay in agreeing this increase due to negotiations with Peterborough Council, due to the shared fostering service. It is important to note that due to the complexities and the nature of foster carers payments the increases take substantial time and effort to implement but this was completed mid-October 2023.

2.4 Recruitment and Retention

2.5 There has been a focus on recruitment and retention in the last quarter. Since 1 April 2023, there has been 8 foster carer household approvals. There have been 65 enquiries and there are 29 applicants in assessment. There has been focused recruitment through 'Refer a Friend' and acquiring support from other teams and services. This has resulted in significant increase in Refer a Friend referrals from 4 in the last financial year to 11 since April.

2.6 There have been 16 resignations of foster carers to date this financial year. The reasons for the resignations have been due to ill health, retirement, safeguarding concerns, changes in circumstances and change of geographical location. There have only been two foster carers who have cited resignation due to being unhappy with the service from the child's social work teams. The service continues to offer retention visits to any foster carers who consider leaving the service and these visits have been very successful in retaining foster carers.

2.7 CFCA recommends there needs to be some focus placed upon additional resources within the fostering service such as support workers, educational workers to effectively support the increasing needs of children and the impact of this on the fostering role.

2.8 The ‘uncoupling’ of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils

2.9 There will be some leadership changes within the fostering service with a change of Service Director and Head of Service. The new Service Director for Cambridgeshire will be changing from Brian Relph who is interim to a permanent Service Director named Ranjit Chambers. There has also been a new permanent Head of Service recruited and it is envisaged that he will start in post in January 2024.

2.10 Within the Fostering Service, the ‘uncoupling’ of Cambridgeshire from Peterborough council is now the priority. The aim of the separation is to do so with minimum disruption to foster carers, children and staff, whilst still maintaining a business-as-usual approach.

2.11 The official date of the separation of services is 1 November 2023. However, this is only the official date and it is not possible for the whole of the Peterborough fostering service to transfer back on this date, due to significant staff resources. There are several vacancies in the PCC staff structure that need to be recruited to and this work is currently underway. Therefore, the PCC and CCC fostering services are currently working to a shared ‘uncoupling’ plan, whereby different parts of the fostering service will ‘uncouple’ in a strategic and planned manner.

2.12 Training will continue to be delivered jointly for CCC and PCC foster carers until at least 31 March 2024, so there will no change to the booking system and to the training of foster carers. If any foster carers are booked onto a training course after 1 November 2023 they should plan to attend.

2.13 It is proposed we will continue with our fostering recruitment joint branding into the new year and marketing campaigns will continue jointly until January 2024. To this point the recruitment of carers will remain jointly until PCC have recruited to the vacancies in the recruitment service the separation has caused.

2.14 From CFCA viewpoint, there has been significant challenges in looking after children from Peterborough such as transport, schools’ family time arrangements and PCC processes. Although there has been concern of foster carers who are still caring for children from Peterborough post the ‘uncoupling’ and how this will be managed ongoing in terms of logistics and practicalities of the care arrangements.

2.15 The CFCA acknowledge that it has been an extremely busy time for Cambridgeshire Council with the ‘uncoupling’. However, we feel that it is very important to keep us informed of any new initiatives of significant developments in the service.

2.16 Overall, the Foster Carers and Staff in Cambridgeshire County Council are positive about the process of ‘uncoupling’ from Peterborough Fostering Service.

3. Alignment with the Council’s ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care to meet this priority.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care to meet this priority.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care to meet this priority.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

4. Significant Implications

Not applicable

5. Source documents

5.1 None

Fostering Services PCC and CCC service redesign

Jo Spender
Head of Fostering
PCC & CCC
21/9/23

Service Design Principles

- An effective modern fostering service will have
  - A separate Recruitment and Assessment Team for mainstream carers
  - A connected Persons Assessment Team - covering SGO/Reg 23/24/ Viability assessments
  - A fostering Support Service including supervising social workers
  - An effective panel and QA system including panel advisor and Fostering reviewing officers
  - Functions which can be located in different part of the service:
    - Placement Officers
    - Foster Care Training Officers
    - Fostering Support Officers
    - Clinical/ Psychological support to foster carers
    - Network Co-Ordinators (Mocking Bird Model)

PCC and CCC Fostering Service Demand

The Fostering Annual report 2022-23 has identified the following areas for improvement.

- Increased number of enquiries to foster with high conversion rates through to approval to meet demand and in recognition of an aging population of current foster carers. The conversion rate from enquiry to application in CCC in this reporting period was 14.5%, and in PCC the conversion rate from enquiry to application in this reporting period was 10%.
- Placing more young people with complex needs locally with carers and placement providers who are equipped and well supported to work with them.
- Embedding a practice of learning and action through the findings of audits, improved collection of the child's voice and ensuring annual review actions are progressed and monitored
- Improving the quality of assessments and support plans for Special Guardians and Kinship Foster Carers which are co-written with colleagues to ensure continuity

The Form F Application & Approval Process

- Currently the process is for all the potential foster carer enquiries to be triaged by the Recruitment Team and they also conduct the initial visit to prospective applicants and receive and process the registration of interest, which is then allocated to the assessment teams.
- Since March 2023 there has been additional capacity at Team Manager level to oversee the recruitment processes to ensure the recruitment pipeline is timely. Early indications are this is producing more enquiries as the data from April to August 2023 demonstrates.
- The focused management oversight of the recruitment processes is resulting in a return on investment in relation to enquiry to application conversion rates.

The Form F Application & Approval Process

2023/2024

New enquiries	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	
Total gathered from all tabs	9	15	13	21	10								
CCC	8	13	10	13	7								51
PCC	1	3	3	8	3								18
Number of IVs	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	**69**
Total gathered from all tabs	7	3	6	8	5								
CCC	5	2	5	4	4								20
PCC	2	1	1	4	1								3
Applications sent	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	**23**
Total gathered from all tabs	7	3	5	4	4								
CCC	4	3	5	2	3								17
PCC	3	0	0	2	1								6
Applications received	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	**23**
Total from in assessment	4	3	8	9	8								
CCC	2	3	6	6	6								23
PCC	2	0	2	3	2								9
Enquiries Closed	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	**32**
Calculate the next month	9	18	16										
CCC	8	10	12										30
PCC	1	8	4										13
													43

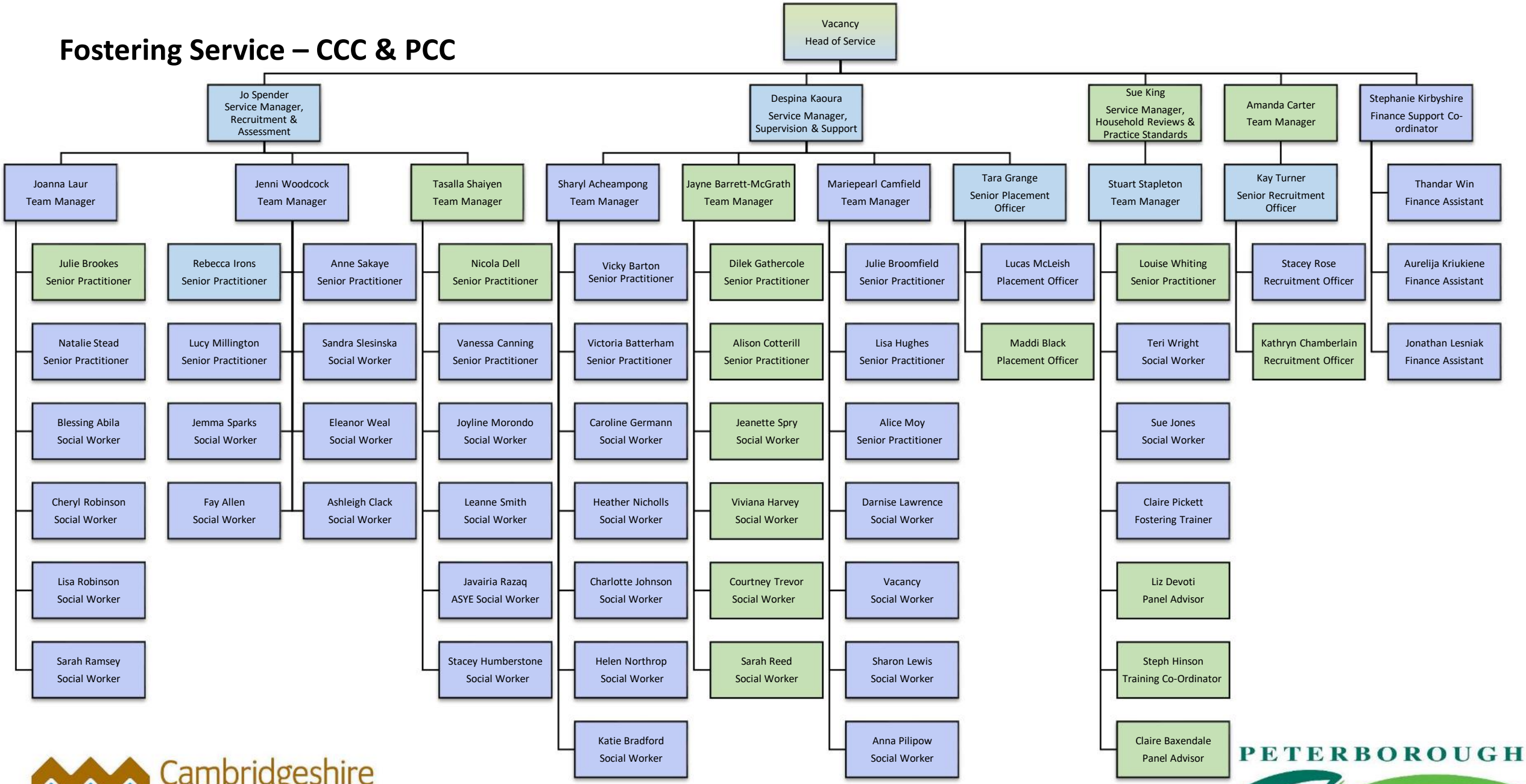
Kinship Assessments

- In 2022-2023, the total number of viabilities received in CCC was 112 and 54 in PCC. This is an overall increase in viabilities compared to 2021-2022 of 22%.
- The increase in requests for kinship assessment is continuing in 2023 – 24, currently there are 28 temporary foster cares in CCC and 18 in PCC combined figure of 46 temporary foster carers across the service.
- In August 2023 Assessments in progress
- PCC – 38
- CCC – 38
- In July 2023 Assessments in Progress
- PCC – 31
- CCC- 36

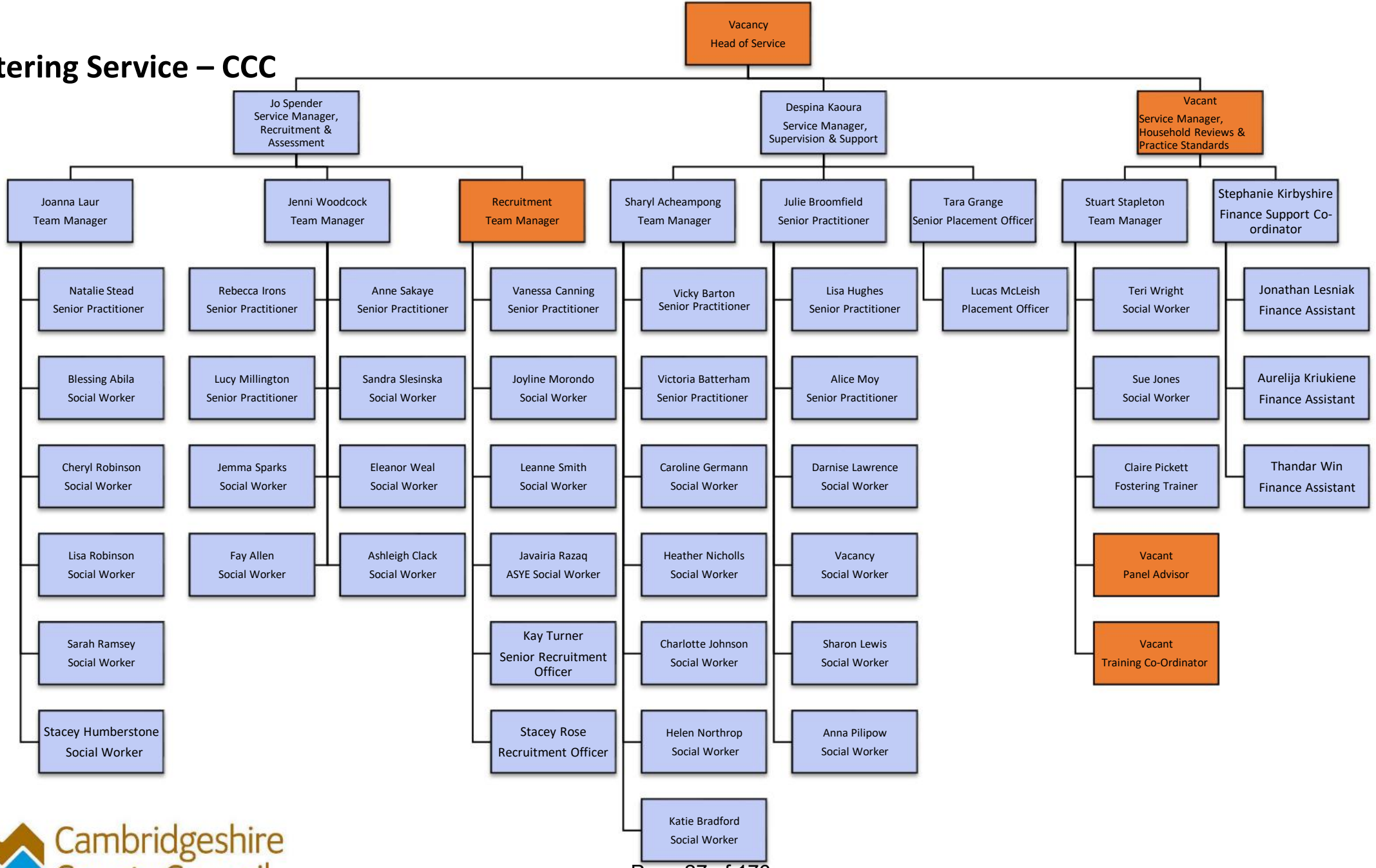
Carer Support Post Approval

- In CCC there are 167 foster households of which 27 are Kinship foster placements.
- In PCC there are 81 foster households of which 7 are kinship foster placements.
- At present post approval support to both mainstream and Kinship foster carers is provided by the 3x Supervision and Support teams.
- Current permanence planning practice means the majority of kinship assessments result in Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) Post SGO Support is provided by the PCC&CCC Regional Adoption Agency.
- The fostering service also assesses and supports private fostering arrangements of which there are currently 6 in CCC and 2 in PCC.

Fostering Service – CCC & PCC



Fostering Service – CCC



CCC - Vacancies from Separation

- 1 Service Manager - Review Practice Standards and Finance
- 1 Team Manager - Recruitment and Assessment
- 1 Panel Advisor
- 1 Training Co-Ordinator

Team Consultations for CCC

- The assessment teams
- 18 SW in three generic assessment teams moving to 2x Generic Assessment Teams and 1 Recruitment and Assessment teams
- 4 SW to opt to join the Recruitment and Assessment Team

Demand Assumptions

- Connected Person Assessment/SGO/Private Fostering. A SW can conduct 5 assessment at a time maximum and assessments take 16-24 weeks
- Form F(Mainstream Fostering) A SW can conduct 5 Assessments at a time and an assessment takes 30 Weeks
- Supervising Social Workers can reasonably have cases load of 15 fostering families
- A Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer Can Have a case load of up to 70 Families

Additional services not in scope

- In CCC
  - Fostering Support Team - mixture of practitioners and direct support officers
  - Clinical Service - therapeutic services for children in care

Transformation Issues to be carried on post separation.

- Mocking Bird
  - Development Program costs
  - Cluster Co-ordinator
- Practice Model Development
  - Whole Service Training Program including foster carers
  - Practice development champions
- Marketing and communication strategy
  - Marketing and events co-Ordinator
  - Event and communications budget

Specialist Placement Development

- Parent and Child Placements
- EDT/PACE Carers
- Respite Carers
- Complex Adolescent Carers + support staff + respite/paired carers

Virtual School Annual Report 2022/23

To:	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
Meeting Date:	15th November 2023
From:	Assistant Director, School and Settings Improvement
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	No
Outcome:	Provide information and evaluate the work of the Virtual School.
Recommendation:	The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee is recommended to:

a) Note the content of the report, and

b) Raise any questions with the lead officer

Officer contact:
Name: Claire Hiorns
Post: Virtual School Head Teacher
Email: Claire.Hiorns@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 699883

1. Background

1.1 The purpose of this report is to detail and evaluate the work undertaken by the Virtual School from September 2022 to August 2023 and to set out the key priorities for the academic year 2023-2024. Furthermore, it is to share the outcomes of the eligible cohort (children in the care of Cambridgeshire County council for a year or more as of 31st March 2023).

1.2 Every local authority in England must appoint at least one person to fulfil the local authority's statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of its children in care, wherever they live or are educated. This person is called the Head of the Virtual School. Within Cambridgeshire we have a team of education professionals that support the Virtual School Head in fulfilling these responsibilities.

1.3 Cambridgeshire Virtual School support children and young people in care between the ages of 2 and 18. The Virtual School brings together information about children and young people who are in the care of Cambridgeshire as if they attend a single school.

1.4 Additionally, Cambridgeshire Virtual School provide information and advice for children previously in care including those who have been adopted from care and those under special guardianship and child arrangement orders. Cambridgeshire Virtual School is responsible for children previously in care attending a Cambridgeshire school or education setting.

1.5 The Virtual School has a non-statutory strategic leadership role for children who have or have had a social worker (in the last 6 years).

1.6 Cambridgeshire Virtual School sits within the Education Directorate. The Virtual School Head is line managed by the Assistant Director for School Improvement. Following consultation, a direct line of sight has been introduced between the Virtual School Head and the Executive Director of Children, Education and Families.

1.7 The Virtual School Headteacher is currently in post as Eastern Region Virtual School Head's Chairperson. This means that Cambridgeshire has a seat on the National Association of Virtual School Heads' Extended Board.

1.8 The Virtual School has a 'management board' which offers both challenge and support to the work and direction of the Virtual School.

1.9 Guide for children and young people: Stable Homes, Built on Love was published by the DfE in 2023. This has implications for the Virtual School and role of the wider council as a corporate parent. Although this hasn't yet been written as primary legislation, it has already begun to influence thinking around future developments within the Virtual School.

2. Main Issues

2.1 Please see the Virtual School Annual Report 2022/23, attached at Appendix 1.

3. Alignment with the Council's ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Virtual Schools have replaced face to face meetings with virtual meetings, where it does not compromise the outcomes of the meeting.
- The team are making use of Rocket Books as opposed to paper-based notebooks.
- Paper is kept to a minimum in training sessions, making use of QR codes, apps and electronic materials.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Virtual Schools have replaced face to face meetings with virtual meetings, where it does not compromise the outcomes of the meeting.
- The team make use of car sharing as appropriate.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Recovery Through Relationships [detailed within the report, page 9] is an evidenced based approach to respond to adverse childhood experiences (ACES) by being trauma responsive.
- Raising an awareness of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder has formed part of the Virtual School priorities [detailed within the report, page 9-10 and appendix 4 page 32-36].

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

Education is a protective factor and provides a pathway to future success. The report attached sets out the implications for this priority in [entire report].

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

The recent addition of strategic lead for children with a social worker has implications for this priority. Nationally between 50% and 60% of children with a social worker (CiN / CP) are eligible to free school meals, which is seen as an indicator of deprivation [details within the report, page 18].

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

The report attached sets out the implications for this priority in [entire report]

5. Source documents

5.1 none

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE

Cambridgeshire County Council

Annual Report 2022-2023

Annual statement from Children in Care Council: It's so important that children are encouraged and supported to have aspirational futures. It's really good that this report is easy to understand and can be used to see improvements and progress over time. We've given our views on how to improve education about what being in care means. The Virtual School listened to us and are working with schools to make this happen.

Annual statement from the Chair of the Virtual School Management Board: This report reinforces three critical themes. First, the positive impact that a well lead virtual school team with a committed volunteer management board can have – to Claire, the team and the board I give huge thanks. Second, the importance of a council that has remained strategically committed to supporting our most vulnerable young people, including the wider brief now inhabited by the VS team. Finally, and not least, that there is still much collective work for us all to do for the sake of these amazing young people - the success of which is dependent on maximising the influence and support given to the complex matrix of hardworking professionals and carers in our Cambridgeshire and wider-placement academies, schools and homes. It is to those young people, staff, volunteers and carers that we thus remain committed, and through whom we collectively work to raise opportunities for all, regardless of life circumstance. I commend this report as a powerful exemplification of that continued and hopeful journey. *Andrew Read, Chair VSMB*

Annual Statement from the Service Director Education: The Virtual School has a clear vision, underpinned by strategy, which holds outcomes for our children and young people as pivotal. This report demonstrates the continued drive, innovation and purposeful activity which supports this vision. The trauma informed approach is central to this, widening the access beyond our education settings is a key step towards Cambridgeshire becoming a trauma informed authority.

Annual Statement from the Executive Director for Children, Education and Families: As we embark on a new Academic year it is helpful to review the huge the amount of work undertaken by the Virtual School. There has been some excellent practice supporting our children in care that has enabled 88% of our children to make expected progress or to exceed their expected progress. The Virtual School Team has been able to work closely with schools across our community, County and beyond where children are placed out of the Cambridgeshire boundary.

The impact of Covid lockdown can still be felt in our schools and often amongst our most vulnerable learners most keenly. The expanded remit of the Virtual School will bring a big challenge but also a big opportunity to ensure better outcomes for even more children.

The Virtual School Team has been successful in preventing any permanent exclusions for children on roll at the virtual school which is a tremendous success and one we hope can be replicated. The challenges remain with the quality of Personal Education Plans being a priority.

I am extremely proud of our Virtual School and the impact it is having on improving outcomes for Cambridgeshire's children and I would like to thank the Team and the volunteer Management Board for their work over the year.

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail and evaluate the work undertaken by the Virtual School from September 2022 to August 2023 and to set out the key priorities for the academic year 2023-2024. Furthermore, it is to share the outcomes of the eligible cohort (children in the care of Cambridgeshire County council for a year or more as of 31st March 2023).

Every local authority in England must appoint at least one person to fulfil the local authority's statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of its children in care, wherever they live or are educated. This person is called the Head of the Virtual School. Within Cambridgeshire we have a team of education professionals that support the Virtual School Head in fulfilling these responsibilities.

Cambridgeshire Virtual School support children and young people in care between the ages of 2 and 18. The Virtual School brings together information about children and young people who are in the care of Cambridgeshire as if they attend a single school.

Additionally, Cambridgeshire Virtual School provide information and advice for children previously in care including those who have been adopted from care and those under special guardianship and child arrangement orders. Cambridgeshire Virtual School is responsible for children previously in care attending a Cambridgeshire school or education setting.

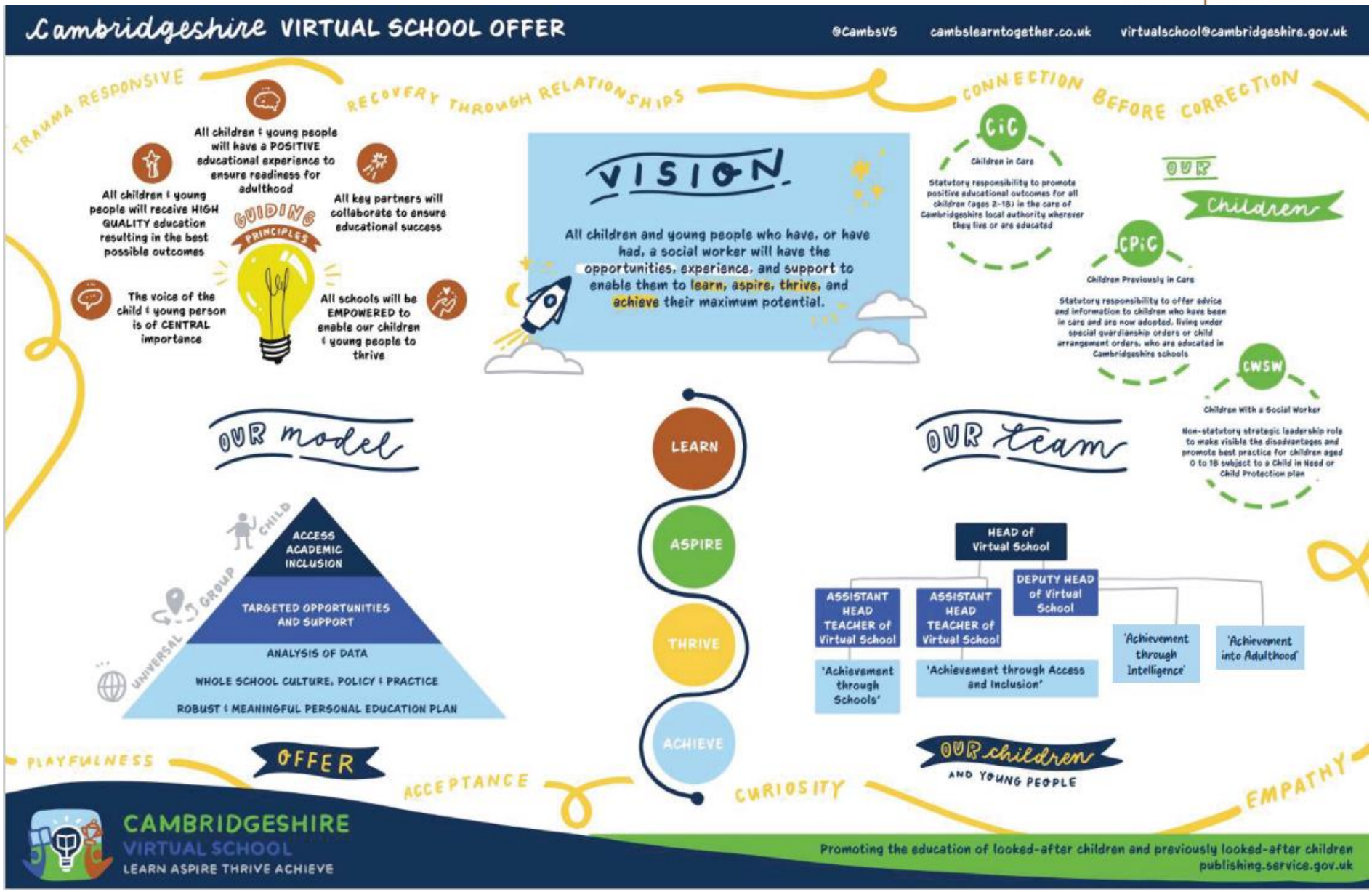
The Virtual School has a non-statutory strategic leadership role for children who have or have had a social worker (in the last 6 years).

Cambridgeshire Virtual School sits within the Education Directorate. The Virtual School Head is line managed by the Assistant Director for School Improvement. Following consultation, a direct line of sight has been introduced between the Virtual School Head and the Executive Director for Children, Education and Families.

The Virtual School Headteacher is currently in post as Eastern Region Virtual School Head's Chairperson. This means that Cambridgeshire has a seat on the National Association of Virtual School Heads' Extended Board.

The Virtual School has a 'management board' which offers both challenge and support to the work and direction of the Virtual School.

'Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation Strategy and Consultation' was published by the DfE in 2023. This has implications for the Virtual School and role of the wider council as a corporate parent. Although this hasn't yet been written as primary legislation, it has already begun to influence thinking around future developments within the Virtual School.
Definition of terms used, and a glossary are provided in appendix 1 and 2.


Cambridgeshire VIRTUAL SCHOOL OFFER
@CambsVS
cambslearntogether.co.uk
virtualschool@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
TRAUMA RESPONSIVE
RECOVERY THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS
CONNECTION BEFORE CORRECTION
All children & young people will have a POSITIVE educational experience to ensure readiness for adulthood
All children & young people will receive HIGH QUALITY education resulting in the best possible outcomes
All key partners will collaborate to ensure educational success
GUIDING PRINCIPLES
The voice of the child & young person is of CENTRAL importance
All schools will be EMPOWERED to enable our children & young people to thrive
VISION
All children and young people who have, or have had, a social worker will have the opportunities, experience, and support to enable them to learn, aspire, thrive, and achieve their maximum potential.
CiC
Children in Care
Statutory responsibility to promote positive educational outcomes for all children (ages 2-18) in the care of Cambridgeshire local authority wherever they live or are educated
OUR Children
CPiC
Children Previously in Care
Statutory responsibility to offer advice and information to children who have been in care and are now adopted, living under special guardianship orders or child arrangement orders, who are educated in Cambridgeshire schools
CWSW
Children With a Social Worker
Non-statutory strategic leadership role to make visible the disadvantages and promote best practice for children aged 0 to 18 subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection plan
OUR model
CHILD
GROUP
UNIVERSAL
ACCESS ACADEMIC INCLUSION
TARGETED OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT
ANALYSIS OF DATA
WHOLE SCHOOL CULTURE, POLICY & PRACTICE
ROBUST & MEANINGFUL PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN
LEARN
ASPIRE
THRIVE
ACHIEVE
OUR team
HEAD of Virtual School
ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER of Virtual School
ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER of Virtual School
DEPUTY HEAD of Virtual School
'Achievement through Schools'
'Achievement through Access and Inclusion'
'Achievement through Intelligence'
'Achievement into Adulthood'
OUR children AND YOUNG PEOPLE
PLAYFULNESS
OFFER
ACCEPTANCE
CURIOSITY
EMPATHY
CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE
Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children
publishing.service.gov.uk

2 Children and Young Person Summary

1370 children with a Social Worker

We now have an app to help social workers have quick access to information about education.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE

This is how the Virtual School fits into the CCC promise to you

We will support you to achieve your goals and reach your potential, in your education, hobbies and interests.

Early Years (Age 2 to 4)

About You

This year we have worked to support over **32** of you in Early Years.

Your Voice

Your carers told us you enjoyed visiting Cambridge Arts Theatre to watch 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'.

How We Helped

We have worked with your carers so that they can make sure you are ready to start school.

What You Learnt

We sent you summer learning packs with 50 things to do before you are 5.

School-Aged (Age 5 to 16)

About You

This year we have worked to support over **421** of you at school-age. Your overall attendance was 83%.

Your Voice

You told us that other children don't understand what it means to be in care. We are working with a school to look at how to change this. It is a big project and won't be finished until December.

How We Helped

Some of you took part in opportunities provided by the Virtual School including Fire Break, youth work and visits to the theatre and university.

What You Learnt

71% of you achieved the expected standard in your phonics assessment.

83% of you achieved the expected standard for reading in year 2.

30% of you in year 6 achieved the expected standard in reading and maths.

***47%** of you achieved a 4 or higher in English and Maths GCSE.*

* Results not yet validated

Post-16 (Age 16-18)

About You

This year we worked to support over **180** of you. **149** of you have been in education, employment or training.

Your Voice

Two of you were guests on our podcasts, sharing things you wanted your teachers to know.

How We Helped

We have worked with Inspire Education where 22% of you attend, to help them think about new and improved ways of working.

What You Learnt

88% of you in education have made expected progress or better.

8 of our year 13 leavers have applied and secured the grades required to attend university.

122 Separated Migrant Children currently in our care.

270 families with children previously in care supported

This year we have...

Learn

Trained your teachers, social workers and carers. 169 attended our big event about Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

Recorded podcasts to help adults in your schools help you.

Delivered VR training to leaders in the council. They have said all social workers must complete the training. Teachers have used the training to help more adults in their schools understand.

Aspire

Pupil Premium Plus supported...

£90,000 provided for education whilst children were waiting to start school

£428,003 was given to support individual children in school

£73,000 was used to fund school projects

Thrive

17 84

PEPs quality assured. That is 107 more than last year!

Developed new ways at looking at how well you are doing. We are using this to talk to your teachers about how to help you

Used your ideas to change how we hear your views in your PEP

Achieve

From September 7 of you will be attending independent schools.

Asked schools and MATS (multi-academy trusts) questions about children who have a social worker or used to have a social worker.

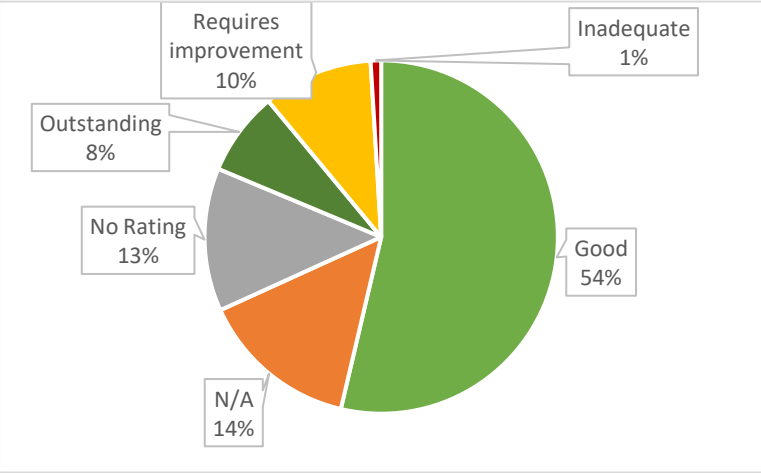
Worked with the Admissions Team and Special Needs Teams to write guidance to support you.

Next year we want to...

- ✓ Help social workers and others working in Children, Education and Families to understand about trauma.
- ✓ Help schools, nurseries and colleges that we haven't been working with think about how to help children who have a social worker or used to have a social worker but are not in care.
- ✓ Promote opportunities to help you know about a wide range of careers and how to work towards your goals.
- ✓ Create opportunities for work experience, internships and apprenticeships within the County Council.
- ✓ Make sure there is a plan to use post 16 pupil premium plus to best help you.
- ✓ Make sure the changes in the PEP designed to hear your voice are better for you and are used in the desirable outcomes.
- ✓ Make sure your carers can share their ideas about how to help you in your PEP meeting.
- ✓ Look at what we have learnt from projects and share this with all schools.

3 Children in Care Characteristics and Contextual Data

The national 8-year trend shows a gradual increase in the numbers of children in care; for the first time in three years Cambridgeshire's data also shows an increase. There are slightly fewer children within the early years. The largest increase is post 16, which can be largely attributed to the increase in separated migrant children. The number of children and young people whose home is outside of Cambridgeshire has increased from 48% to 52% for this reporting period. Cambridgeshire Virtual School has therefore worked with education settings across 44 different educating authorities, 5 of which had 5 or more children in. The largest number living in the neighbouring authorities of Peterborough and Suffolk.



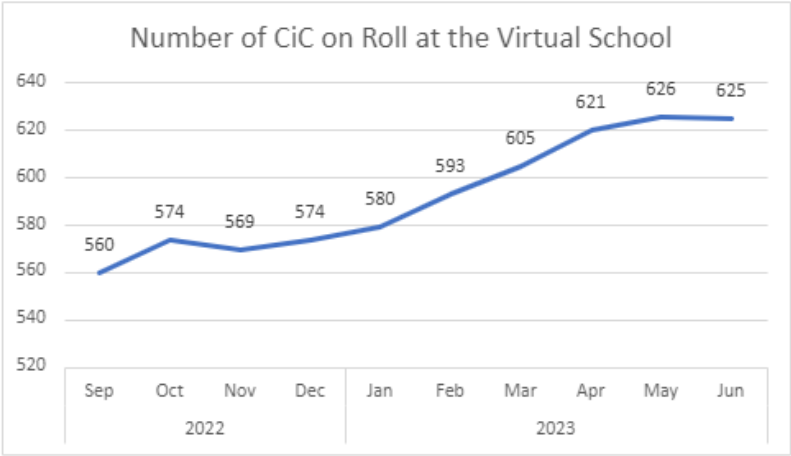
At point of school admission, the Virtual School promote admission to a school that is good or better.

Some children enter care whilst on roll at a requires improvement or inadequate rated school or the rating changes whilst the child is in attendance. In these situations, there is a process to decide whether it is in the child's best interests to move schools or remain where they are. Where a child attends a school judged as requires improvement or inadequate, their progress is monitored closely.

Typically, there is a much higher number of children in the older age range than in the younger years. Numbers increase across the academic year which impacts on rising caseloads within the team.

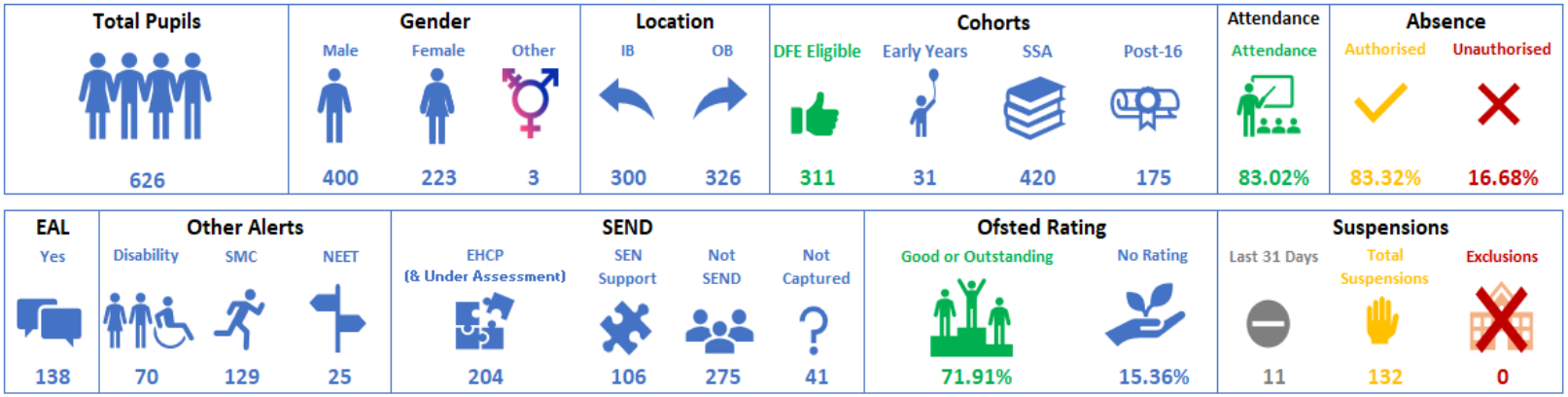
Source: Welfare Call (May 2023)

Pupil Cohorts	May-23	May-22	Diff.
Number of All Children on Roll	626	603	↑ 23
Statutory School Age (Years 1-11)	420	415	↑ 5
Early Years (Years -5 - 0)	31	37	↓ -6
Post-16 (Years 12 & 13)	175	149	↑ 26



Source Welfare Call (May 2023)

Headline Data from Pupil on a Page (POP) Dashboard May 2023



There is a high level of fluidity within the cohort; this includes children coming into care and ceasing to be in care, this means that even if the overall number has only fluctuated by 2, sitting behind that could be a high number of children becoming and ceasing to be in care.

33% of Cambridgeshire children in care have an EHCP which is comparable to the 2022 figure of 33.6%. The national CiC cohort figure is 30.2% & statistical neighbour average is 36.6.%. The percentage of Cambridgeshire CiC who require special or additional support without an EHCP is currently 17% which is a decrease of 9% on the same figures for last year. Cognition and Learning is the largest area of need, followed by social, emotional and mental health.

Number of Separated Migrant Children	May-23	May-22	Diff.
Years 4 to 6	1	0	↑ 1
Years 7 to 9	4	5	↓ -1
Years 10 to 11	34	22	↑ 12
Years 12 to 13	90	55	↑ 35
Totals	128	82	↑ 46

Source: Welfare Call (May 2023)

Separated Migrant Children have no responsible adult, and therefore have child in care status. Cambridgeshire participates in the National Transfer Scheme which means children and young people may be taken into our care as:

- Spontaneous arrivals within the county borders
- Transfers in from other local authorities

Nationally, there has been a rise in the number of Separated Migrant Children arriving in the UK and this is reflected in Cambridgeshire data. In August 2022, the threshold for transfer into local authorities was increased from 0.07% of child population to 0.1%.

In response to the increasing need, the Virtual School has appointed a highly experienced education advisor to develop strategy and an operational response to support the work in this area.

4 Achievement Through Schools

Over the course of this year Cambridgeshire Virtual School have refined the advisory and multi-academy trust (MAT), work to ensure meetings held are directly contributing to improved outcomes for the cohort. The Indicators of Good Practice (IGP), tool has been edited to make more explicit reference to the statutory guidance and ensure that education settings are able to easily identify key areas of development which can be reviewed by the Virtual School to determine and support progress. This document has been shared through summer term advisory meetings and explored in detail through Designated Teacher (DT), Induction and Refresher training, attended by over 80 in county Designated Teachers. This academic year there have been 127 advisory meetings and 84 MAT meetings.

Additionally, the Achievement Through Schools team alongside the Achievement Through Intelligence team has developed an Attainment and Progress Power BI dashboard that enables greater scrutiny of data to inform actions and the work of the wider Virtual School. The dashboard enables the Virtual School to consider the impact of attendance, time in care, placement and school moves on attainment. This information is invaluable in ensuring the specific context of Cambridgeshire is widely understood and directly informing the actions taken by the Virtual School and wider services.

An initial review of MAT work has been completed which evidenced the need to develop a flexible approach to MAT meetings, support, and guidance in recognition of the variations in structures and approaches of individual MATs. Outcomes of MAT meetings have included MAT Designated Teacher Network meetings, Central Leadership Team training to develop leaders' expertise and knowledge around trauma informed practice and the development of MAT specific projects. For a detailed example of work with one MAT, please see appendix 3. Over the course of the year the Virtual School has worked alongside 5 Local Authorities from the Eastern Region to progress an Eastern Region MAT approach which will launch next academic year. This work has led to the creation of a shared Memorandum of Understanding for MAT work, an agreed approach to MAT work and the initiation of an Eastern Region Power BI dashboard.

'It's exciting to be a part of the partnership between ELA and VS. There is a firm commitment to the young people we work with to support the best outcomes for each individual.'

Deputy CEO, Eastern Learning Alliance

'Meridian Trust has benefited from a joint partnership with the Cambridgeshire Virtual School…This has supported the capacity for school improvement using Meridian Trust CiC Leads and external partners; pedagogical principles and sharing practice across the MAT has driven progress and the use of data across the trust has provided a granularity of data, supporting accuracy of data and therefore appropriate funding to be drawn down; governance structures have been supported with direct training with a focus on school improvement, skills, roles and responsibilities for school improvement. Joint working at its best.'

Trust Education Projects Director, Meridian Trust

Broadening Educational Pathways

2022-2023 is the second year the Virtual School has worked alongside the Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation 'Broadening Educational Pathways' to support access to independent schools for children in care. 3 of the 4 children that started in September 2022 are thriving and will continue into the second year of the programme. This academic year it has been announced that there will be an offer 1-4 places only per Local Authority. Cambridgeshire have 2 children who have been offered places to start in September 2023. The Virtual School has worked with the charity to ensure there are robust criteria for identifying those children eligible, as well as tightening up on timescales and deadlines. The Virtual School have pledged to offer whole school trauma training to the schools involved. The Virtual School has also promoted the project within the Local Authority to ensure a wider understanding. This has led to application forms being completed for 5 children well in advance of deadlines for a September 2024 start.

Training

The Virtual School have continued to develop and expand the training offer which remains accessible to a variety of partners. The training offer now also includes training on: Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), PACE, Modular Recovery Through Relationships Training and Annual Designated Refresher training.

There is now a formalised partnership with SEND Services 0-25 with colleagues from both services now trained to deliver the Core Recovery Through Relationships training which from September 2023 will be bookable through the SEND traded booklet and for County Council employees through Our Development. The demand for this training has continued to grow hence a priority for this year has been to increase the numbers of course facilitators trained to meet demand, the Virtual School have jointly delivered the Recovery Through Relationships core training to 33 Cambridgeshire Schools, Colleges, Early Years Settings, and Special Schools. The Modular Recovery through Relationships training is an extension of the Core training to enable Designated Teachers and Senior Leaders to embed key concepts. Attendees are given PowerPoint material and a trainer's manual and then led the dissemination of training within their own setting. Online support sessions for attendees will start in September 2023.

The training has been delivered to the Corporate Leadership Team leading to a commitment by the Chief Executive to Cambridgeshire becoming a trauma informed authority.

'The most powerful immersive learning experience, using VR. Literally seeing through the eyes of a child to help understand and become truly trauma-informed in our practice. Very much bringing to life the importance of our personal and collective corporate parenting roles.'

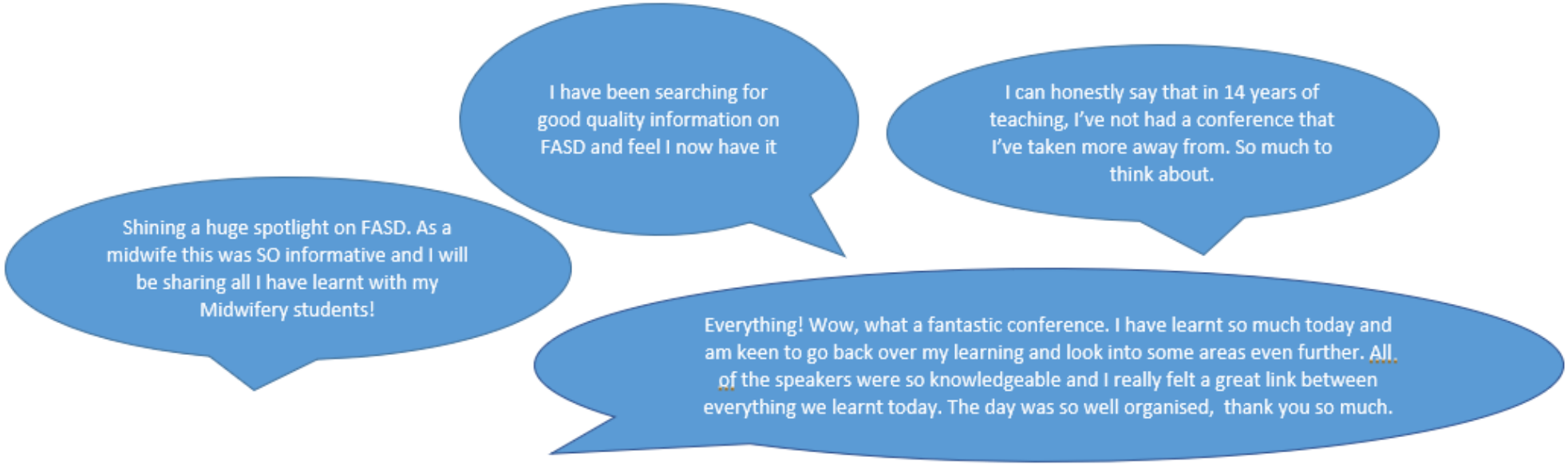
Stephen Moir, Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council, October 2022

'I want Cambridgeshire to be the first trauma-informed county in England, I want Recovery through Relationships to be the way we operate…not only do I recommend it, I would almost say from me to you, it's a mandated requirement, or it will become in the future…'

Stephen Moir, Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council, May 2023

Several teams within the authority have received the training including School Improvement, Education Safeguarding, and the Education Inclusion Officers. Over 90 social workers, children and family workers and other county council officers have also participated in the training.

The Virtual School conference was attended by 169 professionals from education, social care, health, and education. The event focused on 'Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder', the audience benefited from hearing a variety of national experts in the field of FASD including Dr Cassie Jackson, Sandra Butcher, and Carol Hunter. The conference fuelled multi-agency dialogue and supported a shared understanding. Feedback included:

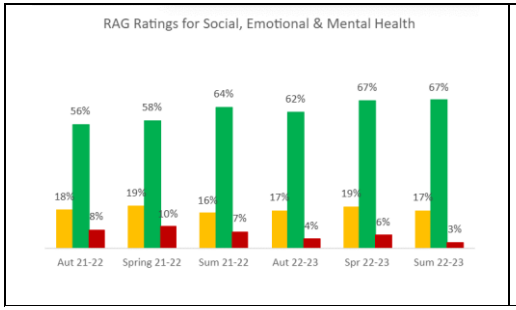


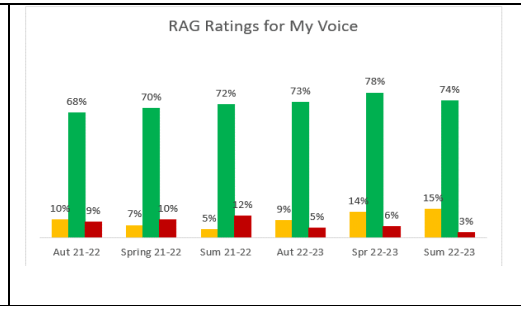
The Virtual School has offered 2 countywide training events alongside bespoke sessions for 6 education providers with more training booked for next academic year. FASD features in the Virtual School podcast series. The Virtual School has worked alongside National FASD and Anster in the development of virtual reality content to support training on FASD. Please refer to the case study for evidence of the impact of Virtual School work in this area (appendix 4).

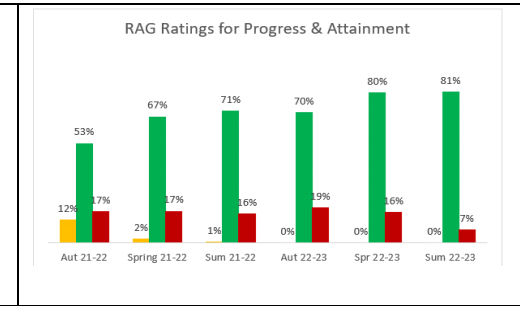
In addition to face to face training the Virtual School has hosted and launched a podcast targeted at educational professionals. The podcast seeks to explore factors which impact the educational journeys of the full Virtual School cohort and consider how barriers can be minimised and opportunities maximised to enable the very best progress and outcomes for children and young people. So far there have been over 1000 downloads and the podcast is now into its second series.

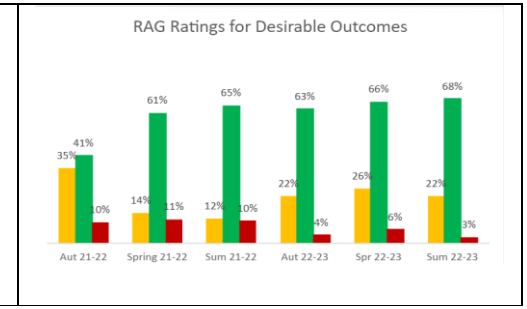
Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

Within Cambridgeshire the PEP is led by the school, with attendance from the social worker, carer, and engagement with the young person according to their wishes. The Virtual School employ a PEP Champion who provides training and support to social workers, designated teachers, and carers. The Virtual School quality assure every PEP. Each section is rated (red, amber or green) and feedback provided. The quality assurance process enables the identification of follow-up actions where there are concerns around individual children and young people, an example of this is provided in appendix 5. Over the year there has been notable improvements in all education sections of the PEP, improvements in the attainment and progress tab demonstrates the greatest improvement. This is the direct result of a new process around collection of this information which ensures prior to quality assurance, settings are reminded and supported to enter this essential information.









Social workers have a dedicated section of the PEP. It contains key information such as contacts, contact arrangements and sensitive issues. Social workers are asked to ensure the information is checked, reviewed, and updated for each PEP. The quality of social care information in the PEP and attendance at PEPs has been a key focus for the last three years. Improvements are now evident. Key actions have been:

- Improved PEP webinar produced for inclusion in social worker induction to include foreword from Head of Service for Corporate Parenting.
- Virtual School PEP Champion support through weekly surgeries for teams and identified individuals.
- Access to PEP reports for team managers.
- Attendance of Corporate Parenting Service Manager in PEP audit.
- Termly reviews of PEP data with Head of Service for Corporate Parenting and the Virtual School Head.
- Targeted intervention and follow-up following PEP data analysis.

There has been a significant increase this academic year in the amount of Social Worker PEPs identified as 'gold' (outstanding quality), however analysis has indicated red ratings (below satisfactory) remain at 20+%; this continues to be a priority for development into next academic year. It appears as if the high turnover of staff within Social Care teams and the use of agency workers is a contributing factor. The Virtual School will continue to work with Senior Leaders to consider how to continue to drive improvements in the face of these continued challenges. Social Worker attendance at PEPs has increased by almost 25% since Summer 2022 to 85.45%.

2022-23						
Autumn PEPS 572	Aut SW Attendance 73.60%	AMBER 40%	GREEN 30%	RED 24%	GOLD 6%	A,G,G 76%
Spring PEPS 591	Spr SW Attendance 72.59%	AMBER 29%	GREEN 32%	RED 20%	GOLD 19%	A,G,G 80%
Summer PEPS 621	Spr SW Attendance 82.45%	AMBER 34%	GREEN 16%	RED 23%	GOLD 27%	A,G,G 77%

Red – quality of PEP is significantly below expected standard.
Amber – quality of PEP is below expected standard.
Green – quality of the PEP is of a good standard.
Gold – quality of the PEP is outstanding.
AGG – Amber, green and gold combined.

This year the Virtual School has worked to provide foster carers direct access to the PEP in response to foster carer feedback and in recognition of their role as a professional supporting the educational needs of the children and young people in their care. Following the success of an initial pilot project working with a small working group of foster carers, all in county foster carers now have the option of direct access to PEPs. Additionally, amendments to the PEP for next academic year will enable greater foster carer input. The Virtual School has provided training for Foster Carers to support their access and will be providing greater support on how to make meaningful contributions to the PEP in the coming year.

The newly developed progress and attainment dashboard has supported Virtual School Education Advisors to follow up with schools swiftly after the quality assurance period where there are queries around student's progress or attainment and where there are concerns that desirable outcomes are not facilitating children and young people to make good academic progress. Through this follow-up, schools may be offered additional pupil premium plus to support accelerated progress. An additional £8995 was granted through this process for this academic year.

The Virtual School has used retained funding for the rental of the virtual reality headsets to continue to provide training at no charge. Additionally, retained funding supported a trainee educational psychologist working with the Virtual School. Work included both child level and strategic work; see appendix 6 for further details. The Virtual School invited expressions of interest for school / MAT level projects. The projects with Impington Village College and Inspire have now concluded. An overview of the projects and impact can be seen in appendix 7 and 8. These will be shared with schools through the Virtual School conference 'Stable Schools' in the forthcoming year. The following projects are in progress and impact will be reported in future Virtual School annual reports.

- Colville Primary School: Development of speech and language resource to support outcomes for Cambridgeshire children in care.
- Cavendish School: Develop the use of Educational Psychologist support to promote trauma responsive practice within The Cavendish School and other educational settings.
- St Andrews CE Primary School: To develop a model which explores how care experience can be 'usualised' across the curriculum to provide better inclusivity and representation for our children in care and previously in care, whose stories are often missing or misunderstood.
- Cromwell Community College: Develop a dynamic sustainable model which facilitates an enhanced holistic provision which enables improved relational support for children in care, children previously in care and those with a social worker to increase inclusion leading to positive outcomes.
- Eastern Learning Alliance: Identify the barriers to accessing and achieving in education through SEMH screening for children known to Social Care to enable a proactive response which leads to improved outcomes.

Attainment and Progress

Attainment and progress data is currently unvalidated and should be treated with caution. There is no current reliable data on outcomes for children in care nationally or for statistical neighbours. The report will be updated in March 2024 once the validated data is available. This is the first academic year where there have been no concessions for COVID, although the disruption to education for these cohorts should still be kept in mind.

The Early Years eligible cohort is 4 children and therefore data is not statistically meaningful. Of the 10 children within the full cohort only 1 achieved 'good level development'; this cohort will be prioritised for follow-up and additional scrutiny throughout the year. A strength of this cohort was physical development. It is likely that many of these children will leave care before the next national data set. Individuals will continue to be tracked and supported for the duration of their time in care. Data is provided in appendix 9.

Phonics data applies to 7 children at the end of year one and is therefore not statistically meaningful. Of the full cohort of 15, 53% achieved the expected standard 71% of the eligible cohort passed. Data is provided in appendix 10.

The end of key stage one eligible cohort is 6, the full cohort at 13 children means that data is still not statistically meaningful. The gap identified in the last two national datasets (2019 and 2022) between reading and writing is less evident. Those students that achieved an expected standard typically did so across all three subjects. Data is provided in appendix 11.

At key stage two the eligible cohort size rises to 28 children, up from last year's cohort of 24. There are 35 children in the full cohort. For those in the eligible cohort 57% achieved at least expected standard for reading, 56% achieved the expected standard in writing and 43% achieved the expected standard in maths. When looking at the full cohort, unlike previous years writing was a strength of the cohort, whilst maths is an area of identified development. The gap between all children and Cambridgeshire children in care whilst still significant continues to reduce. Data is provided in appendix 12.

At key stage four the eligible cohort size rises considerably to 58 young people, from 47 in 2022 and 55 in 2019. GCSE grades 4 or above in English has remained consistent with last year at 50% (2022: 51%) and there is an improvement of 10% in those achieving maths at grade 4. Those achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths has again increased and is up a further 3% on last year. There were 11 GCSE grades achieved between grades 7 – 8. A standout achievement for the Virtual School was for a Separated Migrant Child who achieved a grade 4 in maths despite only entering the country in Autumn term 2022. Data is provided in appendix 13.

17% of Year 13's completed level 3 pathways, of these 80% are expected to transition to university this academic year. There were some standout achievements, including an achievement of 4 A*.

During this academic year the Virtual School has developed a fully interactive Power BI dashboard for progress and attainment, this will now enable improved scrutiny of results and enable more specific child level actions. The Virtual School has already started to utilise the data dashboard to inform actions; this includes work with the 48 Designated Teachers in attendance at the summer refresher training. The dashboard was used to identify the specific priority areas for children in Care, previously in care and also those known to Social Care within Cambridgeshire to improve educational outcomes. This included highlighting the link between attendance and attainment for this cohort aligning with the data made available by the Childrens commissioner in the report, 'Attendance is everyone's business'.

5 Achievement Through Access and Inclusion

The Achievement Through Access and Inclusion seeks to facilitate sustained access to, and inclusion within education by empowering the network around the child. The strategic and operational work within this area is driven by an Assistant Head. Over the last year:

- Attendance, reduced timetables, and suspension data has been further interrogated (statutory school age and post 16).
- Tracking systems have been extended to monitor alternative provision and tuition data.
- Children Missing Education (CME) guidance has been developed in partnership with local authority partners.
- Initial assessments for Separated Migrant Children have been introduced.

This information, alongside referrals from key partners has been used to identify where Virtual School support and challenge is required. Over the last year the response has been primarily at an individual child level; where concerned have emerged about the impact of school policy and practice on children in care, partnership working alongside the Achievement Through Schools team has begun to influence change at a systemic level.

Attendance

Nationally, attendance has improved for all children including those in care over the last academic year, however it is still significantly worse than pre-pandemic levels. National attendance data is available for 2021-2022. Cambridgeshire children in care compare favourably against the eastern region and statistical neighbours average (appendix 14). Key stage analysis reveals lower levels of attendance at secondary age with a significant drop in key stage 4 (appendix 15). Internal data for 2022-2023 shows attendance is higher for children who have been in care for more than a year (87.14%) than for the full cohort (83.36%). Additionally, children with an EHCP and boys are more likely to have poorer attendance. This aligns with the proportion of children supported by the Achievement Through Access and Inclusion team.

Distinct Children Suspended	Total No. of Suspensions	Total No. of Days	Avg No. of Days	In County Suspensions	OoC WFC Suspensions	Overall Schools	No. of IC Schools	No. of OoC WFC Schools	Pupils 2+ Suspensions	No. of Perm. Exc.	Aut. No. of Suspensions	Spr. No. of Suspensions	Sum. No. of Suspensions
58	143	302	2.11	60	83	46	18	28	34		74	38	31

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

The Virtual School has had no permanent exclusions this academic year; two permanent exclusions were issued however following challenge from the Virtual School, in partnership with colleagues in social care and SEND, both were cancelled (see appendix 16).

Unvalidated local authority data shows a 173% increase in the number of the number of suspensions of Cambridgeshire children as compared to the 2021-22 academic year. Part of the increase for Cambridgeshire children may be attributed to increased levels of reporting to the local authority. Comparatively, internal data shows a 9.5% decrease in the number of suspensions of Cambridgeshire children in care as compared to the 2021-22 academic year. Work within the Virtual School has led to timely identification and intervention of escalating need in schools, along with all suspensions being followed up to hold schools accountable against the statutory guidance and to support specific needs. For some children and young people, this has involved the Virtual School supporting a transition into well-matched provision as their school were not able to meet need.

In the forthcoming year, the Virtual School will continue to use data and relationships with schools/services to provide early intervention, and continue to work at a MAT and school level to develop policy and practice, supporting schools to identify the root cause of suspension practices.

Educated Other Than At School (including reduced timetables)

Research from the Children's Commissioner indicates that nationally children in care are over-represented among those missing in school. Virtual School internal data mirrors the Children's Commissioner's analysis that separated migrant children, male children, older children, children with special educational needs, and children without stable care placements were disproportionately more likely to not be in school. Looked after children who are not in school | Children's Commissioner for England (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

For Cambridgeshire children in care, of the statutory school age (39) pupils who were not in receipt of full-time provision in school at the end of the Spring Term:

- 28 boys and 11 girls
- 5 separated migrant children
- 1 primary age child and 38 secondary aged children
- 25 EHCPs

Where it meets the needs of individual children, alternative provision (including tuition) has supplemented the education offer for Cambridgeshire Children in Care. This provision was offered in a variety of circumstances including new to care, unplanned placement moves and children who were not managing the 'typical' education on offer to them. See attached a case study which demonstrates the positive impact of this provision for one young person (appendix 17).

Of the 39 pupils, 10 children and young people were not accessing the education offer in place at this time due to complexity of need and context:

- 7 children and young people experiencing complex, emotional based school avoidance.
- 3 children and young people with complex needs who experienced recent, unplanned care placement moves (1 of whom was experiencing multiple home moves in quick succession, due to crisis).

The Virtual School has identified that the quality and timeliness of reviews of EHCPs for children in care are factors in securing timely, well-matched education. In recognition of the increased demands on the Statutory Assessment Team, the Virtual School have appointed a Virtual School SENCO, who will drive statutory assessment work for children in care with an EHCP (or awaiting an EHCP), in partnership with the Statutory Assessment Team.

Education Employment and Training (EET)

The cohort of NEET young people fluctuates across the academic year. Specific trigger points include the end of October which is the point at which colleges review engagement and officially enrols the young person, and a second trigger point is Christmas.

Risk of NEET is magnified due to a variety of factors including being a separated migrant young person. Strategic work to increase 'roll on / roll off' ESOL provision was undertaken in the Spring term. A 10-week study, led by West Suffolk College, for 3 days started after the Easter holidays; the programme included ESOL, digital skills, maths and engineering tasters (e.g. welding). 18 post-16 separated migrant children in care attended this provision in the summer term alongside a small number of care-leavers. A bid for funding has also been submitted to the ESFA by the Prince's Trust.

To support Education, Employment and Training (EET) the Virtual School has employed Welfare Call to collect weekly attendance data for the post 16 cohort. This has enabled a timely Virtual School response to attendance concerns. An example is provided in appendix 18.

In response to the proposal in Stable Homes, that Virtual Schools will support young people in education through to age 25, the role of 'Inspiring Futures Lead' is being proposed; this will include developing a meaningful careers pathway from primary school onwards. It will also include a proposal to create meaningful work experience and employment opportunities within the local authority further evolving the role of the corporate parent and building on Cambridgeshire's choice to adopt care-experience as a protected characteristic.

6 Children Previously in Care

For children previously in care (CPiC), the Virtual School is not acting as the corporate parent but is there to promote educational achievement through the provision of advice and information to all relevant parties. There has been a 36% increase in the number of enquiries for this reporting period (appendix 19). In addition, to responding to enquires, they are tracked by theme, to support developments and inform training offered.

The Virtual School has seen a rise in the number of enquiries around FASD, enquires now make up 13% of all enquiries, which is the second highest enquiry type. This significant increase has cemented the need for the Virtual School to continue with its focus on FASD across all sectors of the Local Authority who are working with and supporting children and young people. This year the Virtual School has developed a training package, which aligns with the 'Best Practice in FASD Training Guide' developed by National FASD and the Seashell. Training to date, has reached more than 100 educational professionals. In March, the Virtual School held the 'Spotlight on FASD' Conference that was attended by 169 people from education, social care, health and police. Further information is provided in the case study appendix 4.

The Virtual School has continued to offer training to prospective adopters and early years settings, schools and FE settings on the specific role of the virtual school, designated teacher and supporting the needs of children previously in care.

Discussions around the cohort, including approaches to data collection, monitoring and support offered, have been integrated by the Achievement Through Schools Team into their trust level and school advisory meetings.

The Edu-care Advice Line, facilitated by an Educational Psychologist and Advisory Teacher, has continued to offer schools and families an opportunity to view a specific need through a trauma lens.

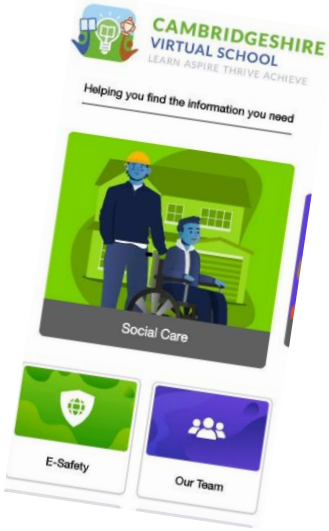
The Virtual School has begun to work with the Regional Adoption Agency to being to think about how increased education support can be used as a protective factor when adoptions are at risk of breaking down. This work is currently exploratory and will evolve over the next year.

7 Children With a Social Worker

The role of the Virtual School for children with a social worker pertains to children who, (for safeguarding or welfare reasons) have a child in need plan (CiN) or a child protection plan (CP) or have had within the last 6 years. It is a strategic leadership role at a cohort level.

A key priority this year has been the building of partnership working across Children's Services and the Education Directorate. The Virtual School app launched in March 2023 collating key education information in one easily accessible platform to support our Social Care professionals. Feedback has been positive with over 2500 downloads to date; the functionality and content remains under continual review. Further online training has been developed for social care professionals to be hosted on the authority's internal 'Our Development' platform; this will be launched during the next academic year.

Discussions around the wider cohort, including approaches to data collection, monitoring and support offered, have been integrated by the Achievement Through Schools Team into their trust level and school advisory meetings. Initially this was trialled with a single trust and then rolled out further. A priority for the Virtual School moving forward is to reach education providers that do not typically have children in care on-roll, ensuring they understand both the Virtual School's remit and their own in promoting educational outcomes for children with a social worker.



Virtual School App

Childrens Social Care Service	1370	Gender				Matched in Census		Cohorts			
Case Status		Male	Female	Other	Unborn	SSA Yes	SSA No	Unborn Babies	Early Years	SSA	Post-16
Children in Need (CiN)	Child Protection (CP)										
485	273										
Children in Care (CiC)	CiN/CLA	CP/CLA									
610	1	1	772	559	3	36	400	257	0	Under 5s	5-16	16+
								36	502	657	175

Source: Liquid Logic and Census data (May 2023)

8 Aspirations Project

A range of opportunities were offered to children and young people through the aspirations project, these included careers interviews, university visits, theatre trips and employability courses. The project has been evaluated and concluded owing to limited impact. In response to Stable Homes and using learning from the aspirations project the VS has created a 'Achievement into Adulthood' team, which includes a level 6 qualified CIAG lead.

Firebreak

Youthwork

Cambridge Arts Theatre

Early Years Fitzwilliam

Cambridge University

My Name is Why
Lemn Sissay
Cambridge Arts Theatre

"I have never met a person who is a care leaver as successful as him."

"One day I will write my story."

9 Development Plan

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE

Review of Development Plan

Cambridgeshire County Council

Vision

All children and young people (CYP) who have or have had a social worker will have the opportunities, experience and support to enable them to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their maximum potential.

5 Year Outcomes

Overarching
- The vision and guiding principles are fully integrated within the VS
- Cambridgeshire Virtual School is recognised both regionally and nationally for impact and innovation
- There is resilience within the VS team and a culture that is proactive, creative and innovative

PEPs are dynamic, live and relevant
- PEPs are an integral part of the child's care journey
- PEPs act as a key mechanism to guide the work of key partners to promote educational outcomes

Children and young people who have or have had a social worker have increased access to high quality education, leading to improved outcomes
- Education is a protective factor for children who have or have had a social worker
- Suitable care placements are arranged which minimise disruption in education
- There is prompt and timely access to suitable education placements

Children and young people in care have increased inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes
- Improve attendance and reduce incidents of fixed term exclusion
- Identification, tracking and intervention serves as protective factor for CYP with SEND rather than a barrier
- There is strengthened trauma informed pedagogy in schools
- Understanding and awareness of FASD underpins education practice
- Cambridgeshire Virtual School are leading on and engaging in research

Aspirational education is seen by all as the key to enable all children to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their potential
- Cambridgeshire children in care have high aspirations and a clear pathway to success
- Link between PPP spend and area of need correlate with improved outcomes e.g. attainment and progress for cognition and learning
- Improve attainment and progress through effective tracking and response to data
- Promote 18 aware agenda

There is a collective responsibility for the education of children who have or have had a social worker, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively
- There is a culture within the LA that children in care are everyone's responsibility, resulting in seamless partnership working
- CEOs, Head teachers, SLT and DTs understand what they can do to offer the best support, and this is embedded in policy and practice
- Carers understand the best way to support learning

Progress To Date

2019-2020

- Developed an offer to include school level work alongside child level
- Widened capacity and expertise within the VS with the appointment of a VS Education Psychologist
- Redesigned PEP, formalised quality assurance process leading to effective tracking of PEP compliance and quality
- Revised pupil premium plus policy strengthening the link between funding and outcomes
- Strengthened partnership working within the local authority and regional virtual school network
- Invested in Virtual Reality Headsets to strengthen the training offer
- Formalised the SEND protocol in partnership with SAT, ART and Social Care.
- Established SAT and VS operational and strategic meetings to avoid drift in education
- Foster Carers education conference and development of literature to support carers' role in education
- Developed weekly homework club for UASC
- COVID response

2020-2021

- Widened capacity and expertise within the VS with the appointment of a Performance Officer, Aspirations Project Lead, Senior Advisory roles, PEP Champion
- Created a YouTube channel with a range of pre-recorded webinars to support DTs, SW, carers in their roles
- Created supporting documentation to empower DTs in their role
- Developed and delivered SEND training across VS, SAT and social care
- Developed an Education Support line for professionals and families of care experienced children
- Development of systems, processes and skills in analysis of attainment and progress data and informed response to this
- Extended training offer to maintain continuity of offer through COVID
- Embraced virtual platforms to ensure continuity of all aspects of service delivery
- Participation in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library leading to 2–4-year-olds receiving books monthly
- Internal moderation of roles to create specific preventative, proactive and reactive inclusion focus in VS work
- Growth of presence on social media

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE

Review of Development Plan

Cambridgeshire County Council

Vision

All children and young people (CYP) who have or have had a social worker will have the opportunities, experience and support to enable them to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their maximum potential.

Aims of 2021-2022 (towards 5 Year Outcomes)	Progress To Date 2021-2022
Overarching 0.1 There is resilience within the VS team and a culture that is proactive, creative, aspirational and innovative 0.2 We hear the voice of individual CYP 0.3 The collective voice of our CYP underpins policy and practice **1. PEPs are dynamic, live and relevant** 1.1 Pupil voice is paramount within the PEP process 1.2 Data from the PEP informs the work of the Virtual School 1.3 Rigorous quality assurance informs the work of the Virtual School **2. Children and young people who have or have had a social worker have increased access to high quality education, leading to improved outcomes** 2.1 There is a reactive, preventative and proactive focus to NIAP and NEET work 2.2 Ensure high quality education is in place for transitions in and out of care **3. Children and young people in care have increased inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes** 3.1 Analysis of risk indicators allows preventative work 3.2 Scrutiny of data ensures impactful response **4. Aspirational education is seen by all as the key to enable all children to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their potential** 4.1 The impact of the aspirations project is evidenced 4.2 The impact of PPP is evidenced against key performance indicators 4.3 Scrutiny and response to data raises expectations leading to improved outcomes 4.4 Pupil voice informs targeted opportunities and experiences **5. There is a collective responsibility for the education of children who have or have had a social worker, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively** 5.1 Training impacts on whole school / MAT policy and practice 5.2 The strategic value of MATS supports the education of all children who have or have had a social worker 5.3 Key partners are involved at the earliest opportunity in the reactive, proactive and preventive work of the Virtual School 5.4 Head teachers, SLT and DTs understand what they can do to offer the best support and this is embedded in policy and practice 5.5 The Virtual School is high profile for carers, guardians and parents. Training empowers them within their role as educators	0. The VS has a new logo co-produced by 4 of our children in care. One YP commented *'It was actually good to be part of this and I'm going to be able to put it on my CV. It was interesting to see all the different options and say what we thought. And think about what the Virtual School is (and) how to put that across. We were included. Thank you'* 0. Pupil voice is included within all VS training 0. In response to a request from the Children in Care Council, DT cards have been created in collaboration with Children in Care Council. 91 have been distributed. 0. Investment in professional development in FASD for the Virtual School team. 1. Across the EY, SSA and P16 cohorts green ratings of desirable outcomes in PEPs have increased from 54% in summer 2021 to 72% in summer 2022. The highest increase is in statutory school age (46% summer 2021 to 76% summer 2022) 1. Attainment and progress data from PEP analysed and used to inform A&P conversations with DTs 2. Early work with year 11s led to only 4-year 12s being NEET on 1st September 2022 3. System in place for identifying exclusions, triage and referral for targeted intervention 3. Attendance is monitored extended beyond statutory school age to include foundation stage 2 and year 12 and 13 3. Data dashboards underpin the work of the VS 4. 34 CYP participated in CIAG organised by VS in addition to that offered by schools. 4. KS2 reading, writing and maths combined for the eligible cohort is 35% (compared to 28% in 2019). This reduction in the gap contrasts with the picture for all children nationally and locally 4. 33% of year 11s achieved English and Maths GCSE grade 4 or above 4. 4 CYP will be starting independent schools in September with full scholarships through the Royal Springboard Programme (increasing access to independent schools is a recommendation of the McAllister independent review of children's social care 2022) 5. MAT model of engagement successfully implemented. 13 MATs have proactively worked with the VS. Association of School and College Leaders have expressed an interest in promoting this model as national best practice. Eastern Region Virtual School Heads have agreed to take this initiative forward as a regional priority 5. Increased foster carers training offer. The average rating of training was 9.1 out of 10. 5. In collaboration with SEND, Recovery Through Relationships training has been developed, trailed and endorsed at Director level, with a view to becoming the local authority offer. 5. 160 participants including social care, IROs, designated teachers, partners within education, foster carers and a Cllr attended the virtual school conference with a focus on pupil voice. A participant shared *'Felt very valued as a 'partner' of the Virtual School'* 5. Formed relationships with the newly created regional adoption agency, leading to increased early referrals to the virtual school for advice and information 5. The extension to the remit of the VS has been promoted across the LA & a strategic direction of travel agreed

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE

Review of Development Plan

Cambridgeshire County Council

Vision

All children and young people (CYP) who have or have had a social worker will have the opportunities, experience and support to enable them to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their maximum potential.

Aims of 2022-2023 (towards 5 Year Outcomes)	Progress To Date: September 2022 - August 2023
Overarching 0.1 Cambridgeshire MAT work extends into Eastern Region practice 0.2 A pilot framework is created usualising care-experience **1. PEPs are dynamic, live and relevant** 1.1 Pupil voice is recorded meaningfully within the PEP and informs provision 1.2 Social workers and personal advisors effectively contribute to PEPs 1.3 Foster carers have access to the ePEP platform **2. Children and young people who have or have had a social worker have increased access to high quality education, leading to improved outcomes** 2.1 There is protocol with admissions which ensures timely access to education 2.2 There is an increase in the number of children accessing the independent schools offer 2.3 There is timely access to well-matched education for all Cambridgeshire children in care **3. Children and young people in care have increased inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes** 3.1 From at least year 9, NEET risk reduction and aspirational pathways are integrated within the planned ATAI approach 3.2 ATAI / ATS and school / MAT partnership working leads to planned approach which improves practice around suspensions with identified schools 3.3 The needs of separated migrant children cohort are recognised, understood and met within appropriate provision **4. Aspirational education is seen by all as the key to enable all children to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their potential** 4.1 Early identification and support is in place for CYP on higher education pathways 4.2 Evidence informed practice is used strategically to raise attainment and progress **5. There is a collective responsibility for the education of children who have or have had a social worker, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively** 5.1 The Recovery Through Relationships strategy is extended across the education directorate, including through the development of modular training 5.2 Social workers (for CIN / CP) have access to and make use of a range of tools, including the app, to enable them to effectively promote education 5.3 There is increased awareness and knowledge of FASD with key partners	**Overarching** 0.1 7 out of 11 Eastern Region Virtual Schools have collaborated to extend Cambridgeshire's MAT initiative. There is a common understanding of approach, and a centralised data dashboard has been initiated to underpin the work. 0.2 St Andrews C of E Primary School have signed up to collaborating with the VS on 'usualising care experience', to date they have consulted with school community, reviewed the curriculum, environment and resources. The project is due to conclude in December. **1. PEPs are dynamic, live and relevant** 1.2 Over a two-year period there has been an increase from 60% to 82% of social worker attendance at PEPs. The quality of information provided by social workers has improved by 9% in the last year meaning that 43% of summer term contributions were rated at green or gold standard. 1.3 All Cambridgeshire County Council carers now have access to the PEP platform; support has been offered in navigating the system. **2. Children and young people who have or have had a social worker have increased access to high quality education, leading to improved outcomes** 2.1 An admission protocol is in place, aimed at minimising drift and delay for children in care requiring access to education. The impact will be able to be assessed next year. 2.2 There is rigour in the process of identifying young people for the broadening educational pathways programme, meaning young people are well matched. The priority shifted to this focus rather than more young people attending. There are two young people with well-matched offers for September. Three out of the four that started last year will be continuing within this programme. There are a further two young people accessing independent schools via other pathways. 2.3 This continues to be a priority moving into next academic year. **3. Children and young people in care have increased inclusion within education, leading to improved outcomes** 3.1 Previous aspirations project has been evaluated and concluded owing to limited impact. In response to Stable Homes Built on Love and using learning from the previous project the VS has created a 'Achievement into Adulthood' team, which includes a level 6 qualified CIAG lead. 3.2The revised IGP tool alongside newly developed Power BI VS dashboards facilitate accurate identification of areas for development. The ATS team have developed clear processes of escalation including the engagement of wider partners to support progress against identified concerns. All identified schools have engaged with the VS to begin addressing concerns, outcomes remain variable and due to fluidity of cohort meaning we are unable to provide statistically meaningful data around reduction in suspensions. This will remain an area of priority for the VS for 2023.24. 3.3 The Virtual School has a highly experienced Education Advisor dedicated to strategic and child level work for separated migrant children. This has led to a refined new to care process and collaboration with partners to create roll-on-roll-off provision for post-16 separated migrant young people, reducing NEET numbers. **4. Aspirational education is seen by all as the key to enable all children to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their potential** 4.1 Higher education pathway question has been built into the PEP to facilitate targeted opportunities. This will be built on through the introduction of the Achievement into Adulthood Team. 4.2 Attainment and progress tracker developed enabling increased scrutiny of attainment, progress and effort data, alongside attendance data at a child and cohort level. This has led to targeted follow up and where appropriate additional pupil premium plus allocation. There has been a systematic review of the use of pupil premium plus. This local intelligence will be used to inform future allocations and advice to schools. **5. There is a collective responsibility for the education of children who have or have had a social worker, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively** 5.1 The Recovery Through Relationships now includes core training and a modular 'train the trainer' approach. Following delivery to the Local Authority Corporate Leadership Team, there has been a commitment from the Chief Executive to Cambridgeshire becoming a Trauma Informed Local Authority. The training has been mandated. So far, 45 early years settings, schools, FE providers and Local Authority teams have been trained. There have been 60 social care colleagues, 3 elected members and members of the Virtual School Management Board. 5.2 App is now live; there have been over 2500 downloads. A series of podcasts, although targeted at educational professionals have relevance for all key partners. 5.3 The Virtual School conference supported a growing understanding of FASD for 169 professionals, including education, social care, health and police. The Virtual School has also offered county wide training and bespoke sessions for 6 education providers. There has been a podcast and FASD is included in the app. The Virtual School has worked alongside National FASD and Anster in the development of virtual reality content to support training on FASD. See case study for exemplification of impact.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VIRTUAL SCHOOL
LEARN ASPIRE THRIVE ACHIEVE

2023 -2024 Annual Aims (linked to 5-year outcomes)

Learn

Overarching

- All members of the team use a creative and innovative approach to their work which supports the continued development of the Virtual School
- There is ownership and accountability across the Virtual School Team for all three cohorts
- Attainment and progress underpin all work across the Virtual School

Aspire

1. PEPs are dynamic, live and relevant

- Voice of the child informs all aspects of the PEP document and can be evidenced within the desirable outcomes
- Carers are supported to make meaningful contributions within the PEP

2. and 3. Children and young people who have or have had a social worker have increased access to and inclusion within high quality education, leading to improved outcomes

- Pace and urgency enables timely access to well-matched education for all Cambridgeshire children in care and this is carefully tracked.
- The focus of ATAI and ATA work is the empowerment and strengthening of the team around the child.
- The work of the Virtual School influences Cambridgeshire settings that do not have Cambridgeshire children in care on roll
- There is an improved understanding of the specific needs of Separated Migrant Children within the Virtual School

Thrive

4. Aspirational education is seen by all as the key to enable all children to learn, aspire, thrive and achieve their potential

- Education Employment and Training Champion role is defined, and a Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) strategy is developed.
- Post-16 PP+ policy and practice is established and implemented
- Effective evaluation of funded projects provides evidence of best practice and informs future development

Achieve

5. There is a collective responsibility for the education of children who have or have had a social worker, with all parties feeling empowered to support effectively

- Family Business Approach is initiated within Cambridgeshire County Council
- There is an agreed strategy and timeline for Cambridgeshire to become a trauma-Informed authority
- There is increased awareness and knowledge of FASD with key partners

Appendix 1: Definitions

Definitions			
	Group or Key Terms	**Number of Students**	**Definition**
Cohorts of students	**Pupils on Roll (May 2023) Academic Year 202-2023**	626	Total number of Children in Care (CiC) that the Cambridgeshire Virtual School were responsible for. The Cambridgeshire Virtual School works with children and young people from when they begin early years education (aged 2) to 18. Where a young person is accessing education at 18, the virtual school continues to be actively involved until they finish year 13.
	On roll at any time	554	The actual Virtual School cohort is fluid, with children entering and exiting care by way of reunification, adoption, special guardianship orders or child arrangement orders, or reaching adulthood throughout the year.
	School Age 5-16	420	Total number of children and young people aged 5 – 16 that Cambridgeshire Virtual School were responsible for during the Academic Year. The statutory school ages are reception to year 11. Data for the Early Years cohort sometimes includes the Reception (Year 0) data.
	DfE Eligible Cohort	311	Number of Statutory School Aged Children in Care currently who have been in care for the full period April 1st – March 31st that Cambridgeshire Virtual School were responsible for this year. In this report the end of year results (Summer 2023) refers to the students in care for 12 months from April 2022-March 2023.
	Cambridgeshire Schools	114	Cambridgeshire Children in Care in Cambridgeshire schools, Early Years Settings and Further Education Providers. The figure does not include any children where the adoption has been finalised (awaiting Liquid Logic closure), those with no recorded school or Post 16 who are NEET.
	Out of Area Schools	193	Cambridgeshire CiC in Other Local Authority (OLA) Schools, Early Years Settings and Further Education Providers. The figure does not include any children where the adoption has been finalised (awaiting Liquid Logic closure), those with No recorded School or Post 16 who are NEET. Many children are placed in settings outside of our authority – however they remain the responsibility of Cambridgeshire Virtual School for their entire time in care.
	Children in Care from other local authorities (OLA) educated in Cambridgeshire	155	Total number of OLA children in care aged 2 to 18 registered in Liquid Logic during the academic year to 31st May 2023 Cambridgeshire schools have Children in Care from many other local authority virtual schools.

			We give advice and support where appropriate/requested, to other Virtual Schools but they remain the responsibility of the home Local Authority who are their Corporate Parent. All Cambridgeshire schools can attend Cambridgeshire Virtual School training at no cost, regardless of whether they have Cambridgeshire Children in Care on roll.
	SEND	304	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. (All ages) This is the figure for all pupils on roll with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a need for Special Educational Needs (SEN) support.
	EHCP	198 +6 (Under Assessment)	Education Health and Care Plan (All ages) Children with significant special needs (meeting the threshold within the SEND Code of Practice) must be provided with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) this obliges schools and those working with the young person to work to an agreed plan of support to manage their individual needs. An EHCP is issued to a child after an assessment of their needs is carried out by the SEND team from the Local Authority in which they live. The plan is reviewed regularly and is statutory. An EHCP can be for cognition and learning, communication and interaction, social, emotional, and mental health, or physical and sensory needs.
	SEN Support	106	School Support Students (All ages) Students with SEN needs that are not as significant will still need SEN support, this is organised at a school level.
	No SEN/Not captured	316	Number of pupils on roll who do not have an SEN requirement or where the data has not been captured (at the time of the reporting period (May 2021)
	Children With a Social Worker	758 7500	Children with a Social Worker refers to children who have a **current** child in need plan or a child protection plan. Children who have had a child in need or children protection plan within the last six years

Appendix 2: Glossary

Glossary			
	Group or Key Terms	**Definition**	**Comments**
Key Terms	**Progress 8**	Progress 8 shows the students' progress across 8 subjects. This is calculated by subtracting the students estimated attainment (calculated from KS2 scores at the end of Primary school) from their actual attainment. This will be shown as a + or -. For example, 0.5 would represent a student being on average half a grade above expectation.	This measure was introduced and replaces previous measures based around the former A*-C grading system for GCSEs. This change was made because the data from the previous examination system did not reflect the progress that a child made over time, from the end of Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. The average expected progress score is 0. If fewer than 8 subjects are taken, the score will be reduced further; for example, dropping a subject, will affect the overall score by approximately -0.5.
	Attainment 8	The Attainment 8 score is a measure that ensures all students are compared rather than those on the cusp of grade boundaries	This measure was introduced to the KS4 examination system in England because previous measures were not demonstrating attainment from a wide range of subjects. However, the attainment 8 measure can give a negative score to a child who does not sit 8 or more GCSE examinations.
	GLD	Good Level of Development	This is the national benchmark for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (aged 5).
	ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	ESOL courses can include areas such as survival English, functional language, specific speaking and listening skills, and sociocultural information. They often have an element of citizenship training.
	EAL	English as an Additional Language	The term EAL is used to describe a diverse and heterogeneous group of learners who speak English as an Additional Language. In England, such learners are defined as those who have been 'exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English' (Department for Education, 2019)
	SMC	Separated Migrant Children	Formerly referred to as Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), SMC refers to children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers. While their claim is processed, they are cared for by a local authority.
	CiC	Children in Care	The statutory guidance refers to looked after children; Cambridgeshire children have rejected this term in favour of Children in Care (CiC). The terms looked after child and children in care have the same meaning.
	CPiC	Children Previously in Care	CPiC refers to a child who left care on an order, typically a Special Guardianship Order, Child Arrangement Order or Adoption order. The Virtual School has a duty to provide information and advice to the parents / guardians, education professionals, and other associated professionals, where the

			child attends a Cambridgeshire education setting. This was added to the virtual school remit in September 2018.
	CWSW	Children with a Social Worker	CWSW refers to social who are children in need or under a child protection plan or who have been in the past six years. The virtual school has a non-statutory strategic leadership role to promote education outcomes for the cohort of children. This was added to the virtual school remit in September 2021.
	PEP	Personal Education Plan	The PEP is the education plan. It forms part of the wider care planning for the child. This plan is statutory, it is reviewed each term. PEPS begin when a child enrols in early years education (from aged 2) and continues until the child turns 18. When a young person turns 18 and is in education, PEPs continue until the end of the academic year.
	PP+	Pupil Premium Plus	PP+ is additional funding for children in early years provision (the year before they start school) and for children in reception to the end of year 11. The funding is managed by the Virtual School and is used to promote education outcomes.
	NEET **EET**	Not in Employment Education or Training Education, Employment or Training	NEET refers to young people that have finished year 11 and are not in education, employment, or training. EET refers to young people that have finished year 11 and are in education, employment, or training.
	Key Stage (KS)	Early Years Foundation Stage = Age 0-5, Pre-school, Nursery and Reception Key Stage 1 = Age 5-7, Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 2 = Age 7-11, Years 3-6 Key Stage 3 = Age 11 – 14, Years 7-9 Key Stage 4 = Age 14 – 16, Years 10 and 11 Key Stage 5 = Age 16+ following the completion of year 11.	The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called 'key stages' (KS). At the end of each key stage, there is a formal assessment.
	DT	Designated Teacher	It is statutory for all schools to have a designated teacher, whether they currently have children in care on roll or not.
	DP	Designated Person	In Early years settings and for Post 16 providers the role is termed DP as the member of staff does not have to be a qualified teacher
	Statistical Neighbours	**For Cambridgeshire our Statistical Neighbours are** Hertfordshire, Wiltshire, West Berkshire, West, Sussex, Bath & North East Somerset, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire	Many sections of this report refer to similar Local Authorities that would be expected to have similar statistical data. This provides a more contextual comparison than purely national data alone.

Appendix 3

Strategic MAT work	
Context	• Government have provided detailed plans for moving all schools into trusts by 2030 devolving LA responsibility, support and guidance to executive trust boards. • Within Cambridgeshire all Secondary School settings have now transitioned to a MAT. • We are currently working at a strategic level with 13 MATS across Cambridgeshire. • The Eastern Region is actively developing a collaborative approach to working effectively with MATs.
What are the specific circumstances?	• The Trust has 21 settings, 10 of these are within Cambridgeshire 11 in Suffolk. 4% of our total Virtual School (VS) roll attend schools within this trust, representative of 26 students. • Over the past 2 years there has been inconsistent leadership of the MAT. A new CEO was appointed in Autumn term and started in January 2023. • Trust wide policy and practice varies greatly – few centrally held policies. • 4 settings within the trust are RI and 1 is inadequate (all within Cambridgeshire). • 1 Secondary setting is the only good school within the locality leading to a disproportionate number of applications of Children in Care to the school. • 2021/22 Suspension and exclusion data identified that there was a disproportionate amount of CiC getting suspended from within this trust; this amounted to 11% of the total suspensions for Cambridgeshire CiC. • Issues identified across the trust with regards to staff recruitment and retention. • VS concerns regarding capacity of DTs to fulfil their roles due to competing priorities and high numbers of CiC within settings.

What did the Virtual School do?	Strategic work at a MAT level: • Utilised VS data dashboards and VS Indicators of Good Practice (IGP) Tool to identify development areas across the Trust for 2022.23. • Created and initiated clear action plans to support individual settings determined by key performance indicators and the experiences of individual children (informed by Virtual School Access and Inclusion Team and key partners). • VS proactively contacted newly appointed CEO of Trust and requested a meeting to ensure accurate picture of need for CiC and extended VS cohort was shared and to promote the need for these cohorts to remain high on the Trust agenda during this period of change. Commitment from CEO to work collaboratively moving forward. • Training opportunities for SLT members on Recovery Through Relationships (trauma informed training). Strategic work at an Individual setting level: Secondary Setting 1 (RI, Roll: 1389, CIC Roll: 11): VS and MAT led half-termly meetings with the setting providing specific training and modelling to support completion of purposeful and meaningful PEPs for CiC. DTs became active participants within VS PEP Audit. VS actively involved in 'Team around the school' with the setting to address identified concerns around a lack of inclusivity and support with the development of a new behaviour and relational policy. Secondary Setting 2 (Good, Roll: 1332, CIC Roll: 19): VS and MAT lead worked alongside DT and head teacher at setting to develop an alternative staffing structure to facilitate the day-to-day relational work required to ensure students are given the best opportunity to access, engage and achieve. Initiated a project – Memorandum of Understanding produced and agreed, on-going commitment to work together. Secondary Setting 2 (RI, Roll: 562, CIC Roll: 2): OFSTED rating changed in Summer 2022, VS conducted a meeting to explore the key themes of the OFSTED rating and discuss the potential implications on our Children in Care, decisions made on a case-by-case basis. On-going monitoring of setting has influenced the decision to explore alternative settings for both children still on roll due to limited improvements. Specialist Setting x 2 (Good, Roll: 268, CIC Roll: 7): VS advisory meeting held in the Autumn term to explore how the VS IGP tool could be adapted to support specialist settings this led to identified actions around whole school staff understanding of ATAI. VS led whole staff RtR training and PACE training booked for April 2023. Primary School 1 (Good, Roll: 166, CIC Roll: 1): New Head Teacher and first Chid in Care in a significant period. Promotion of training which DT attended and Advisory meeting to establish actions school need to take to fulfil statutory guidance. Primary School 2 (Inadequate, Roll: 401, CIC Roll: 0) OFSTED rating changed to Inadequate in Autumn 2022. VS conducted a meeting with the DT and MAT lead to explore the key themes of the OFSTED rating and discuss the potential implications on our Children in Care. The 1 child attending the school ceased to be in care, the VS made the decision not to place anymore children there until evidence of improvement. VS continue to work with the MAT to support progress.

Strategic work with Suffolk VS:

- Collaborated with Suffolk VS where the other settings within the trust reside to develop an on-going programme of support for Designated Teachers. Development of trust 'Network Meetings', for Designated Teachers facilitated by Trust Leads and attended by Virtual Schools. These meetings provide an opportunity for DTs to collaborate, explore areas for development as identified by; MAT leads, VS dashboard, attainment data, IGP tools. Meetings ensure the needs of this cohort remain on the trust agendas. Provide opportunities to develop trust wide approaches to policy and practice to ensure inclusive practice that enables children in care to thrive in settings and reduce chance of suspension, exclusion and internal suspensions. (2 meetings held to date, 23.1.23 and 14.3.23)

What difference did this make?

- Some evidence of initial improvement in PEP quality from Summer Term 2022 to Autumn Term 2022.

CVS PEP Profile for the MAT Autumn Term 2022	PEP RAG Pupil Voice & Aspirations			
	Red	Amber	Green	Gold
	0	2	24	0

	PEP RAG Progress & Attainment		
	Red	Amber	Green
	3	0	23

	PEP RAG Desirable Outcomes			
	Red	Amber	Green	Gold
	0	3	23	0

	PEP RAG Social & Emotional			
	Red	Amber	Green	Gold
	0	3	23	0

CVS PEP Profile for the MAT Summer Term 2022	PEP RAG Pupil Voice		
	R	A	G
	1	0	21

	PEP RAG - Currently My Education Updating to Progress and Attainment		
	R	A	G
	0	0	22

	PEP RAG Desirable Outcomes		
	R	A	G
	3	1	18

	PEP RAG Social & Emotional (Not Early Years)		
	R	A	G
	1	2	19

- Increased engagement of MAT leads, Head Teachers and Designated Teachers across the Trust. At least half-termly meetings have been attended leading to actions including increased staff training (2 x MATS setting have had RtR this term and 1 x booked in for summer term).
- MAT have invested in a new data dashboard that will enable the trust to track Children in Care, Previously in Care and those known to a social worker.
- Raised the profile of the Designated Teacher – MAT lead now chairing half-termly Designated Teacher network meetings.
- MAT lead and CEO have clear understanding of the individual strengths and needs of each of the schools with regards to Care Experienced Children to inform future actions.
- Improved relationship between the Virtual School and MAT leading to more responsive communication.
- VS benefitted from CPD from Highfield and Littleport Head Teacher on Specialist Pathways.

Implications for practice	• This case study demonstrates that there can be rapid positive outcomes for CiC where the VS works effectively alongside MAT leads. It remains evident that support from the VS needs to be driven by identified areas for improvement to ensure MATs remain invested in working with us. • Virtual school structure continues to appropriately facilitate partnership working with MATs through an allocated Education Advisor. • Acknowledgement that MAT structures remain unique and therefore Cambridgeshire VS needs to be able to respond to the direct needs of individual MATS, utilising data and intelligence proactively. • Continued development of data dashboards required to ensure we have the most up-to-date data in a user-friendly format to inform our work and enable us to identify any emerging themes and address. • Continued commitment to evolve how we work with MATs to ensure best impact on our cohorts.

Appendix 4

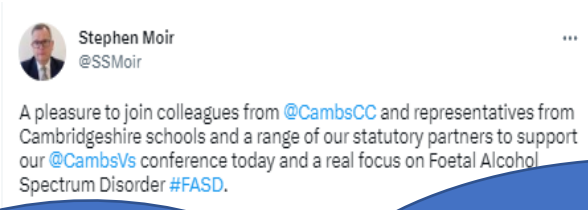
Previously in Care and FASD	
Context	**Previously in Care** • In 2018 the role of the Virtual School Head was extended to include the offer of advice and information to families and professionals for children previously in care. • Within Cambridgeshire we have appointed an advisory teacher to lead on this remit. The offer includes responding to individual enquiries as well as signposting to relevant teams. At a strategic level there is an analysis of enquires, an understanding of research and use of the national and local context to identify emerging themes. These are then responded to through the development of resources and training. • We have seen a 60% rise in previously in care enquires from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022. **FASD as an emerging theme:** • Recent research by the University of Bristol indicated that 6% of the research cohort, potentially equivalent to up to 4 million British people, may have FASD. • In 2022, the first gold standard prevalence study took place in the UK. It found that FASD affects 1.8%-3.6% of children (almost twice as many as autism). • Charnoff, (2015) collected data from 547 fostered and adopted children, of which 156 met the criteria for FASD (29%). • From January 2021-December 2021 the Virtual School received 1 enquiry related to FASD. From January 2022-7th March 2023 there were 29 enquiries from families of children previously in care and schools relating to FASD.
What are the specific circumstances?	**An example of how this translates to a specific child, school and professional network around the child:** • Greg was in the care of the LA before being awarded an SGO with maternal grandmother. He continues to have contact with his birth mother. • Greg is in Year 2 having had a school year deferral. • He was attending a mainstream school. He had experienced a series of suspensions, leading to a reduced education offer. The risk of permanent exclusion was high. • He received an EHCP April 2022. • The relationship between the school and the guardian was fractured. The guardian's preference was to consider a school move. • Greg moved to another mainstream school within the locality.

What did the Virtual School do?	**Strategic Response:** • Promotion of the Virtual School offer for previously in care through the regional adoption agency and training with schools. • Virtual School training on the role of the designated person for children previously in care. • The Eastern Region Virtual School Conference Summer term 2022 (planned by Cambridgeshire Virtual School) focused on FASD. • There has been a focus on CPD for the Virtual School, leading to the creation of a Cambridgeshire Virtual School countywide and bespoke training offer. • The Virtual School podcast series features FASD. • The Virtual School app contains an FASD section. • The Virtual School held a FASD conference in March 2023, attended by 169 professionals from education, social care, health and police. **An example of how this translates to a specific child, school and professional network around the child:** • Following a conversation with the post adoption support, school and guardian, the presenting needs of Greg, along with the prenatal experience shared by the guardian suggested that FASD may be the underlying need. The VS provided information to the team around the child (including commissioned Consultant Independent Occupational Therapist). • Shared knowledge of schools in the local area with experience of effectively supporting care experienced children at risk of permanent exclusion. • Supported the guardian to understand the process and teams within the LA that would support a change of schools. • VS delivered Recover through Relationships (trauma informed) training and school reported this led to changes in practice in Autumn term 2022. • VS worked closely with Post Adoption and SGO Social Worker to understand the support that was being offered by their service (post adoption supported access to a multi-disciplinary assessment for FASD) and how this could be linked with Virtual School support. • Designated Teacher worked with VS for early identification of needs communicated through behaviour. • Bespoke FASD training was delivered to the school in January 2023. Attended by Head Teacher, SLT, SENCO, class teacher and TAs support team around Greg which included and modelled use of FASD specific resources. • VS provided a 1:1 session to TA.

What difference did this make?

Strategic Impact:

- Reached 48 professionals through VS training, increasing their understanding of FASD. A Clinician stated *'the focus on the shift to adapt the environment rather than the child. A global holistic approach to FASD. I feel much more equipped now' A member of the SEND District Team stated 'brilliant training, really opened my eyes. More training required to bring this to a wider audience' An Emotional Support Assistant stated 'I think all school staff should have this training, I never knew how many children are affected by FASD'*
- 169 professionals from education, social care, health and education attended the VS conference, opening up multi-agency dialogue. Twitter activity and evaluations stated:



It has opened my eyes to the effects and prevalence of FASD. It is going to change my practice moving forward massively.

Knowledgeable, expert key speakers, empowering parents and individual perspectives. Having the opportunity to listen to 'their voice' and lived experiences. So powerful and so eloquent. A real privilege to attend. Thank you

I have been searching for good quality information on FASD and feel I now have it

I can honestly say that in 14 years of teaching, I've not had a conference that I've taken more away from. So much to think about.

Shining a huge spotlight on FASD. As a midwife this was SO informative and I will be sharing all I have learnt with my Midwifery students!

Everything! Wow, what a fantastic conference. I have learnt so much today and am keen to go back over my learning and look into some areas even further. All of the speakers were so knowledgeable and I really felt a great link between everything we learnt today. The day was so well organised, thank you so much.

Showing how the FASD affected brain is different, works differently. How you need to understand that fact FIRST and use it as the lens through which you view everything else.

- Resources and literature are available enabling a proactive approach.

An example of how this translates to a specific child, school and professional network around the child:

- Greg is attending a school matched to his needs and his EHCP is reflective of his needs.
- Greg is now in fulltime education.
- There have been no suspensions since changing school.
- Greg's guardian has a better understanding of his need and feels supported by the team around Greg.
- The school team around Greg have been upskilled. Training evaluation forms show that 100% felt that the training met the objectives and 100% felt that the training met their personal needs.
- Impact of the FASD training:
    - The head teacher reconsidered his previous thought about moving to a reduced timetable, understanding that what was needed was a change to the environment to enable success.
    - The head teacher raised the fact that this training is going to support many many other children in their school due to their high numbers.
    - A member of SLT stated that she felt this training was a lightbulb moment for her realising that FASD is a lifelong condition and that we cannot change the child we have to change to environment and what we do as adults teaching the child.
    - Direct feedback from Greg's TA 2 weeks after training session – '*I would say the main take away is understanding that we are not going to change Greg so we have to change his environment as well as building trust between Greg and his close adults. We have taken steps, listening to Greg's wants, and created a space where he feels safe in his learning. Here we have been able to build trusting relationships with Greg. This has allowed us to begin to create boundaries for Greg in social situations. We have started to do anxiety mapping to highlight the triggers of the environment so we can see how to minimise incidents. Greg continues to struggle in social situations and becomes easily overwhelmed. We have slowly been introducing him to small snippets of social times, as well as buddy time. We have been listening to Greg and understanding that some behaviours are out of control, giving praise where its due and promoting the positive play rather than prolonged consequences for negative incidents. Alongside this we have been focusing on using positive language on what we want Greg to do rather than what we do not want him to do - using the script before play and break times of: "Remember when we are outside, we play safe and make sure everyone is safe". Through using a script, we have been able to ensure consistency, which as highlighted in the training is key. This is a slow process, and we are far from there, however, through having a higher focus on building relationships and trust as well as making changes to Greg's environments we have seen some positive steps in the right direction.*
    - In reference to the training school undertook Greg's guardian stated: *'The training has clearly helped school to understand him more and what they need to do for him as they had set up a space for him to be with just his 1 to 1 and that was working really well'.*
    - had a wider impact on whole school practice for potential other undiagnosed children with FASD
- DT attended the VS FASD conference to further her networking and professional development.
- School will be using a one-page profile for Greg throughout his educational journey.

Implications for practice	• Continue to raise the profile of FASD locally, regionally and nationally to ensure there is consideration of FASD within education and social care contexts. • Continue to promote training around FASD, working with Anster and National FASD to develop film content around FASD for the VR headsets for all key stakeholders and partners, to strengthen training offer. • Consider mechanisms through which the Virtual School can influence future direction of regional FASD support and diagnosis, including the ICB response to the NICE Quality standard (pathway for diagnosis). • Sharing learned experiences with regional and national partners, including NAVSH, to develop the work of Virtual Schools around FASD.

Appendix 5

Response to PEP Quality Assurance to Impact on Outcomes for an Individual	
Context	• 30% of Year 11s achieved Grade 4 (or above) English and Maths compared with 22% of children in care nationally. • 5% of Cambridgeshire children in care access Higher Education compared with approximately 6% nationally. • Although pilot programmes are operating nationally, Cambridgeshire post 16 children in care have not had access to the post-16 PP+ grant. Consequently, Cambridgeshire VSH has the discretion to allocate statutory school aged PP+ in exceptional circumstances. • There is national recognition of the 'cliff edge' which care leavers may experience when turning 18 and how the transition from child in care to care leaver can disrupt education.
What are the specific circumstances?	• Anthony achieved 10 GCSEs. His attainment 8 score was 74. • He attends Year 13 at an out of county Grammar School, is studying 4 A Levels and he is targeted to achieve A/A*s. • Anthony has applied to university to study law. • Anthony's birthday falls in December; therefore, he will turn 18 and cease being a child in care midway through Year 13. • Originally, it had been anticipated that Anthony would stay put in his foster placement until the end of his sixth form studies. However, there was a change of plan and a period of uncertainty around where he would be living at the start of his Year 13. • School shared with the social worker and Virtual School that Anthony was struggling with anxiety, triggered by the uncertainty and his upcoming transition.
What did the Virtual School do?	• Through the Autumn term PEP quality assurance process, the Virtual School identified that Anthony was making below expected progress in English and that his expected grades had been reduced. • Further communication with the DT revealed that Anthony had failed a law test in November and that he was receiving GP treatment for anxiety. • School identified that 1:1 tuition for Anthony had been effective historically, that he had engaged well and made good progress. • The PEP captured Anthony's voice. It evidenced that he had used his vulnerable bursary to fund additional tuition but that the funding for this had now run out and this was increasing his anxiety. Anthony explained that he wanted more 1:1 tuition to help him manage his anxiety around his learning. • Cambridgeshire Virtual School liaised with school and social worker and agreed an additional 20 hours 1:1 tuition package tuition. This was funded by the Virtual School.

What difference did this make?	• The tuition package continuing resulted in Anthony feeling listened to and he reported feeling calmer and less anxious. • Anthony passed his law test. • The Designated Teacher shared that '*Anthony was very pleased about receiving funding to continue his tuition, it was a nice surprise for him and gave him a little hope that good things do happen and so he can focus on the positives! He does seem calmer in himself and did get a B grade for his Law test!'* • Anthony continued to prepare for his next steps of going to University and has selected 5 Universities where he would like to read law. He received support from his teachers and sixth form team to complete his personal statement and UCAS application and is doing preparatory work with a teacher to prepare for interviews, which has included debating current issues. • Anthony achieved BCCD in his A levels, although the results are below his predicted grades, the results enabled Anthony to progress to university to study law. • Cambridgeshire social care recognised the importance of maintaining Anthony's education placement and sourced a home with his carers extended family so he had familiarity. This placement will be secure until he turns 21.
Implications for practice	• Cambridgeshire Virtual School are tracking year 12 & 13 students in advance of their 18th birthday to minimise disruption to education. • Cambridgeshire Virtual School work in partnership with social care to consider timing around placement moves into semi-independent and independent accommodation. • Anthony has been working with an advocate and Cambridgeshire head of services to influence government policies to change legislations for children in care to help with tuition support and changes to housing when turning 18 (rather than waiting until the end of their phase of education i.e. year 13) • Virtual Schools now have access to pupil premium plus funding at post 16. Amongst other things, the funding will be used to support tuition, as was successful in this instance.

Appendix 6

Trainee Educational Psychologist Placement Summary

I joined Cambridgeshire Virtual School in September 2021 as a trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) under the supervision of Pamela McLeman, EP. My training is provided through the Tavistock & Portman NHS Trust, which has a strong focus on supporting young people and professionals with mental health needs. The year prior to my joining the VS, I was placed in a London CAMHS working with families and young people that had experienced trauma and were struggling at school.

My time in Cambridgeshire has built upon this experience in a range of ways. Both the EP and I were new to the VS at the time of my joining and so we worked to establish the EP/TEP role during my first year. This has included developing ways to work collaboratively with the EPs in SEND Services (e.g. through training, with individual cases).

Casework

The majority of referrals I have received were for individual children in specific circumstances, such as when a child is new to care, has experienced frequent placement breakdowns, or when efforts to secure local EP input have been exhausted. Under Pamela's supervision, I have worked directly with a number of young people and also indirectly, supporting the professionals working with them to gain their pupil voice with a view to understanding and supporting their needs in school. As part of this work, I have offered consultation to a range of professionals, including social workers, teachers and caregiver. Advocating for the young person is a key part of this role, ensuring they have access to resources and trauma-sensitive educational opportunities. Another part of this role has been to support the professionals managing the emotional toll of their work with trauma-experienced children.

Project work

A key feature of my placement has been the opportunity to support the work of a number of different projects including: the VS pupil voice project, IVC Onion project and the Colville Speech and Language project. As well as witnessing the successes of these projects, supporting colleagues with self-care and reflecting on their role has been a key part of this work.

Training

I have offered support to VS colleagues with developing and delivery of the Recovery through Relationship training. This has included developing and delivering PACE training in a number of Primary, Secondary and Specialist schools, as well as the development of a practical Window of Tolerance tool that can be used to guide teachers with understanding patterns of behavioural presentations at school and responding to these in a planned, trauma-sensitive way.

Research

As part of my studies, I have conducted a review of published research for effective school-based interventions for trauma-experienced children with a view to informing an empirical study in which I analysed the contents of EP reports written for children in care (see abstract below). This work has resulted in the production of a framework for trauma-informed EP practice. The intention is to publish this work, supporting Cambridgeshire Virtual School not just to be evidence-informed but also a service that is contributing to research evidence in respect of school-based support for this cohort.

THESIS ABSTRACT:
The aim of this research is to contribute to the growing literature for how educational psychology services can support the outcomes of care experienced children and young people. Outcomes for children in care have been well documented and include educational under-attainment, under-representation in further education, over-representation in the criminal justice system, as well as a high prevalence of special educational needs and mental health disorders.
By way of background to the present research, a systematic review of literature is presented, identifying the key features and components of interventions that support trauma-experienced children and young people in school. Rationale for the present study and research questions is offered.
Data was extracted from the psychological reports of 36 children in care (aged 5 – 15) written by educational psychologists across five separate local authorities, between 2017 and 2022. Qualitative document analysis explored the assessment methods, psychological formulations and recommended provision. Findings reveal (a) the range of assessment methods undertaken, (b) the psychological formulations offered to guide professionals in developing understanding of trauma-experiences and their impact on learning and related behaviours, and (c) the common themes in respect of recommended education provision for improving learning and wellbeing outcomes for this population.
Findings are considered in relation to wider research for trauma-sensitive classroom practice. Implications for research and practice are considered with the introduction of a proposed framework for practice that may be helpful to educational psychologists working with children in care.
Written by: Lysandra Sinclare-Harding

Implications for future practice and legacy:

- The value of Education Psychologist supervision for school-based projects is evident within the Impington Village College case study. Additional EP time has been secured and supervision will be built into each school-based project.
- All colleagues who are trained to deliver Recovery Through Relationships have also received PACE training. PACE training is therefore embedded within the ongoing Virtual School training offer.
- The findings from the research have been shared with the Virtual School team and EP colleagues from SEND services to support the formulation of future reports.

Appendix 7

Impington Village College: Pupil Premium Plus Project	
Context	**National context** The 2019 Children in Need Review data shows that: • Children in need of social care were 50% less likely to achieve a strong pass in English and Maths • Children in need during KS4 were 3 times less likely to access Further Education • Children ever-CIN[1] were twice as likely to have authorised absence and three times as likely to have an unauthorised absence than children never-CIN. Moreover, 25% of ever-CIN were persistently absent compared to 9% of never-CIN and nearly 10% of ever-CIN had less than 80% attendance compared to 3% of never-CIN. • CIC were 5 times and CIN were 3.5 times more likely to be excluded than those who were not The 2021 "Against The Odds" report remarks that the landscape for disadvantaged students is volatile and recommended to school leaders to refocus efforts on a small number of critical, context-specific issues such as improving the experience of students or reducing student absence. **Rationale for IVC** We have started our journey through "Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Teaching" with support from the Cambridgeshire Virtual School and have had over 20 targeted staff directly trained in attachment awareness using the VR headsets. Typically, our students who are care-experienced or ever-CIN are not only our most vulnerable students, but also our more frequently dysregulated students. As our provision for CEC continues to evolve, we are getting more CPIC students and these typically have high levels of need but often do not have the ongoing multi-agency support that their CiC peers may have. Following this trend, those who have had a social worker typically present both the highest frequency and severity of dysregulated behaviour. We have identified that all disadvantaged or marginalised groups of students had an existing support group or intervention – from Young Carers to our Gay/Straight Alliance supporting LGBTQ+ students – except for those students who have or have had a social worker. Thus, this project sought to help this cohort to a) develop a sense of belonging and (b) identify challenging emotions that are experienced at school. **Partnership working** The project was a joint enterprise between Impington Village College (IVC) and YMCA Trinity, which was funded by the Cambridgeshire Virtual School. IVC contributed the venue, project lead and support worker. YMCA provided two Counsellors – one for Summer term 2022 and the other for the entire academic year 2022-23 as well as supervision sessions for the two IVC based staff. The Cambridgeshire Virtual School offered support from an advisory teacher and trainee educational psychologist.

What are the specific circumstances?	**Eastern Learning Alliance context** The ELA trust is growing and the provision available for all students is evolving, with opportunities to support those from deprived backgrounds or with challenging life experiences. The Deputy CEO of the Trust has strong connections with YMCA Trinity as a service provider. The Trust is also working closely with the Cambridgeshire Virtual School / SEND Partnership to further promote models for best practice across the region. **IVC context** Numbers of care experienced students at IVC are growing, particularly in the children previously in care cohort, and as we evolve our provision for those ever-CIN we are identifying a growing number of such students. In line with the recommendation from the "Against The Odds" report, we are targeting specific intervention at a cohort where complex needs have been identified. We have a longstanding culture of inclusivity at IVC and as such, we wanted to do more to be inclusive of the needs of this cohort. **Description of the cohort** The original cohort of Onion Project participants consisted of 8 care experienced children and 5 who are considered ever-CIN. Of these, three students declined to participate, citing that they felt 'too old' for the project as they were in KS4 whereas the rest of the cohort was in year 7 or 8. As of September 2022, of cohort consisted of 7 CEC in Years 7 and 8 (6 female, 1 male) and 4 ever-CIN in Years 7 to 9 (1 female, 3 male). Of these 11 participants 6 reside in CB4, 3 in CB24 and 2 in PE19 (7^{th} decile of deprivation). 4 students had EHCPs and 3 students had other SEND support. In the academic year prior to the project only 1 of the cohort had any fixed term exclusions (total of 3 days), in line with low rates of exclusion at IVC, however many of the students were accessing support from pastoral staff and stretching existing resource capacity. **Staff – confidence & concerns** Pastoral staff were often thinking "What can we do to help these young people?"; it was clear that there was a need to support the cohort and all pastoral staff were very supportive towards ideas for additional intervention. The IVC Designed Safeguarding Lead identified a lack of targeted provision towards, particularly, care experienced children. The Designated Teacher noted that all care experienced children, without exception, had described a feeling of alienation or isolation because they were not aware of any more than 1 other care experienced child at IVC. Some teaching colleagues raised concerns that students would need to miss lessons for the intervention.

What did you do?	**Structure of the project** The project was planned to consist of whole group lunchtime sessions and smaller, targeted group sessions, also planned to be held at lunchtime. The sessions would ideally take place in a large and reasonably private pastoral support room, but it could take place in a classroom if there were difficulties with room availability. These group sessions were to be staffed by a member of the school pastoral support team and a Counsellor (external) who is experienced in supporting trauma experienced young people. It was planned that typically one member of staff will be 'at the table' engaging with and leading discussions, whilst the other would 'sit back' to carefully observe the room and the reactions of the young people. This is a key nuance of the project, which has been developed following consultation with various different Virtual Schools and several social workers – when discussing plans for this project they unanimously suggested having a second adult in the room is vital to allow student's reactions to discussion topics to be observed and also to act as a safeguarding measure that can step in, in the event that a young person sharing their experiences might retraumatise themselves or others. Initial topics or areas of discussion will be guided towards team building, resilience, and broader pastoral curriculum attributes. As appropriate and based on local need, later sessions could be guided to create conversations around topics such as dealing with loss, substance misuse, healthy relationships, risk taking and future hopes, worries and aspirations. For most of the remaining time during each day, the Counsellor would meet with small groups of the cohort. It was initially planned that these sessions would be held on a fortnightly rotation. The Counsellor would focus on further exploring areas of opportunity for the students, as identified in discussions at the lunch time sessions and through the other data being collected for this project. The project lead would message each student individually on Teams, every week the day before the project to let them know where they needed to be and when. Information was also shared with the teachers of the lessons students would miss as well as the attendance officers and other key staff. **Term 1 (Summer 2022)** Having secured an appropriately qualified and experienced Counsellor provided by project partner YMCA Trinity, we launched the project with our original cohort in the 2022 summer term. The project was based in a computer room away from the busy areas of the school, offering familiarity yet appropriate privacy. All qualifying students (CEC or ever-CIN) were invited to attend the project. Initially the Counsellor was confident that she could resource and provide activities for both the lunchtime sessions and small group sessions. Over time it became apparent that this resource bank was somewhat limited and student engagement declined. Tasks were typically of low demand or gimmicky; students could not see the benefit. Attendance at the small group sessions was mixed, with students needing to be heavily persuaded to attend. Attendance at the lunchtime sessions was very good for the first month or so and then dropped off entirely. The counsellor would often forget the names and life experiences of the students, which led to a strong disconnect. The counsellor also found it every more challenging to source and adapt resources for the sessions and left the project at the end of the term. **Terms 2, 3 and 4 (2022-23 Academic Year)** Following review and planning meetings with Alistair Young (Clinical Operations Manager, YMCA Trinity) in July and August 2022, we recognised that change was needed. A new YMCA Counsellor was assigned to the project. In addition to a new counsellor, sessions would be better resourced by redeploying existing YMCA-made group work resources. Topics covered areas within self-esteem & confidence, social skills, transitions and emotional management. Following reflection of the

stuttering attempts in Term 1, all adults involved in the project agreed to make the lunchtime sessions significantly more informal and with optional attendance – students could attend for all of lunch, the start, or the end, or even drop in and out. Lunchtime sessions could therefore be used to bring all the students together, allowing them to develop a community and to gauge their interest in the topics discussed in their small groups, it would also allow the supervising adults to deepen their connections with the students.

We also more carefully targeted our cohort to remove the older students from the very start, based on their feedback from Term 1 and the clear age gap. It was also agreed that there would be an appropriate adult from IVC staff to support the smooth running of the small group sessions. It was clear that YMCA staff were not trained teachers and should not be expected to locate missing students or manage challenging behaviours. So, at the start of each session an IVC staff member would check all students were present and would also pop back halfway through the hour to check that all students were engaging and reasonably well regulated. Whilst this increased the demand on IVC staff, it promoted positive behaviours from the students within the group sessions, allowing the Counsellor to get to know the students well and to foster a safe space.

The location also changed to a quiet, wood panelled room, which none of the students had ever really used before. With a grand piano in a corner, stacks of comfy chairs, the occasional bean bag, empty walls and a view of a private green space and a distant public road, this room served as an ideal sanctuary for the project to grow.

Initially we had planned several smaller groups to meet with the Counsellor on a fortnightly basis, with a view to minimising the impact of missing the same lesson each week. Over the course of the year, 4 students were no longer able to access the project and so the group numbers were reduced. These students withdrew from the course following ongoing instability in their home placement, or changes to their school provision; these changes meant that they were either typically too dysregulated to engage with the sessions or were physically not at school when the sessions were held. Following careful consideration of personalities and social dynamics, for Terms 3 and 4 we found ourselves with two well balanced groups that each fostered a safe, positive small group environment. This also allowed us to move from a fortnightly model of small group sessions to a weekly model, with students attending the sessions at the same time each week.

Initially (Term 2), the Counsellor had ambitions to have detailed and carefully structured plans for each session but found that he had to be very flexible and would offer suggestions for conversations. Indeed, sometimes students would talk about an issue of some kind and the group would explore that theme with his guidance. Careful consideration was also made to meet the needs of individual students when scheduling the sessions. For example, Fred could not miss PE, or he would struggle to self-regulate that day, Alex preferred to attend at the start of the day before the complexities of school created a myriad of challenges for them and Rupert was often late to school which in turn scuppered any chance of him having a session at the start of the day.

Small Group Sessions

Term 2 was a much better experience for the students, helped by the increased support from IVC staff monitoring behaviour and engagement. By Terms 3 and 4 – with the dynamics of the group well established – much progress was being made. Of paramount importance, there was a clear, almost tangible feel from the groups that they were in safe spaces. They were always calm, regulated, and happy to be there and the Counsellor had established appropriate boundaries that

	worked for him and the students. Attendance to the small groups was 100% all year – if they were in school that day, there were always in the Onion Project. A delightful evolution was that during Terms 3 and 4, the day before the sessions ran – all of the students would pro-actively contact the project lead in person or via Teams messaging to confirm that their session was running – they wanted to be there and they valued being part of the community, in fact, it was their community. **Lunchtime Sessions** Lunchtime sessions where the whole group came together were very well attended in the Autumn term. Attendance, as it was optional, petered out over the year. Feedback from students suggested that they appreciated having a private space during the colder months – "warm", "just for us", "comfy" were phrases used to describe the space. It was observed by duty staff that over the year the students in the Onion Project were now identifying and socialising with each other; indeed, their community had grown beyond the group sessions, and they had fostered a long-awaited sense of belonging, perhaps. **Support for Staff** Supervisions were available for the project lead and pastoral support worker, but it was felt that these were not required. Following the change to the format of the lunchtime sessions, neither adult experienced much challenge or difficult disclosures from the students. Both Counsellors were both invited to some whole staff CPD sessions but were unable to attend due to commitments with other clients.

What difference did this make?

Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (self-report)
All students completed an SDQ at the start of Term 2 (September 2023) and in June 2023.
Whilst there was no notable change in the Emotional Difficulties, or Prosocial scales there were clear benefits in other areas.
Standardised categories are, ranging from least to most worrying: close to average, slightly raised, high and very high. Categories showing improvements are shown in the table below.

Scales	No Change	1 Category Improvement	2 Category Improvement	1 Category Reduction
Total score	3/7	2/7	2/7	0/7
Conduct score	2/7	3/7	1/7	1/7*
Hyperactivity score	4/7	1/7	1/7	1/7
Peer problems score	3/7	3/7	1/7	0/7

*Rupert has had fixed term exclusions (4 days) this year but is now able to reflect on situations whereas he did not share this before.

Trends in Behaviour and Attendance – September 2022 to June 2023
Most of the female students have not had any negative behaviour points all year. A termly analysis of behaviour points of those who have is here:

Name (Alias)	Autumn Total	Spring Total	Summer Total
Lola	2	0	0
Fred	34	24	15
Rupert	10	15	3
Cameron	22	14	6

As described above, Rupert has had 4 days of FTE this academic year with 1 day in autumn term and 3 days occurring in the spring with no further exclusions since. This corresponds with an increase in behaviour points in the spring followed by a reduction in the summer term.
There has been no clear impact on % attendance for most students involved, except Rupert – his attendance has improved and although often late to school will now attend where he might have previously not come in at all.

Vignettes - September 2022 to June 2023
Key workers, who know each student best in school, were asked to write a short vignette to capture the student in the moment. This could be imagined as a blurb or summary description of the student. Vignettes were written by the same adult, both in September and again in late June. The comparison of the general themes across the cohort is summarised below.

Positive Terms:

September Vignettes – Key words and phrases	June Vignettes – Key words and phrases	
Sweet	Made enormous progress	Strong and maturing understanding of who they are
Happy and settled with foster family	In their own words "doing much better with the drama"	Able to express frustrations and worries
Enjoys talking about hobbies	Friendship group is settled	More confidence to stand up for themselves
Likeable student	Appreciates being in a group of friends	Now able to self-advocate their thoughts and feelings
	Much improved attitude to her learning	Attendance has improved
	Working well	When he gets angry, he goes to see pastoral staff
	[Student] was pleased with their recent report	Very amenable
	Less chatty	Significant reduction in escalatory behaviour
	Less negative attention-needing behaviour	Seems a lot calmer
	Has been able to share desire to be known as they/them and has taken ownership of this	Now has a good relationship with most of his teachers
		Well-liked by the pastoral staff
		Much less disruptive behaviour

Negative Terms:

September Vignettes – Key words and phrases		June Vignettes – Key words and phrases
Struggling to fit in	Does not like school	Can be a target due to previous behaviour
Chatty	Has lots of days off and prefers to stay at home	Often late to college
Guarded	Becomes very easily annoyed	Does still occasionally storm off
Struggles to find a friendship group	Gets very angry and will storm off	Does not respect Mum's boundaries
Difficulties managing relationships with groups	Involved with a group of friends who are challenging at social times	Quality of work is a concern
Very dysregulated		
Challenging in lessons	Difficult at home and does not respect Mum's boundaries	
Answering back and showing off	Shows loss of dysregulated behaviour	
Struggling to cope with transition to new year group	Persistently involved in low level disruption	
Finds relationship with sister very challenging	Argues back when challenged	
Strong sense of their differences – this affects them daily	Fails to make sensible choices	
	Seems to enjoy winding teachers up	

These students have made almost polarised changes in lots of regards. Even where there are negative comments in the June vignettes, these were often offset by a reflection of huge progress made. For example for Fred, in the autumn term he had received the most detentions in the entire College but in June he was described as having a good relationship with many of his teachers and teachers are in turn now able to identify concerns around the quality of this work – although a negative at first glance, it is a significant development that he is now remaining in most lessons and is able to complete at least some work, such that teachers can give feedback, where he was very unlikely to have done so in the autumn term.

Student resilience for change and transitions

An unexpected positive result is that all students have developed fantastic resilience for change and transitions in school. Whilst we hoped to have the same room all year, the project had to "move out" for exam periods and the lunchtime group location changed twice to accommodate other changes to the College. All students were able to adapt to these changes. They also adjusted quickly to the new Counsellor in term 2.

Student communication
An additional unexpected improvement is how readily all students will now communicate with the project lead via MS Teams chat. Students are motivated to use this to ask for help in areas beyond the remit of the project and will also chase the project lead for updates on room changes etc, demonstrating high levels of motivation and commitment to the project.

Staff Interest
Over the last 3 terms the level of staff interest and support has grown both for the project itself and for the students involved in it. All have been pleasant reflections to make, whilst some have been unexpected.
Despite the initial fears of the project lead, not a single teacher has expressed concern that a student is missing their lessons; some have asked if there is anything they can do to help the student emotionally or academically within their subject and some have taken the time to come and ask about the project with genuine and returning interest.
A wide cross section of the Senior Leadership Team has offered to support with session drop-ins, reminding students about the lunch time sessions and praising students simply for turning up to the project sessions.
Support staff have all embraced the project and have gone above and beyond to make accommodations and considerations for the group. Not least, our data manager who has proactively enquired which day we will be running the project next year and for amicably block-booking the room of choice for an entire year despite the resulting logistical headaches. Most remarkably, our exams officer who moved mock IB and GCSE exams to different venues because she "thought it would be best for the students to have the continuity of the safe space that they are used to and besides, they are as good as gold".
Pastoral colleagues have been keen to bring new students into the project. We were reluctant to do so mid-way through the year, having finally got the dynamics and group balance 'just so', and felt obliged therefore to project the safe space. Nonetheless, this request for additional support has opened further conversations and better identification of ever-CIN students. Our numbers of ever-CIN students are increasing, alongside our numbers of CEC. Considering thresholds for social care involvement have been ever rising, it would stand to reason that this increase is due to increased awareness of support available for those considered to be ever-CIN. Conversations are happening; staff consider the impact of adverse childhood experiences more commonly and awareness of this is being conveyed to parents and carers.
It has been a delight to also notice, hear and see the subtle changes to language that colleagues use to describe the students involved in the project. Some examples are captured in the vignette summary above. You can also hear the more natural use of trauma informed language in the snatched snippets of conversation between lessons, on the phone to external partners or parents and in offices or over the photocopier.

Student voice feedback
Perhaps some of the most valuable feedback has been offered from the students themselves. In a PEP meeting, Jane said "I like [the] Onion Project because I've met other people like me, and I wouldn't have met them if I didn't do Onion."
In the autumn term Rupert said to the project lead, at a lunchtime session, that he would describe his typical happiness as 2 out of 10. When asked why, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "I just feel really sad most of the time." For all last year and the autumn term of this year, Rupert refused to remove his green coat

	and black hoodie. No matter how wet his clothes were or how hot he was, he would not remove them (his school photo even showed a sullen face under the hoodie). These actions and clothes were his and he felt safe in his coat with his hood up. We have all been delighted that Rupert now does not insist on his coat, or even his hoodie. He is quite content being himself in his own school uniform. When he completed the June SDQ, he asked the project lead "Do you think I can I have a new school photo? Like without my old hoodie?". We, of course, obliged. Rupert also freely offered the most profound feedback on the Onion Project: ***"When I am in class it is like everyone else is wearing black clothes and I am the only one wearing white- like I am standing out or just different. I feel like no one else has a clue even what a social worker is. When I am in the Onion Project, I don't feel different or that I stand out. It is just nice to know that there are other people who have had experiences like what I have and be able to connect with them, just to know that I'm not alone."***

Implications for practice	**Implications for IVC** Students have established a sense of belonging and community. They have shown progress in managing their conduct and peer problems. It would be professionally remiss of us not to continue to support these students to further develop their sense of belonging and awareness of their emotions relating to self-regulation. For Staff, the Onion project has provided a springboard from which the profile of the CIN and CIC cohort has been raised through whole school professional learning. **What will we do next time – the same & different?** We plan to run the Onion Project next year, subject to funding. We have a new partner aligned for the counsellor role who has a more extensive depth and breadth of experience of knowledge of running group sessions with young people who have experienced trauma in a school setting. This might reduce the need for the monitoring support of small group sessions that YMCA counsellors required. We need to adjust our priorities next year so that we do not try to put everyone who qualifies into the project regardless of their individual preparedness or appropriateness to engage safely in a group work environment. Term 1 might have been more successful if we had given more careful consideration to the small group dynamics and the needs of the individual students; we instead prioritised participation in an attempt to elicit better value for money – this was a mistake, one size does not fit all, particularly where vulnerable students are concerned. We hope to run the Onion Project in a similar format to how it has concluded this year. Regarding the lunchtime sessions we will plan to run them weekly in the autumn term, fortnightly in spring term and agree up to five sessions for the summer term (in agreement with student voice). We will also plan to identify any changes to the cohort in January, so that we can bring in new students and update small groups accordingly. **Future priorities** Early identification of students in the target demographic, particularly those who have previously had a social worker. Continued staff CPD to further deepen our trauma informed practices. Sharing the Onion Project model with leaders at other schools within the multi academy trust. **Implications for Virtual school** • Create a forum for sharing the project with senior colleagues within education. • Embed a model which makes use of supervision through an EP in future Virtual School funded projects. • Consider how the methods for evaluation, in particular the vignettes could be used in future Virtual School work. • A strength of the project has been working across the cohorts (children in care, previously in care and those known to social care), consider how future projects may work across the extended cohorts.

Appendix 8

Inspire Education Group: Pupil Premium Plus Project	
Context	• Within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough many students transition to Further Education (FE) Colleges as opposed to remaining in school sixth-forms. There are a limited number of sixth-form/FE colleges that can provide appropriate courses and qualifications for our students as a result this means that these colleges often end up with large numbers of young people in care from many different local authorities. • A substantial number of these are ESOL students. ESOL numbers have increased rapidly over the past two academic years and this number continues to rise. The biggest increase is in pre-entry learners who have no experience of English. The fluidity of this cohort means that students are arriving throughout the academic year. There is a limited evidence base on how to best to support the achievement of this cohort. • FE colleges have shared that meeting the on-going needs and requirements of this specific ESOL cohort is challenging, this is notable in the low attendance of this cohort. • It is not statutory to have qualified teacher status for Designated Teachers within FE colleges. This can have implications on their status across the setting and their role often sits outside of curriculum departments. This means that Designated Teachers can be solely relied upon to meet the needs of this cohort and their expertise around trauma informed practice and individual young people is not always shared across the setting. This impacts on young people's ability to achieve their potential. • There are not always Care Leaver processes for sharing best practice around the specific needs of this cohort at an individual student level and this has contributed to setting policies being used inflexibly. This is likely to have impacted the retention figures of young people in care. • Curriculum staff have not routinely received training around young people in care. • There is often no designated governor for care experienced young people. • Young people in care and care experienced young people are not routinely tracked as a vulnerable group. • There is not a consistent model that has been used previously to support FE Colleges in strategic development.

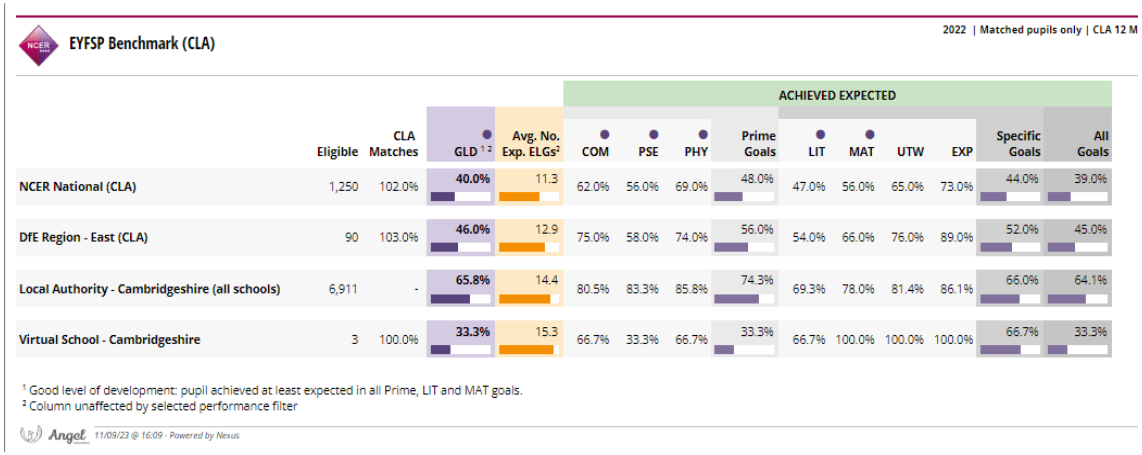
What are the specific circumstances?	• The Inspire Group has 184 Children in Care on role – 36 Cambridgeshire and 59 Peterborough • Inspire group had no link governor specifically named for Children in Care and no governors had been trained in Children in Care and Trauma Informed Practice. The Governing Body was not fulfilling its statutory duties towards Children in Care. • Limited staff awareness of Children in Care and the implications of attachment and trauma on children's development and behaviour. Designated Teachers were the only staff who had received Trauma Informed Practice training or training around Children in Care. • Attendance and achievement data was not tracked specifically for Children in Care or Care Leaver groups • Engagement in enrichment and careers support was not being tracked specifically for Children in Care or Care Leavers as defined groups. • Best practice for our cohort was not being routinely shared across Peterborough and Stamford colleges or with other Post-16 Designated Teachers. • Inspire group have 2 Designated Teachers, 1 was new to post during the project and the other is experienced. • High retention figures for Children in Care: - Peterborough College 24 Children in Care withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2021. - Peterborough College 16 Care Leavers withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2021. - Stamford College 3 Children in Care withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2021. - Stamford College 0 Care Leavers withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2021.

What did the Virtual School do?	The project used the Cambridgeshire/Peterborough Indicators of Good Practice (IGP) tool as a basis for self-evaluation and action planning and involved Education Advisors from Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Virtual Schools, DTs from Stamford and Peterborough Colleges, members of the Senior Leadership Team from Stamford and Peterborough Colleges and reported to Headteachers/ Principals from the Inspire Group, Cambridgeshire Virtual School and Peterborough Virtual School. The project started in January 2022, it included funding from both Virtual Schools which totalled £10,000. This was used to support staff release to attend meetings, conduct surveys, train staff, design reports and recruit staff. **The following priorities were identified through self-evaluation:** • The Governing Body fulfils its statutory responsibility towards Children in Care • All teaching staff improve professional awareness of Children in Care and implications of attachment and trauma Children in Care awareness training for staff • Attendance, retention and achievement of Children in Care/Care Leaver increases 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 • All Children in Care are engaged in termly conversations about careers • Best practice is shared between DTs within and outside of the Inspire Education Group **Actions:** • Working party was established to develop a Care Leaver action plan informed by the IGP tool. • Working party attended 8 meetings, through these meetings actions were developed, monitored and reviewed. • Key barrier emerged: stalling progress due to communication difficulties because of staff absence, the VS called a strategic meeting between VS Heads and Senior Leaders of Inspire to overcome the barriers. • Specific webinar Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware training was developed and provided for linked governors and whole college staff.

What difference did this make?	**Evaluation of data and other evidence for key identified priorities:** **Governing Body:** • Named link governor appointed who received training and is beginning to action their duties and responsibilities. **Staff training:** • All curriculum staff at Peterborough College have received Trauma Informed Practice training or training around Children in Care. • Peterborough college has included this training in the induction process so new members of staff will receive this training when they join. • By the end of the project ALS, Welfare and Mentor staff at Stamford had received Trauma Informed Practice training or training around Children in Care. • Staff and Governors are kept up to date through the safeguarding newsletter which reiterates key policy, practice and process around Children in Care/CARE LEAVER • The Staff Portal links staff to key support, policy and guidance included the Cambs VS podcasts. **Attendance and Achievement data:** • By the end of the project attendance data is now routinely tracked for Children in Care and care leavers groups including by curriculum area/department • 2022/2023 overall attendance and achievement data will be available for evaluation by Autumn 2023. • Retention data – First 42 days. There has been a significant reduction in 42-day withdrawals for both Children in Care and care leavers during the period of the project at Peterborough College, whilst there has been an increase at Stamford College. Peterborough College • 11 Children in Care were withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2022. • 10 Care Leavers were withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2022. Stamford College • 5 Children in Care were withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2022. • 1 Care Leavers were withdrawn within 42 days in Autumn 2022. **Engagement in Enrichment and Careers conversations:** • Careers conversations have increased. Cambs PEP data for Autumn 2022 - 17 of students engaged in career conversations. PEP data for Spring 2023 - 25 students engaged in career conversations. In Autumn 2022 0 students requested 1:1 careers advice. In Spring 2023 33 students requested 1:1 careers advice. Peterborough Virtual School have evidence that Peterborough and Stamford PEP records for Autumn 2022 onwards demonstrated that students had had career conversations during PEP meetings and the opportunity to meet with the Careers Advisor is available to all Children in Care / Care Leavers. • There is a good enrichment programme available at Peterborough College. A survey was conducted in the Autum term which showed some learners accessed the activities. A repeat survey is planned for May 2023 to compare results and evaluate. The take-up of enrichment activities by Children in Care at Stamford College is low. **Sharing Best Practice:** • Peterborough College and Stamford College DTs now meet regularly and share best practice.

	Funding The colleges spent £16,000 on the project in total. The key spending has been on release time for training of current staff and recruitment of new staff.
Implications for practice	• What has been the key learning from the project? There has been impact of collective working - working together has drawn together lots of pockets of good practice that was going on in isolation to create impact. This project has helped level the playing field for these vulnerable learners. The training and development of staff and governors is impacting on changing culture with schools. • Where has impact not been so strong? The impact has been strong throughout the college, because information sharing, updates and training have been embedded into college process and policies. There is a drive from SLT which has embedded throughout the college. Knowledge and understanding previously held by the DT is being cascaded throughout the departments. • What other development areas have been identified? ESOL. Staff recruitment and retention. Attendance. • What does future VS support need to look like to maintain and support future progress? Is this a model that should be rolled out to support other colleges? Yes, and both colleges are keen to support VS to disseminate learning. College will share the case study with their regional groups. Some of the learning, templates etc can be shared to support. The online training has been so valuable because it can be used flexibly. • Is the model useful without additional funding? A tool kit to support would be useful. Building on top of what is already there and adding to as we work with other colleges. Using the IGP as a basis. Make project time limited.

Appendix 9: Early Years Data



EYFSP Benchmark (CLA)

2022 | Matched pupils only | CLA 12 M

	Eligible	CLA Matches	GLD [1] [2]	Avg. No. Exp. ELGs [2]	ACHIEVED EXPECTED COM	PSE	PHY	Prime Goals	LIT	MAT	UTW	EXP	Specific Goals	All Goals
NCER National (CLA)	1,250	102.0%	40.0%	11.3	62.0%	56.0%	69.0%	48.0%	47.0%	56.0%	65.0%	73.0%	44.0%	39.0%
DfE Region - East (CLA)	90	103.0%	46.0%	12.9	75.0%	58.0%	74.0%	56.0%	54.0%	66.0%	76.0%	89.0%	52.0%	45.0%
Local Authority - Cambridgeshire (all schools)	6,911	-	65.8%	14.4	80.5%	83.3%	85.8%	74.3%	69.3%	78.0%	81.4%	86.1%	66.0%	64.1%
Virtual School - Cambridgeshire	3	100.0%	33.3%	15.3	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	33.3%

[1] Good level of development: pupil achieved at least expected in all Prime, LIT and MAT goals.
[2] Column unaffected by selected performance filter

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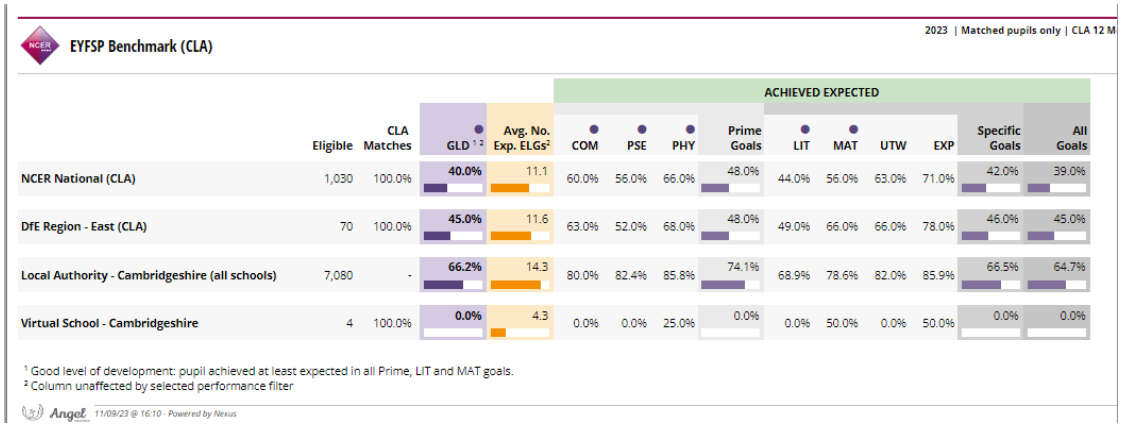
Early Years Validated Data 2022
Nexus (September 2023)



EYFSP Benchmark (CLA)

2023 | Matched pupils only | CLA 12 M

	Eligible	CLA Matches	GLD [1] [2]	Avg. No. Exp. ELGs [2]	ACHIEVED EXPECTED COM	PSE	PHY	Prime Goals	LIT	MAT	UTW	EXP	Specific Goals	All Goals
NCER National (CLA)	1,030	100.0%	40.0%	11.1	60.0%	56.0%	66.0%	48.0%	44.0%	56.0%	63.0%	71.0%	42.0%	39.0%
DfE Region - East (CLA)	70	100.0%	45.0%	11.6	63.0%	52.0%	68.0%	48.0%	49.0%	66.0%	66.0%	78.0%	46.0%	45.0%
Local Authority - Cambridgeshire (all schools)	7,080	-	66.2%	14.3	80.0%	82.4%	85.8%	74.1%	68.9%	78.6%	82.0%	85.9%	66.5%	64.7%
Virtual School - Cambridgeshire	4	100.0%	0.0%	4.3	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%

[1] Good level of development: pupil achieved at least expected in all Prime, LIT and MAT goals.
[2] Column unaffected by selected performance filter

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Early Years Unvalidated Data 2023
Nexus (September 2023)

Appendix 10: Year 1 Phonics Data

Nexus (September 2023)

Phonics Benchmark (CLA) (Keypas)

2023 | Matched pupils only | CLA 12 Months

	Cohort	Mark: No Score	0-15	16-23	24-31	32-36	37-40	APS	Outcome: Q	A	D	WT	WA
NCER National (CLA)	1,360	7.0%	17.0%	7.0%	7.0%	30.0%	31.0%	28.8	-	-	7.0%	31.0%	61.0%
DfE Region - East (CLA)	110	7.0%	17.0%	7.0%	12.0%	27.0%	30.0%	28.2	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	36.0%	56.0%
Local Authority - Cambridgeshire (all schools)	7,028	2.6%	7.7%	4.3%	7.3%	32.4%	45.7%	32.0	0.0%	0.3%	2.3%	19.3%	78.1%
Virtual School - Cambridgeshire	7	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	57.1%	14.3%	33.0	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	71.4%

2023 Data

A mark of 32 or above is a pass.

Phonics Benchmark (CLA) (Keypas)

2022 | Matched pupils only | CLA 12 Months

	Cohort	Mark: No Score	0-15	16-23	24-31	32-36	37-40	APS	Outcome: Q	A	D	WT	WA
NCER National (CLA)	1,510	7.0%	18.0%	8.0%	8.0%	30.0%	29.0%	28.3	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	33.0%	60.0%
DfE Region - East (CLA)	100	11.0%	21.0%	9.0%	6.0%	22.0%	30.0%	26.9	-	-	10.0%	36.0%	52.0%
Local Authority - Cambridgeshire (all schools)	7,198	2.6%	9.2%	5.5%	8.8%	31.5%	42.4%	32.0	0.0%	0.3%	2.3%	23.5%	73.9%
Virtual School - Cambridgeshire	2	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	33.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%

2022 Data

A mark of 32 or above is a pass.

Appendix 11: Key Stage 1

KS1 Benchmark (CLA)

2022 | CLA 12 Months

	Cohort **	READING <EXS	READING ≥EXS	WRITING <EXS	WRITING ≥EXS	MATHS <EXS	MATHS ≥EXS	SCIENCE <EXS	SCIENCE ≥EXS	RWM* ≥EXS	RWMS* ≥EXS
National (CLA)	1,950	55.0%	45.0%	66.0%	33.0%	57.0%	43.0%	43.0%	56.0%	29.0%	29.0%
Local Authority (all schools)	7,276	32.0%	67.8%	42.2%	57.6%	31.5%	68.3%	20.3%	79.4%	53.6%	53.4%
Local Authority (state-funded)	7,276	32.0%	67.8%	42.2%	57.6%	31.5%	68.3%	20.3%	79.4%	53.6%	53.4%
Virtual School	6	33.3%	66.7%	66.7%	33.3%	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	33.3%

KS1 Benchmark (CLA) (Keypas)

2023 | CLA 12 Months

	Cohort **	CLA Matches	READING <EXS	READING ≥EXS	WRITING <EXS	WRITING ≥EXS	MATHS <EXS	MATHS ≥EXS	SCIENCE <EXS	SCIENCE ≥EXS	RWM* ≥EXS	RWMS* ≥EXS
NCER National (CLA)	1,520	100.0%	53.0%	46.0%	64.0%	35.0%	53.0%	46.0%	42.0%	57.0%	31.0%	31.0%
DfE Region - East (CLA)	120	100.0%	59.0%	40.0%	68.0%	31.0%	59.0%	41.0%	47.0%	52.0%	27.0%	26.0%
Local Authority - Cambridgeshire (all schools)	7,466	0.2%	33.4%	66.1%	43.5%	56.0%	30.9%	68.6%	20.1%	79.2%	52.1%	52.0%
Virtual School - Cambridgeshire	6	100.0%	16.7%	83.3%	33.3%	66.7%	16.7%	83.3%	16.7%	83.3%	66.7%	66.7%

<EXS below expected standard

>EXS at or above expected standard

RWM Reading, writing, maths combined result

Appendix 12: Key Stage 2 Data Set

KS2 Summary (CLA) (DfE)

2023 | Matched pupils only | CLA 12 Months

Virtual School - Cambridgeshire

	Cohort	No SS	N	80-89	90-99	100-109	110-114	115-120	Scaled Score Distribution	Avg SS	<Exp	≥Exp	High
Reading	28	10.7%	3.6%	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	0.0%		102.7	42.9%	57.1%	28.6%
GPS	28	10.7%	0.0%	10.7%	25.0%	42.9%	10.7%	0.0%		100.2	46.4%	53.6%	10.7%
Maths	28	10.7%	0.0%	10.7%	35.7%	39.3%	0.0%	3.6%		99.0	57.1%	42.9%	3.6%
Writing TA	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	44.4%	55.6%	3.7%
RWM	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	37.0%	29.6%	3.7%

KS2 Summary (CLA) (DfE)

2022 | Matched pupils only | CLA 12 Months

Virtual School - Cambridgeshire

	Cohort	No SS	N	80-89	90-99	100-109	110-114	115-120	Scaled Score Distribution	Avg SS	<Exp	≥Exp	High
Reading	24	16.7%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	45.8%	8.3%	4.2%		101.3	41.7%	58.3%	12.5%
GPS	24	20.8%	0.0%	0.0%	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%	4.2%		101.0	58.3%	41.7%	16.7%
Maths	24	20.8%	0.0%	4.2%	29.2%	41.7%	4.2%	0.0%		100.4	54.2%	45.8%	4.2%
Writing TA	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%
RWM	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	41.7%	37.5%	0.0%

<EXS below expected standard

>EXS at or above expected standard

RWM Reading, writing, maths combined result

Appendix 13: Key Stage 4 Data Set

Year 11 - GCSEs	English at 4+	Maths at 4+	English and Maths both at 4+	English and Maths both at 5+
National - 2022	65.9%	71.7%	71%	52%
Cambridgeshire Ci/47 (eligible cohort) 2022	51%	37%	33%	15%
Cambridgeshire CiC/58 (eligible cohort) 2023*	29% (50%)	28% (47%)	28% (47%)	(12%)
Cambridgeshire CiC /86	21% (43%)	20% (38%)	20% (38%)	6% (15%)

*Missing 2 results from our eligible cohort

Appendix 14: Attendance Data

Average % Attendance	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Change from previous year
Cambridgeshire	4.2	4.4	5	-	10.2	7.8	-2.4
East of England	4.7	5.1	5.4	-	9.6	8.5	-1.1
Statistical Neighbours	5.04	5.13	5.54	-	9.15	8.33	-0.81
England	4.7	5	5.1	-	9.1	7.8	-1.3

Source: LAIT (July 2023)

Absence				
Children in Care	Total Absence	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised	Persistent Absence
National	7.8%	5.5%	2.3%	19.1%
Eastern Region	8.5%	6.5%	2.0%	20.6%
Cambridgeshire	7.8%	6.4%	1.4%	17.5%
Stat Neighbour AVG	8.3%	6.4%	1.9%	20.3%

Source: National Statistics – Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities, in England: 2021 to 2022 (March 2023)

Appendix 15: Attendance Data by Key Stage

Key Stage	Average Attendance
1 (years 1-2)	90.18%
2 (years 3-6)	92.03%
3 (years 7-9)	86.54%
4 (years 10-11)	73.17%

Source: Welfare Call (May 2023)
*Data for academic year from 1st September 2022 -31st May 2023

Cambridgeshire County Council

Appendix 16

Response to a Permanent Exclusion	
Context	• The DfE advises that permanent exclusions should be avoided where possible for children in care. • The legacy of a permanent exclusion as part of a child in care's life story will contribute to and reinforce their experiences of loss and rejection. • Suspensions and permanent exclusions often put pressure on care placement stability; permanent exclusions can trigger the loss of a care placement (alongside the loss of a school). • Numbers of permanent exclusions within Cambridgeshire for children who aren't in care have risen; 8 permanent exclusions in the Autumn term 2022 (an increase from 2 permanent exclusions in the Autumn term 2021). For Cambridgeshire children in care, there have so far been no permanent exclusions this academic year or in the last academic year. The Virtual School have successfully challenged 2 permanent exclusions this academic year.
What are the specific circumstances?	• Tommy, a Year 3 child in care, is described as creative and academically able. Tommy has the potential to achieve well in his GCSE's and go on to pursue a post-16 pathway; it is thought that this is likely to be in a practical/creative field. If Tommy is provided with the right support, environment and opportunities, he has the potential to pursue any area of interest/passion. • Tommy has an EHCP and presents with SEMH difficulties at school and home; likely due to his early lived experiences. • Tommy was taken into care in 2021, experienced a care placement move due to a placement breakdown and was moved out of authority to a new care placement. Tommy continued to travel to his Cambridgeshire school, but the travel distance was having a detrimental impact on him, so a school search was undertaken, and a local school was secured for Tommy to start in July 2022. • Although continuing to present with dysregulated behaviours at school, support was provided for Tommy through his EHCP, he did not experience any suspensions in the Autumn term and the school did not reach out for Virtual School support. The school reported in his Autumn term PEP that it was unlikely that he would experience a suspension in the Spring term and very unlikely that he would experience a permanent exclusion. • Within the span of 14 school days (between the end of January and start of February), Tommy experienced his first suspension at his new school, shortly followed by a longer suspension and then a permanent exclusion.
What did the Virtual School do?	• Prompt Virtual School response to initial suspension (allocated on day 1 of first suspension – notified on day 1 by the Social Worker). • Virtual School Education Advisor: - Investigating concerns, pushing forwards professional meetings/emergency Annual Review, liaising with multi-agency teams and advocating for Tommy/challenging concerns around negative language amongst professionals. - Proactive and thorough parallel planning with Tommy's interests/pathway planning at the core of decision making; in partnership with Statutory Assessment Teams, the local authority Virtual School and school. - Ongoing parallel consultations with a range of schools to ensure reintegration into school is successful and prompt • Virtual School Assistant Headteacher: - Mobilising senior support within the multi-agency team; Statutory Assessment Teams & the local authority Virtual School. - Liaising with the school Principal to challenge the permanent exclusion and push forwards its cancellation.

What difference did this make?	• The permanent exclusion was cancelled by the principal; 3.5 days after it was issued. • The legacy of a permanent exclusion will no longer form part of Tommy's life story. • Tommy will continue to know that the school is supporting him in the background and will have opportunities for a goodbye from the school, which promotes healthy closure and minimises loss. • The school will have the experience of a positive pathway of support for a child whose needs they can no longer meet. • Tommy will have the opportunity to access a robust, full-time package of alternative interim provision, which is matched to what he currently needs, with only a 4.5 day gap between the school incident and starting the alternative interim provision. • Tommy remains on a pathway of having every chance to reach his maximum potential.
Implications for practice	• Prompt and robust response for children at risk of experiencing a permanent exclusion can have positive outcomes. • Virtual School team structure allows for effective Advisor and Senior Leadership partnership work in instances of children experiencing a permanent exclusion. • Model letter (joined work from Virtual School Head and Statutory Assessment Team Strategic Lead) produced to use/adapt for future circumstances to establish school responsibilities when they can no longer meet a child with an EHCP's needs. • Case study produced to support future schools and agencies to understand a positive pathway. • Ongoing consideration of how else the Virtual School identify a child at risk of a permanent exclusion, prior to them experiencing a suspension.

Appendix 17

Statutory School Age: Alternative Education	
Context	• Children in care are academically nearly two and a half years (29 months) behind their peers by the time they finish their GCSEs.[1] • Children who are more likely to struggle with transitions or starting new schools in Key Stage 4 are those with additional needs (SEND, CiC, trauma). • Repeated placement breakdown or moving between home and care increases the likelihood of children developing multiple problems, becoming more challenging and needing intensive, high cost placements.[2] • Children who are excluded from school have poor outcomes later in life. Only 1% of excluded pupils will go on to achieve 5 good GCSE grades. Children who are excluded from school by age 12 are 4 times more likely to be imprisoned as an adult.[3] • Good alternative provision should include early defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment. There is scope for the importance of the relationships developed in AP to be recognised more fully in policy. • Research suggests that engagement with AP can aid engagement with other services. Critical components in supporting re-engagement include student voice, creativity of approach, partnership working, flexibility in meeting students' needs, and a readiness to compromise.
What are the specific circumstances?	• Hannah is a Year 11 child who was placed into care in Year 8. Several placements gave notice, resulting in considerable disruption. • Hannah was achieving well academically at the time of entry into care and was engaged in education. • Hannah was unsettled at her new school following a school move and experienced suspensions at the new school. • Exploration of gender identity and related behaviours resulted in self-harm and significant decline in Hannah's mental health. • Hannah's academic achievement declined, and she lost engagement and motivation in school. • Hannah became at high risk of permanent exclusion.
What did the Virtual School do?	• The Virtual School promptly submitted Education, Health and Care Needs application as corporate parent, utilising co-produced Cambridgeshire County Council children in care SEND Protocol, which facilitated the application being fast-tracked. • The Virtual School ensured robust, 25 hour per week package of Alternative Provision (AP) was put in place and monitored, with Hannah's interests/pathway planning at the core of decision making; in partnership with Statutory Assessment Team, School and Social Care. Unlocking post-16 pathway support based on Hannah's voice and aspirations: • Careers Information Advice and Guidance through Virtual School and School advisors. • Work experience workshops in-line with Hannah's aspirations commissioned using Pupil Premium Plus (PP+). • Engagement in additional activities such as barista courses and youth work course commissioned using Pupil Premium Plus (PP+).

<table>
<tr><td>What difference did this make?</td><td>

Re-engagement in learning helped Hannah to develop new skills, gain confidence, and improve her overall well-being.
Hannah achieved well academically in Year 11 exams (see below for results).
Hannah was able to take an active role in her education and achieve 6 GCSES in core subjects, 5 of which were strong passes.
Hannah now has high aspirations to be a lawyer, midwife, or pursue a course in health and social care.
Hannah is now attending a post-16 college and working towards her future aspirations.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Year 11 Exam Results:</th></tr>
<tr><td>GCSEs
Biology: 5
Chemistry: 5
Physics: 4
Mathematics: 5
English Language: 5
English Literature: 5</td><td>LAMDA Level 1 Shakespeare qualification (distinction)
Level 2 Grade 4 Musical Theatre exam (merit)
Bronze Arts Awards achieved
Silver Arts Awards (tbc: awaiting moderation results)</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Implications for practice</td><td>

Co-production of creative, out-of-the-box planning and bespoke appropriate provision can result in enhanced outcomes. Consideration should be given to empowering other services and education settings to take this approach when planning for vulnerable children.
Enhanced communication between alternative provision providers, schools, residential homes, and supporting professionals can help ensure that young people receive the best possible care.
Further consideration on how the Virtual School can develop consistency in approach and expectations of alternative provision for children not on a school roll, so that it results in increased outcomes and excellent progress.

</td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 18

Post-16 Inclusion	
Context	• 57 separated migrant children came into the care of Cambridgeshire local Authority in the academic year 2021-22. Cambridgeshire participate in the National Transfer Scheme and since then, in response to the national picture, the numbers of young people accepted into Cambridgeshire has increased from 0.7% to 1.0% of the child population. • Therefore, the number of separated migrant children on the roll of the Virtual School has increased and continues to do so this academic year. FE providers are struggling to keep up with demand and do not have the places to enrol all these young people onto courses, there is also a dearth of roll-on roll-off provision. For this reason, it is essential to reduce any risk of NEET as if a young person does become NEET then it is not likely that they will be able to access further FE provision until the following academic year.
What are the specific circumstances?	• Mo, aged 16, arrived in the UK in June and was housed in semi-independent living arrangements. He had no experience of education and had never been in a classroom before, consequently he was limited to an ESOL curriculum at college. He started at Beats Learning and Select English in Cambridge. Mo was supported to commence a fulltime ESOL course in September, three months after he had arrived in the UK. • Mo struggled to understand the British education system. He could not see the purpose in studying maths and struggled with the subject. • Mo's attendance averaged 67% through the autumn term and college staff were unable to raise this despite interventions. He risked being given a stage 2 disciplinary due to his attendance and lack of motivation.
What did the Virtual School do?	• The Virtual School collect weekly attendance data and analyse the post-16 cohort every 2 weeks. In response to Mo's attendance and after analysing the attendance data, an early autumn PEP meeting was scheduled. Mo shared, that he wished to pursue a career in IT. • The Virtual School liaised with a specialist careers advisor. • The careers advisor visited college, met with Mo to talk about possible IT pathways and was also able to explain, through the help of his keyworker the relevance of studying maths.
What difference did this	• Mo's attendance improved significantly with some weeks at 100%. His tutors have noticed a behavioural change, increased engagement and he has requested a second careers appointment. • *"I'm glad he has engaged in this, that's really positive. We have seen a real turn around the last few weeks in terms of attendance and attitude to college. He has had 100% attendance the past 2 weeks and has had full attendance so far this week too."* Via email from Designated Teacher • *"Fantastic to hear! Proof he can do it I'm going to remind him of that next time I see him, and he moans how hard it is!"* Via email from Social Worker
Implications for practice	• Virtual Schools have a responsibility not only to ensure that separated migrant children have access to high quality and appropriate education, but also that they understand the UK education system and pathways of progression within it. • This case study demonstrates how attendance and engagement can be improved, by ensuring that a young person has the necessary understanding. • Cambridgeshire Virtual School are committed to developing a system to ensure that all newly arrived separated migrant children can explore their aspirations, in their first language, so that they have clarity around their own options and pathways. Where relevant this may be with a qualified careers guidance advisor and an interpreter.

Appendix 19: Children Previously In Care Data

Type of Enquiry	Amount	Percentage
Child at Crisis	58	21%
FASD	32	12%
Other	27	10%
PP+	24	9%
Training	20	7%
General CPIC	19	7%
Funding	11	4%
Transitions	10	4%
EHCP	9	3%
Care Status	9	3%
Admissions	9	3%
Support	8	3%
SEMH	5	2%
FAGUS	4	1%
PEX	4	1%
Suspension	3	1%
ESP	3	1%
Attachment and Trauma	3	1%
Accessing Independent school	2	1%
FASD Training	2	1%
Transport	2	1%
Safeguarding	2	1%
Adoption	4	1%
Total Enquiries	270	100%

Type of Order	Amount	Percentage
Adoption	184	68%
All	5	2%
CAD	1	0%
CAO	2	1%
None	2	1%
SGO	51	19%
Unknown	25	9%
Total	270	100%

No of Contacts	Amount	Month
All Categories	270	
Most Contacts	41	Oct/Mar

Contact By	Amount	Percentage
Local Authority Partners	74	27%
School/Setting	107	40%
Parent/Guardian	89	33%
Total	270	100%

Source: Internal data (September 2022 – Jun 2023)

Children in Care/ Care Leavers Education, Employment and Training Promotion Action Plan Update

To:	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
Meeting Date:	15th November 2023
From:	Service Director, Corporate Parenting
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	No
Outcome:	To provide the Sub-Committee with an update on progress toward increasing the number of young people in education, employment and training (EET)
Recommendation:	The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee is recommended to: a) Note and comment on the report.

Officer contact:
Name: Mark Cowdell
Post: Countywide NEET Manager
Email: mark.cowdell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 507218

1. Background

1.1 The numbers of young people in education, employment and training (EET) is a key positive outcome measure for children in care and care leavers so measurement of those in EET and those not in education, employment and training (NEET) is carefully monitored.

1.2 In 2020, it was decided that Matt Oliver would be given the task of pulling together a NEET strategy across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and ensure that all the different services supporting this work are working together to help improve performance across our vulnerable group. We completed a report in November 2022 regarding this strategy and action plan.

1.3 This report is to provide an update since that time.

2. Main Issues

2.1 The current DfE (Department for Education) EET figure for care leavers aged 19 to 21 for Cambridgeshire is 54.1%. This was for 2022 and unfortunately the 2023 figure has not been published yet. This is in comparison to an EET figure 56.7% for East of England Average and an EET figure of 55.6% for Cambridgeshire Statistical neighbours.

Care Leavers	% in EET (DfE Annual Published Data)				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
East of England	51.00%	52.00%	53.00%	52.00%	56.70%
Cambridgeshire	47.00%	47.00%	44.00%	49.00%	54.10%
Cambridgeshire SN	51.80%	53.90%	54.10%	54.30%	55.60%

2.2 The above table shows that although Cambridgeshire is still behind our local and statistical neighbours, the gap between Cambridgeshire and these neighbours has been narrowed considerably and an excellent improvement of 10.1% from 2020 to 2022. This is reflective of the work that is being done to highlight the importance of increasing our vulnerable young people into education, employment or training.

2.4 As a wider NEET picture for Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire consistently achieves an average result of 3.0% for NEET and Not knowns for 16 to 18-year-olds. This result means we are within the first Quintile and score well in comparison to local and statistical neighbours.

2.5 By developing a quarterly reporting document called “NEET on a page”, this has helped us to highlight the results for Cambridgeshire including splitting down the vulnerable groups such as Care leavers, young people known to Youth Offending Service, young people who have an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plans) for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) needs and teenage mothers. By raising the awareness of reporting, which shows we are performing well but also shows the areas we can further improve, and we are able to then focus resources to help to improve that performance.

2.6 Following the uncoupling from Peterborough City Council this summer, we are now developing a new Cambridgeshire Raising Participation Age Strategy and a new strategy group has been formed which is led and chaired by Tom Molloy, Head of Service for Cambridgeshire Skills. This strategy group had its first meeting in September 2023 and will

be looking at the issues that are being faced across the county with regards to our vulnerable groups.

Children in Care/Virtual School activities to promote Education, employment and training (EET)

2.7 The cohort of NEET young people fluctuates across the academic year. Specific trigger points include the end of October which is the point at which colleges review engagement and officially enrols the young person, and a second trigger point is Christmas.

2.8 Risk of NEET is magnified due to a variety of factors including being a separated migrant young person. Strategic work to increase 'roll on/roll off' ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision was undertaken in the Spring term. A 10-week study programme, led by West Suffolk College, for 3 days started after the Easter holidays; the programme included ESOL, digital skills, maths and engineering tasters (e.g., welding). 18 post-16 separated migrant children in care attended this provision in the summer term alongside a small number of care-leavers. A bid for funding has also been submitted to the ESFA by the Prince's Trust to be able to run other courses of this nature.

2.9 To support Education, Employment and Training (EET) the Virtual School has employed Welfare Call to collect weekly attendance data for the post 16 cohort. This has enabled a timely Virtual School response to attendance concerns.

2.10 In response to the proposal in Stable Homes, that Virtual Schools will support young people in education through to age 25, the role of 'Inspiring Futures Lead' is being proposed; this will include developing a meaningful careers pathway from primary school onwards. It will also include a proposal to create meaningful work experience and employment opportunities within our local authority further evolving the role of the corporate parent and building on Cambridgeshire's choice to adopt care-experience as a protected characteristic.

Activity to support Care Leavers

2.11 We have a joint protocol with the DWP (Department of Work and Pensions). We continue to strengthen our partnership more recently engaging the DWP in the EET empowerment forum with a focus on promoting higher aspirations for our young people. Universal credit training is being embedded into the annual training schedule for leaving care (the most recent training occurring in September 2023) ensuring baseline knowledge and understanding for services advising young people. We are focusing on advertising and encouraging the DWP SWAP's (Sector-based Work Academy Programmes).

2.12 We are part of the Eastern Region NNECL group (National Network for the Education of Care Leavers), a network of higher education institutions which supports us and young people with access to up-to-date information and materials. We have collaborated with Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (NEACO), which delivers targeted and regional outreach activities across East Anglia as part of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). NEACO aims to support the most disadvantaged young people in England to progress into higher education and we have jointly produced booklets with them. We are actively promoting and encouraging our young people to access the ARU "Find out about HE" annual event in October specifically for care leavers and children in care interested in higher education. In preparing care leavers for Higher Education, Cambridge University held a skills day over the summer holidays and have recently

launched a first star academy in conjunction with Emmanuel college. This will work with a group of year 9 students from summer 2023 onwards for the next four years, raising aspiration and give clear pathways into higher education for children who are in our care. We are starting to see some impact from this work as our overall numbers in higher education continue to increase. 70% of our 18-year-old Level 3 learners have progressed onto university this autumn.

2.13 We have a Job-Hunting Pack (with a version for our unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people). This pack accompanies the "Stepping Out" preparation for adulthood work which staff and carers use as a tool to support our work with rising 18-year-olds. We are currently working with Form the Future on updating the job-hunting packs and having them professionally produced.

2.14 We have worked with colleagues in the Combined Authority to develop a 19 plus learning offer that includes no course fees for most courses, full-time post-19 ESOL provision and an enhanced vulnerable bursary for 19 to 22-year-old learners. This has been recognised at national benchmarking forum events. We are developing a local baseline offer for all Cambridgeshire and Peterborough care leavers. We have worked with Cambridgeshire skills to develop marketing materials designed to appeal to care leavers

2.15 A nine-month project was completed this year in partnership with the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum and the Care leavers Covenant which focused on establishing long term relationships with the construction industry, supported by the Esme Fairburn Foundation. This work has led to a workshop attended locally by Keir and Persimmon Homes to raise the profile of our young people to establish the connections to provide opportunities. Using this model, we had replicated this approach targeting the automotive industry for 2024. This has involved joint work with the care leavers covenant and our aim is to hold an employer session in conjunction with the covenant to improve industry awareness of care leavers.

2.16 Funding for 18-25 Mentoring scheme was awarded to organisation 'Goal 17', tasked with administering 40 mentoring relationships for care experienced young people over 2 years. The first cohort of 16 mentoring relationships launched in July 2023 and the second cohort is now being recruited. A steering group has been set up to get quarterly updates, and review progress of scheme. Funding for the next programme, with potential expansion to include CiC pre-18, needs to be discussed in January 2024 to allow continuity.

3. Alignment with the Council's ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- This report includes information to support the deliverable of “ensuring people can access support to develop their skills as a route to financial security”.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- This report includes information to support the deliverable of “working alongside the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to ensure the support for skills development is accessible, targeted and relevant”.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- This report includes information to support the deliverable of “ensuring all children have access to education from early years to post 16 provision”.
- This report includes information to support the deliverable of “ensuring that young people who experience care can access the support they need to move into adult life”.
- This report includes information to support the deliverable of “improving outcomes for children and young people with complex needs, including mental health needs”.

4. Significant Implications

Not applicable

5. Source documents

5.1 None

Last Updated: September 2023

Cambridgeshire County Council

CCC Corporate Parenting Scorecard

Business Intelligence
Cambridgeshire County Council
business.intelligence@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Number of Section 47 Enquiries completed

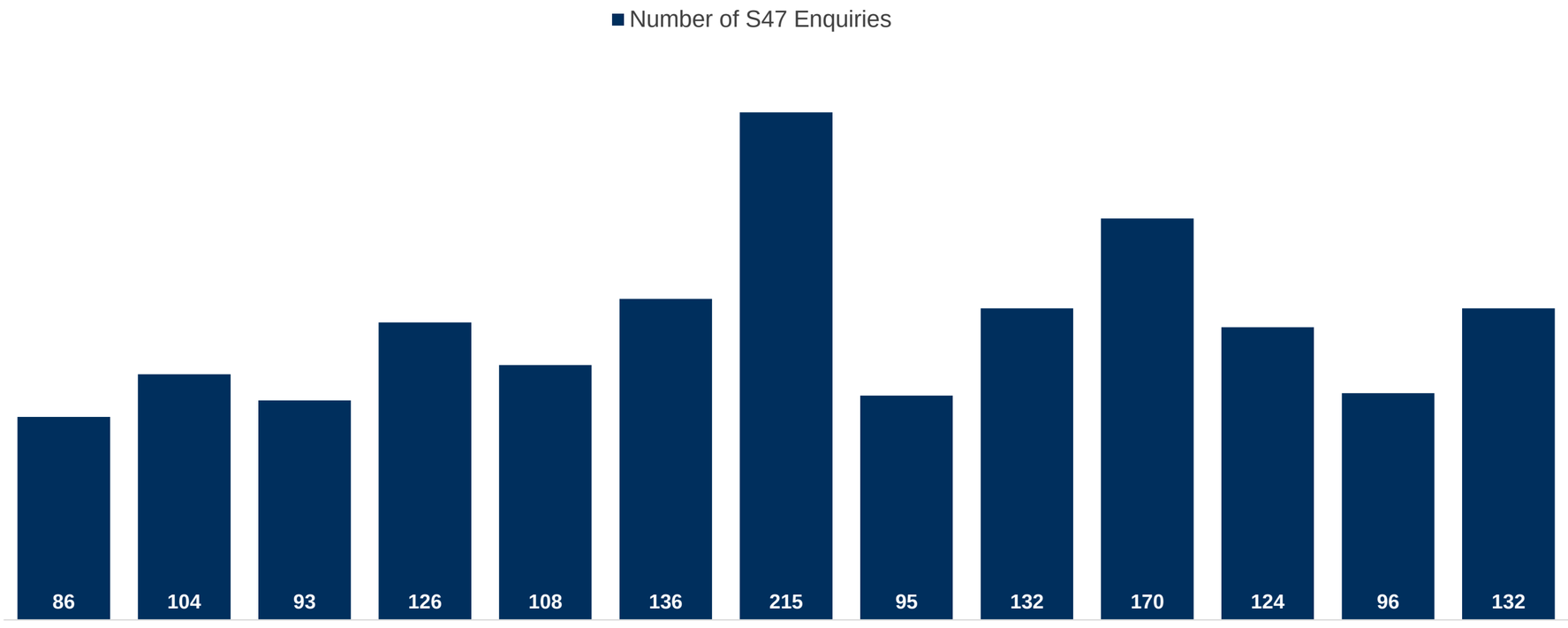
September 2023

12M Rolling Rate per 10,000	Target	Variance 12M Rolling
112	130	-13.7%
	Previous month 12M Rolling	Change in performance
	109	▼

Low is good

During the month of September, the service carried out 132 Section 47 enquiries.

The number of Section 47 enquiries completed over a 12 month period is now 1531. This equates to a rate per 10,000 of 112.



CSC Commentary

	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	97	+15
Stat Neighbours	170	-57
Region	100	+12
England	180	-68

S47 Enquiries leading to an Initial Child Protection Conference

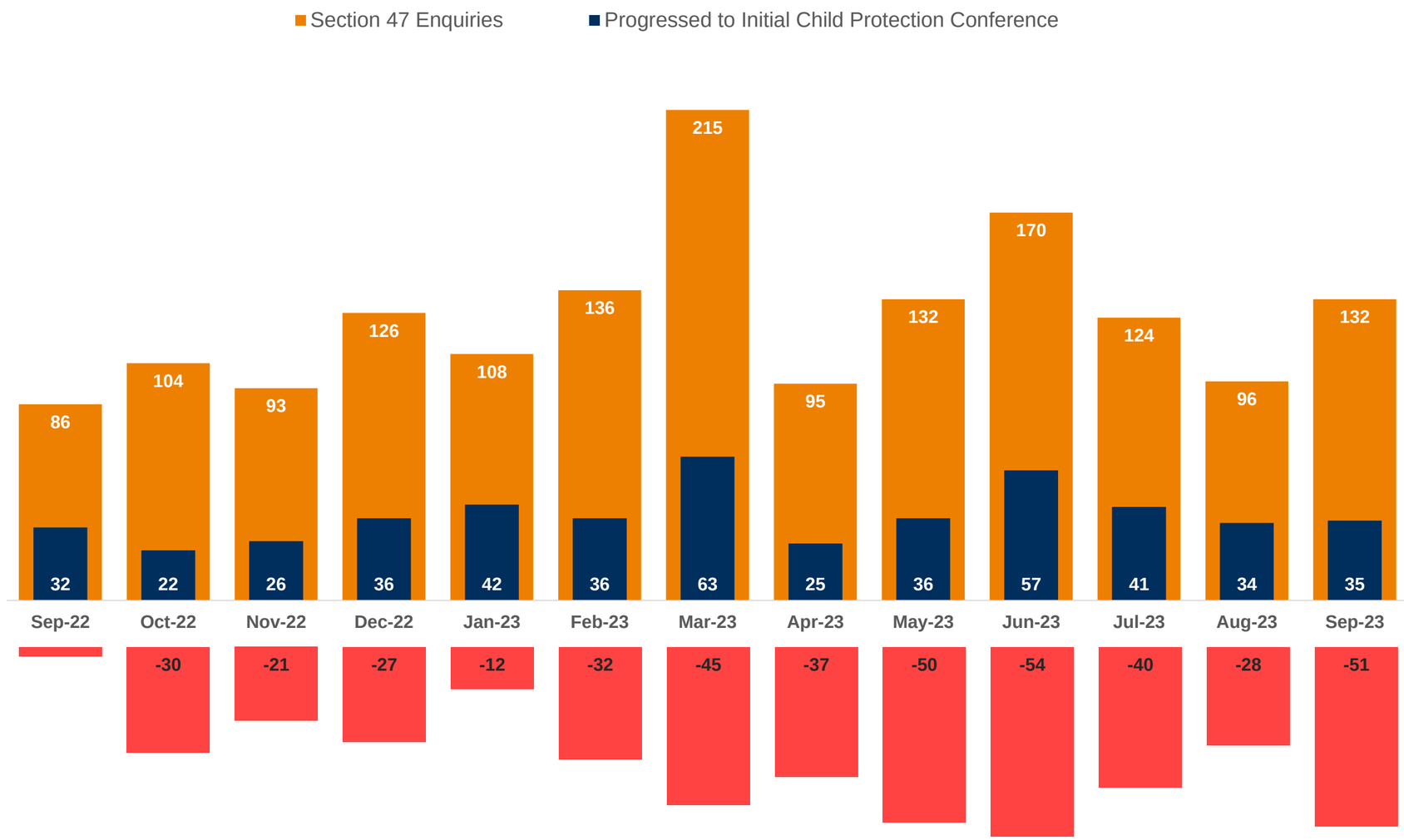
September 2023

% S47s leading to ICPC (YTD)	Target	Variance YTD
30.4%	65%	-34.6%
	Previous month YTD	Change in performance
	31.3%	▼

High is good

Out of 132 Section 47 Enquiries completed in September, 35 progressed to an Initial Child Protection Conference. This is 26.5%.

30.4% of all Section 47 Enquiries completed since the beginning of the financial year led to an Initial Child Protection Conference.



Monthly variance from target

Target: 2022/2023: 50% 2024/2024: 65%

CSC Commentary

	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	43%	-12.8%
Stat Neighbours	35%	-4.5%
Region	39%	-8.2%
England	34%	-3.5%

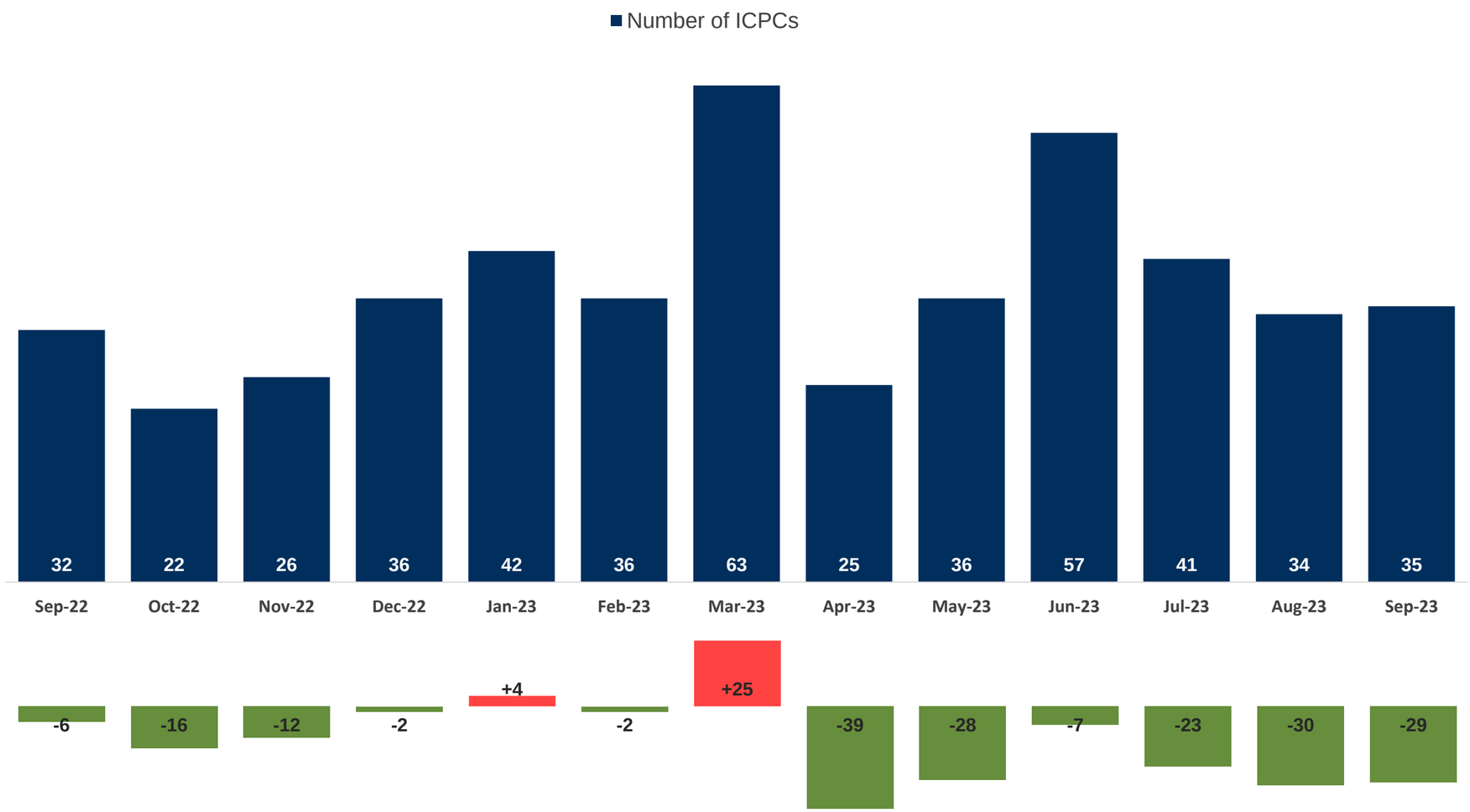
Number of Initial Child Protection Conferences

September 2023

Rate per 10,000 12M Rolling	Target	Variance 12M Rolling
33.2	56	-40.7%
	Previous month 12M Rolling	Change in performance
	33.0	▼
Low is good		

During the month of September, an Initial Child Protection Conference was held for 35 children.

The number of children who had an Initial Child Protection Conference during the last 12 months is now 453. This equates to a rate per 10,000 of 33.2.



Monthly variance from target (number of referrals)

Target Rate: 2022/2023: 33 2023/24: 56

CSC Commentary

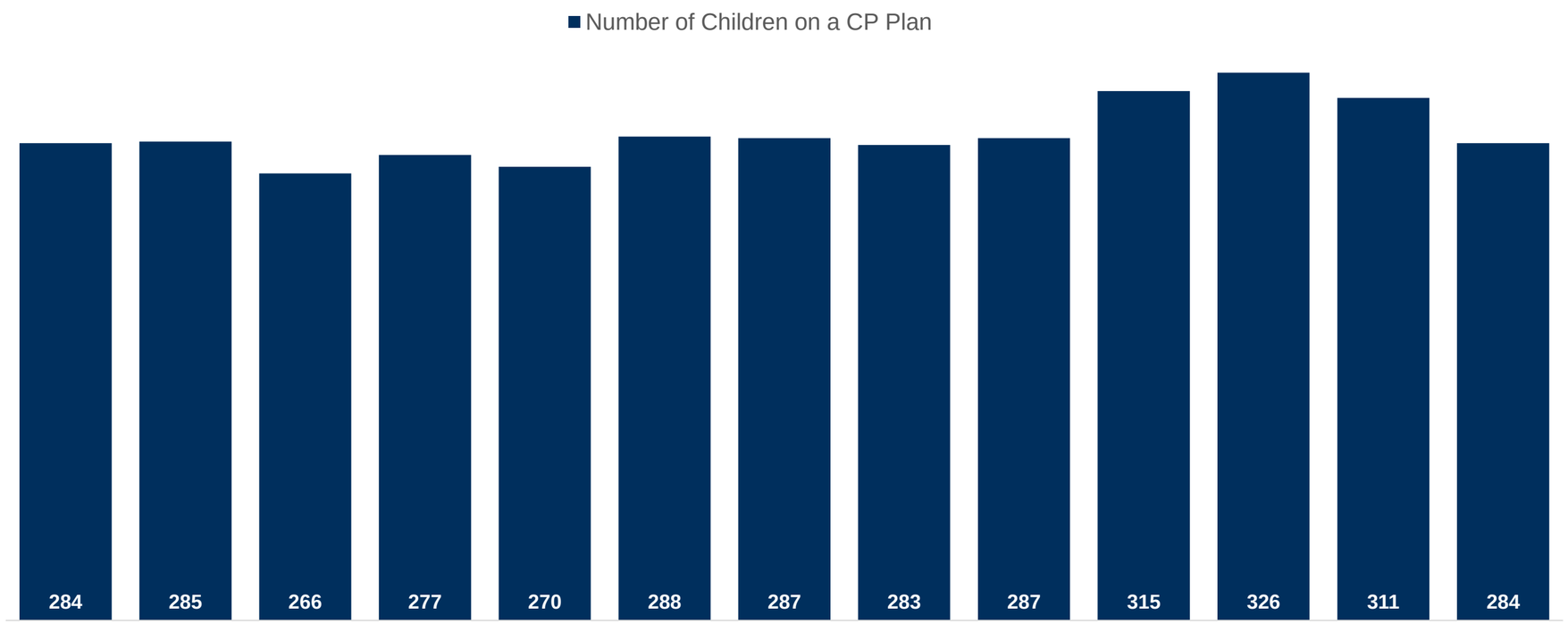
	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	42	-9
Stat Neighbours	56	-23
Region	39	-5
England	61	-28

Number of children on a Child Protection Plan

September 2023

Rate per 10,000	Target	Variance
20.8	38.0	-45.3%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	22.8	▲
Low is good		

At the end of September, there were 284 children on a Child Protection Plan. This equates to a rate per 10,000 of 20.8.



Monthly variance from target

Target Rate: 2022/23:21.1 2023/24:38

CSC Commentary

	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	30	-9
Stat Neighbours	38	-17
Region	26	-6
England	42	-21

Child Protection Episodes Started and Ended

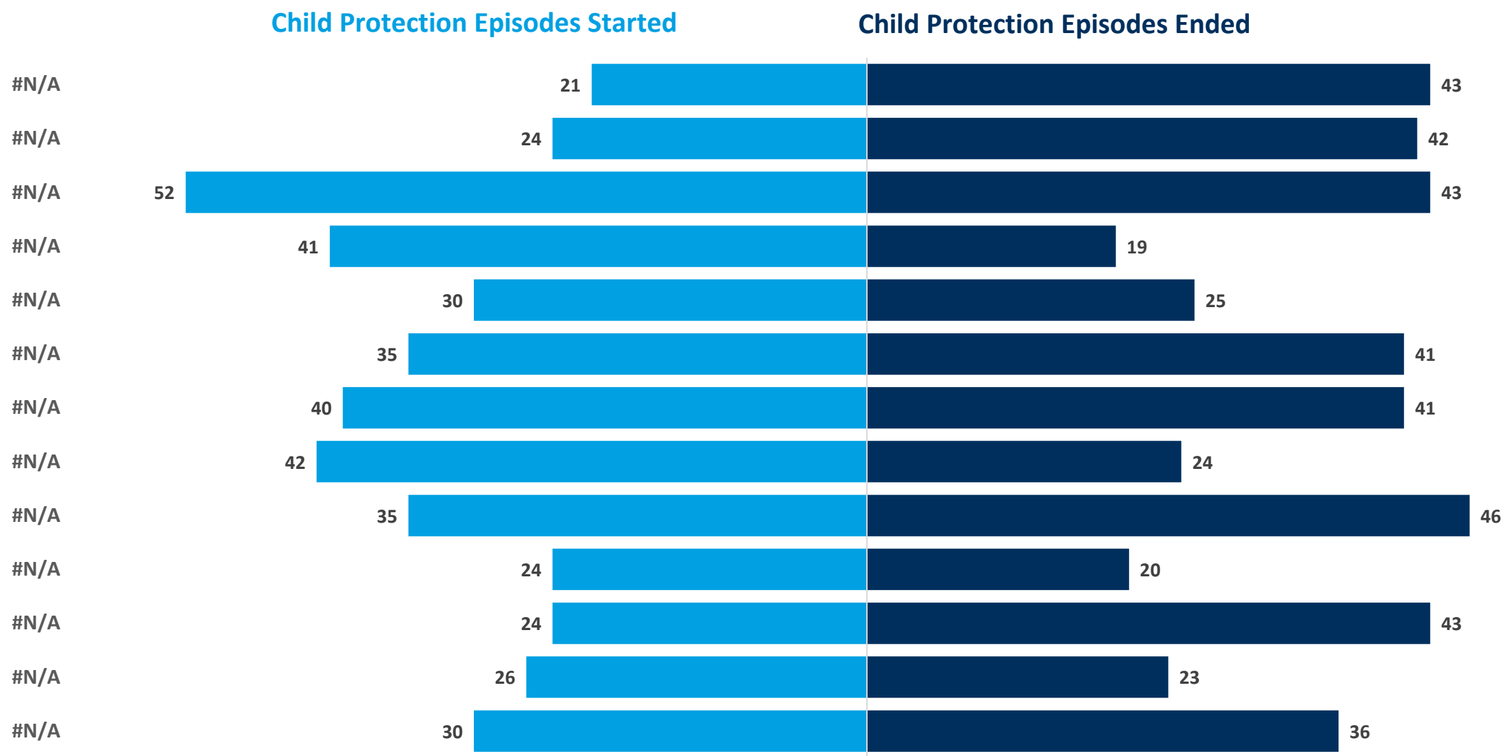
September 2023

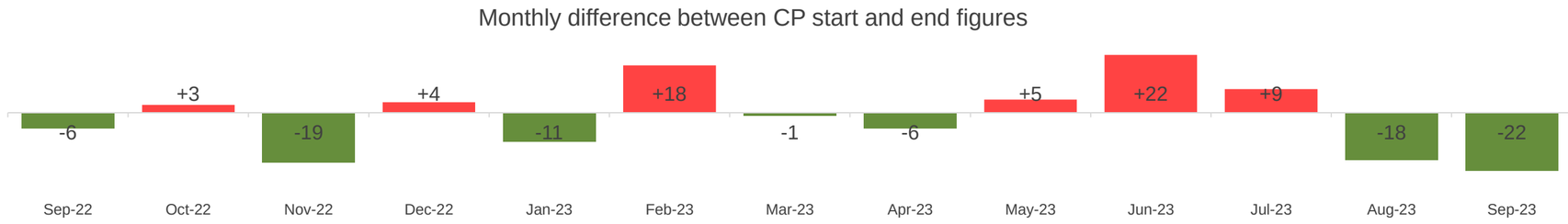
CP Starts per 10,000 12M Rolling	Target	Variance 12M Rolling
28.9	49	-41.1%
Low is good	Previous month 12M Rolling	Change in performance
	29.5	▲

CP Starts	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	38	-9
Stat Neighbours	49	-20
Region	34	-5
England	53	-24

CP Ends per 10,000 12M Rolling	Target	Variance 12M Rolling
30.1	45	-33.2%
High is good	Previous month 12M Rolling	Change in performance
	29.5	▲

CP Ends	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	40	-10
Stat Neighbours	47	-17
Region	34	-4
England	52	-22





CSC Commentary

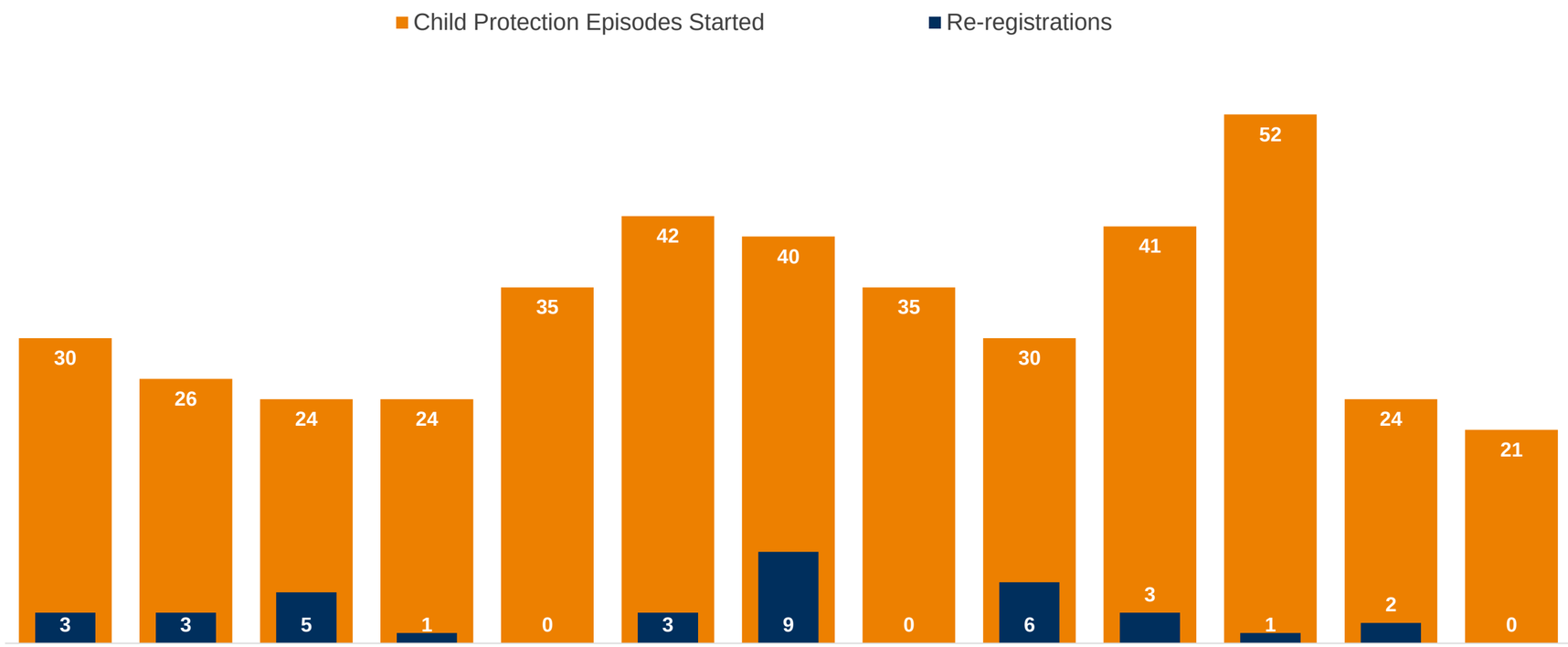
Child Protection Plan Re-Registrations

September 2023

Re-registrations (% YTD)	Target	Variance YTD
5.9%	10.0%	-4.1%
	Previous month YTD	Change in performance
	6.6%	▲
Low is good		

0 out of the 21 children with a Child Protection plan starting in September had a previous Child Protection plan ending within the last 2 years. This is 0.0%.

5.9% of Child Protection plans starting since the beginning of the financial year were re-registrations within 2 years.



Monthly variance from target

Target: 2022/2023: 6.5% 2023/24:10%

CSC Commentary

Lion01

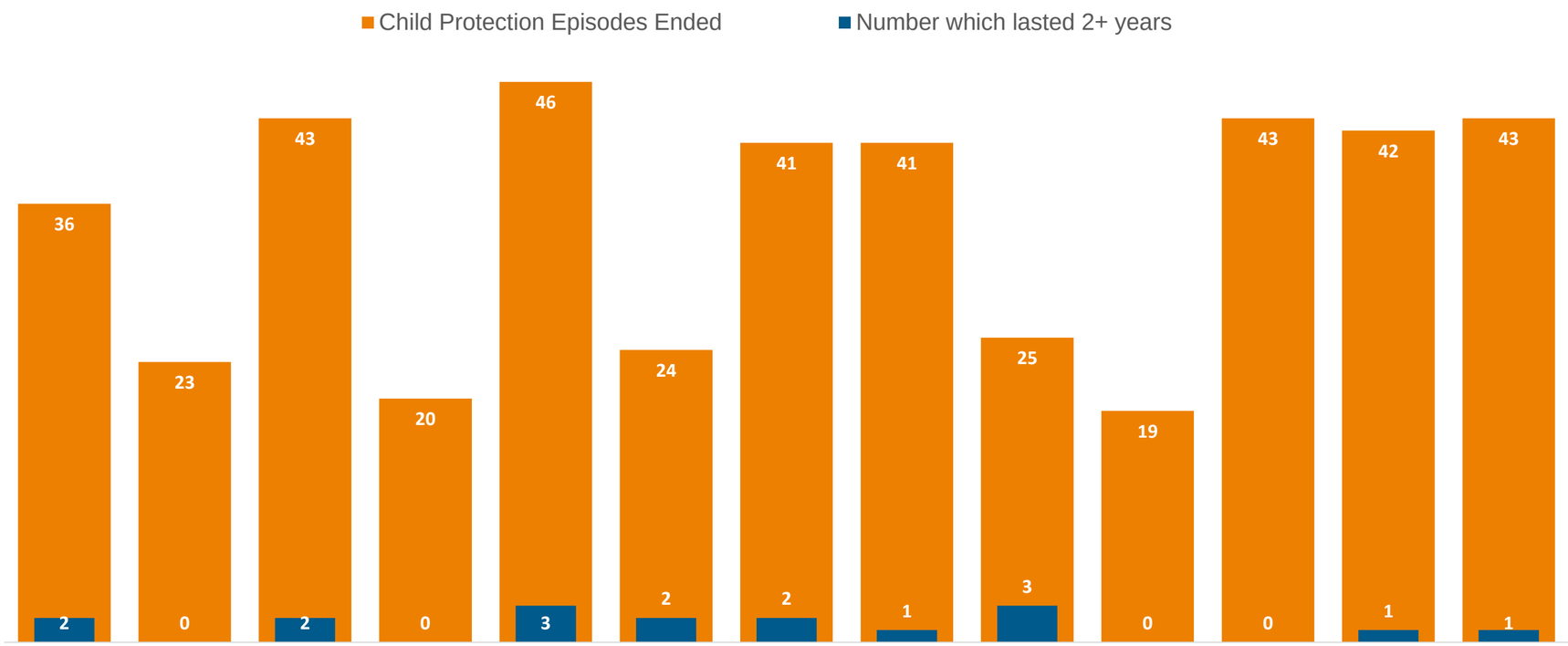
	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	23%	-16.9%
Stat Neighbours	25%	-18.7%
Region	19%	-13.5%
England	23%	-17.4%

Child Protection Plans lasting 2 Years or More

September 2023

CP end after 2+ years (% YTD)	Target	Variance % YTD
2.8%	2.0%	+0.8%
	Previous month % YTD	Change in performance
	2.9%	▲
Low is good		

1 out of the 43 children with a Child Protection plan ending in September were on a Child Protection plan for a period of 2 years or more. This is 2.3%.



2.8% of all Child Protection episodes which ended since the beginning of the financial year lasted for a period of 2 years.

Monthly variance from target

Target: 2021/2022: 3% 2022/2023: 1.5%

CSC Commentary

	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark	
Local Authority	-	-	-
Stat Neighbours	4%	-1.1%	
Region	3%	-0.4%	
England	4%	-0.9%	

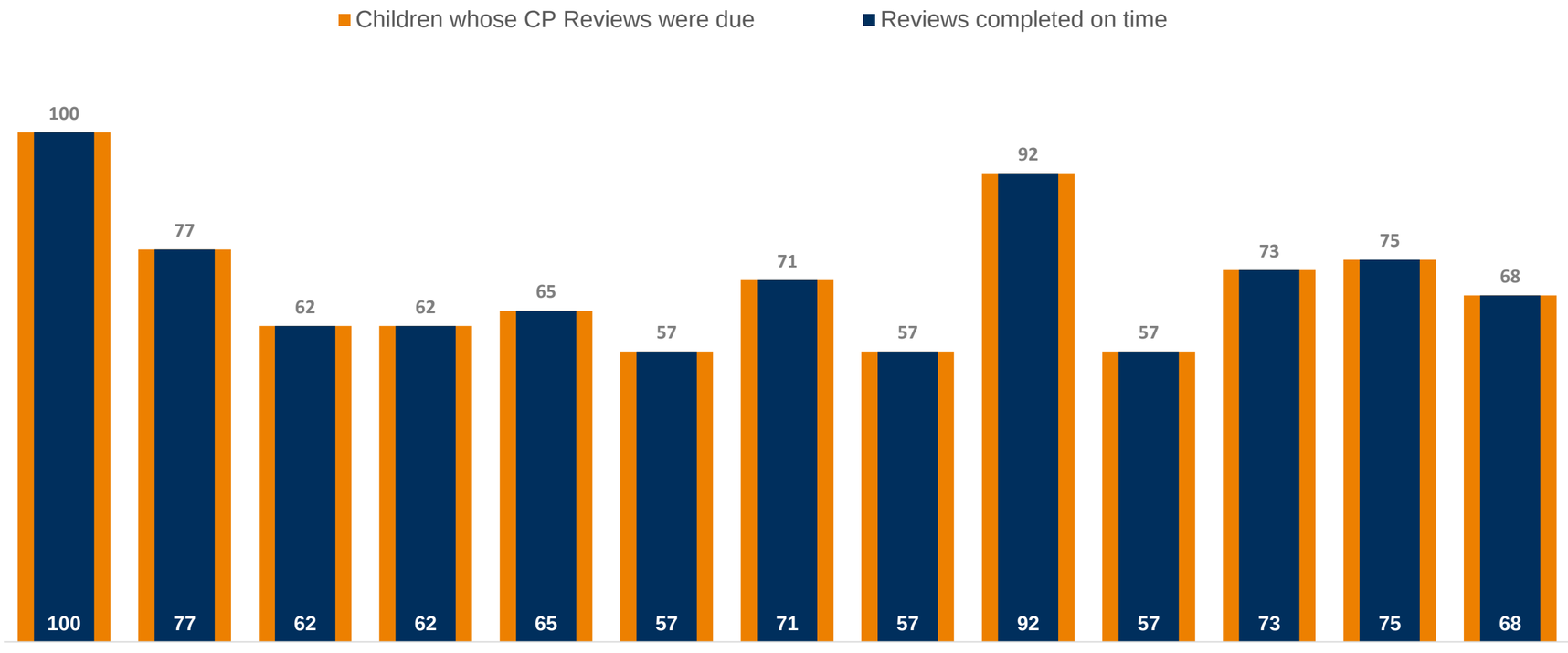
Child Protection Reviews within timescales

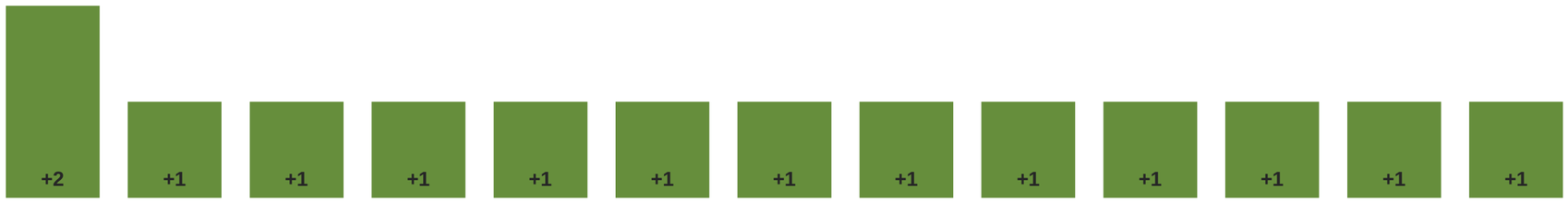
September 2023

CP Reviews on time (% YTD)	Target	Variance % YTD
100%	98%	+2.0%
High is good	Previous month % YTD	Change in performance
	100.0%	

For 68 out of the 68 children whose Child Protection Review was due in September, this review was held on time. 100.0% of reviews were completed in time.

Since the beginning of the financial year, the completed Child Protection Reviews of 100.0% of all children were held on time.





Monthly variance from target

CSC Commentary

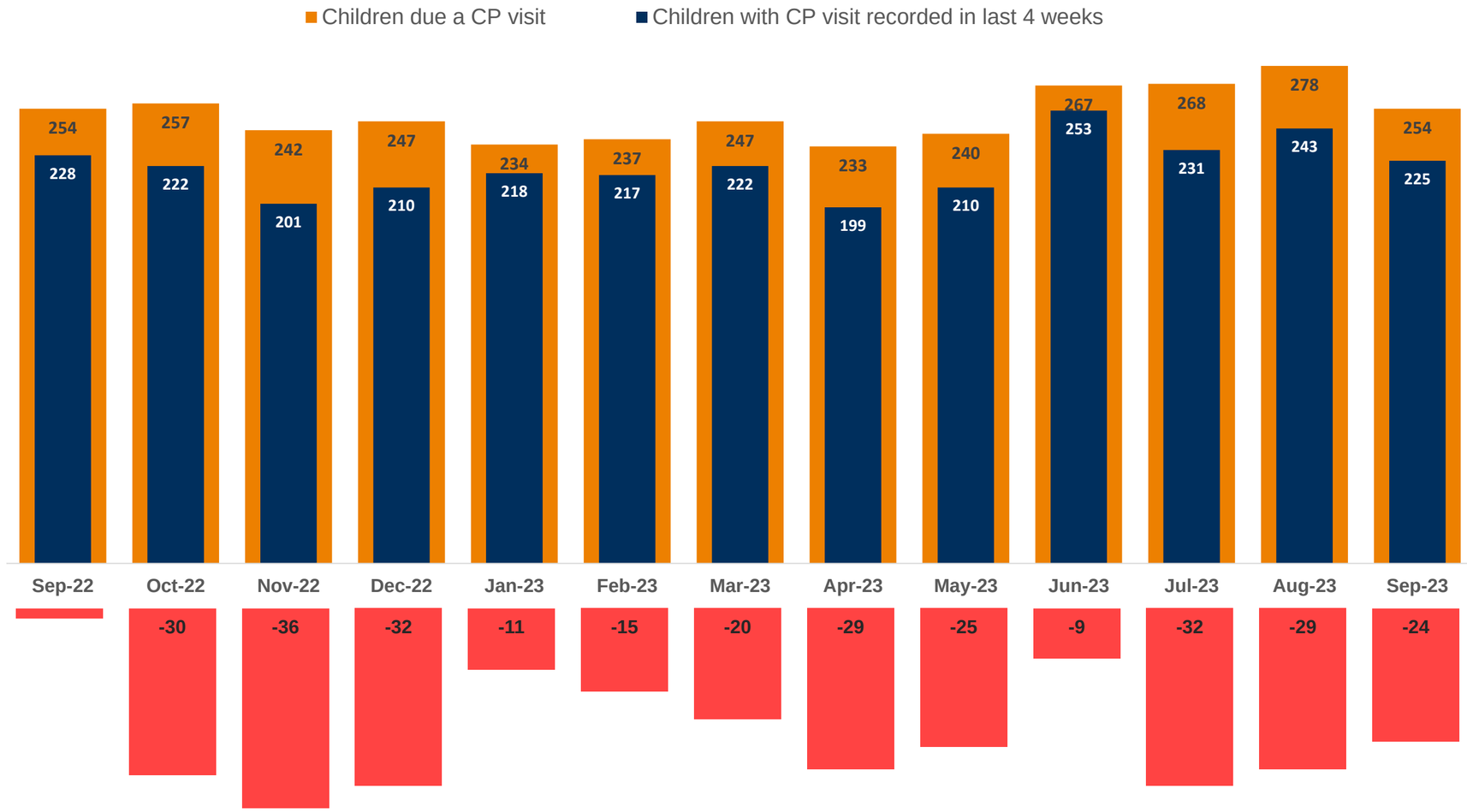
	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	99%	+1.5%
Stat Neighbours	87%	+12.5%
Region	95%	+5.1%
England	98%	+2.0%

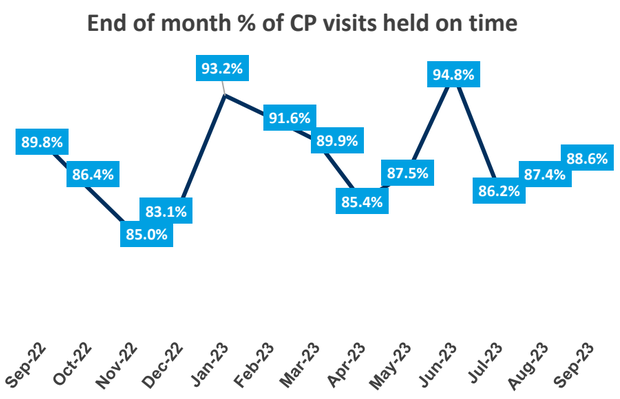
Statutory Child Protection visits held on time

September 2023

% CP visits held on time	Target	Variance
88.6%	98%	-9.4%
	Previous month	Change in performance
High is good	87.4%	▲

A Child Protection Statutory Visit was recorded for 225 children out of the 254 who were due such a visit during the last 4 weeks of September. This is 88.6%.





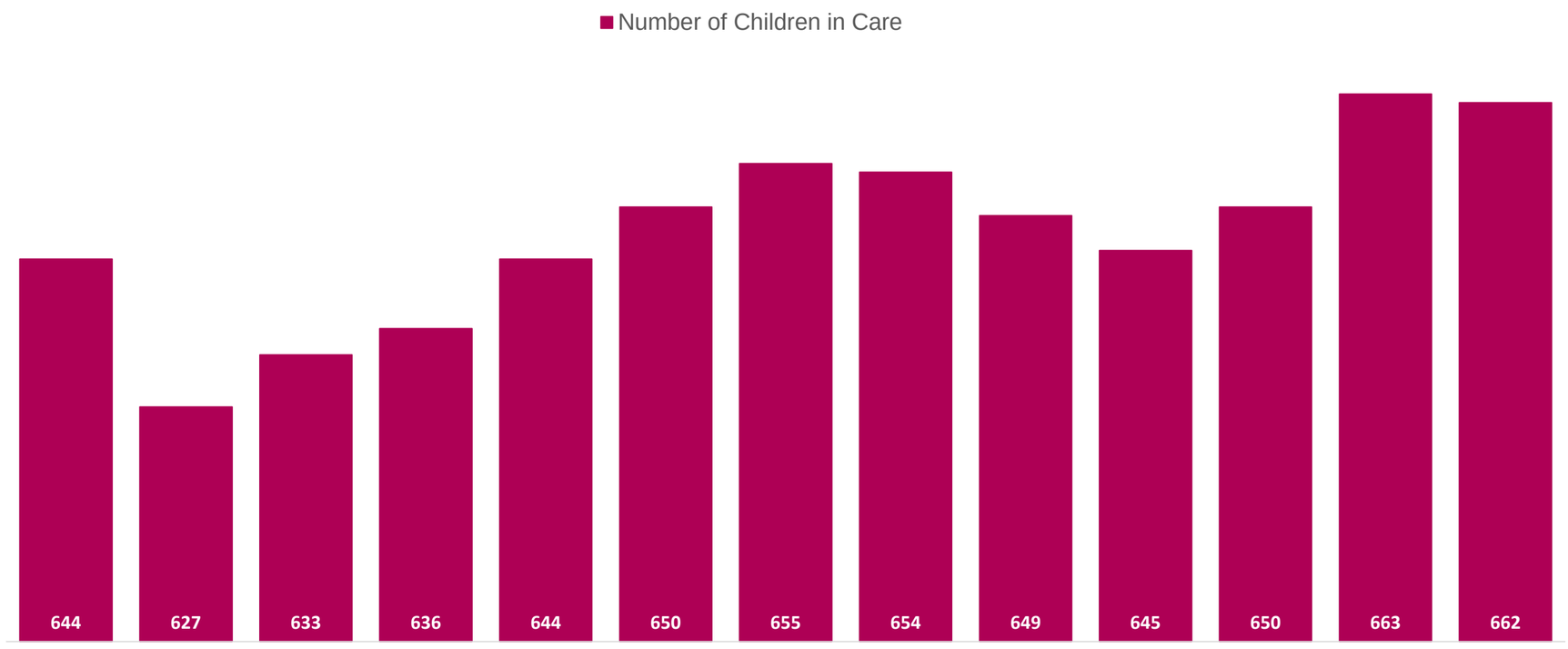
CSC Commentary

Number of Children in Care

September 2023

Rate per 10,000	Target	Variance
48.5	50	-3.0%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	48.6	▲
Low is good		

At the end of September, there were 662 Children in Care. This equates to a rate per 10,000 of 48.5.



Monthly variance from target

Target Rate : 2022/2023: 40 2023/24: 50

CSC Commentary

	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	45	+4
Stat Neighbours	56	-7
Region	50	-1
England	70	-21

Children in care starters and leavers

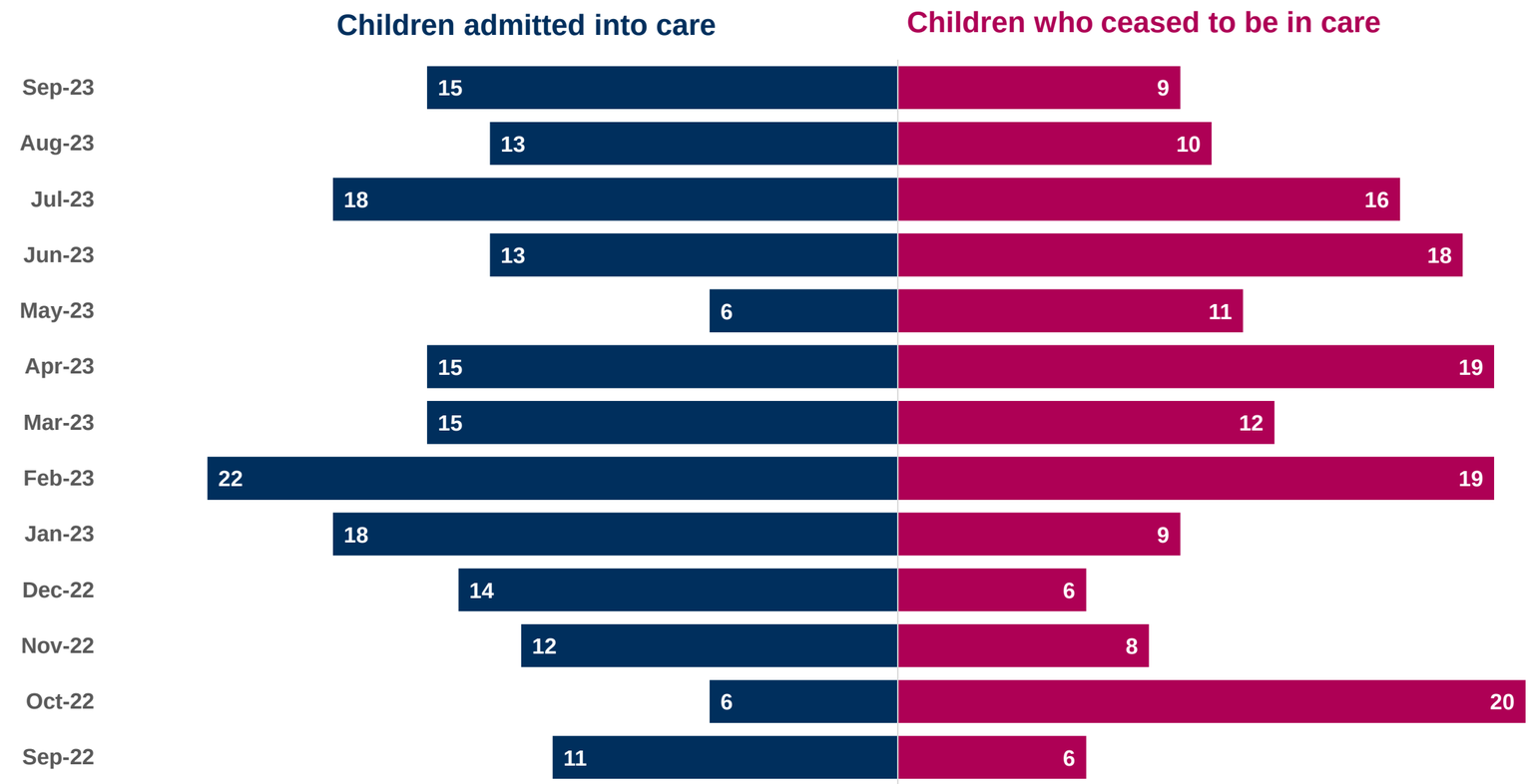
September 2023

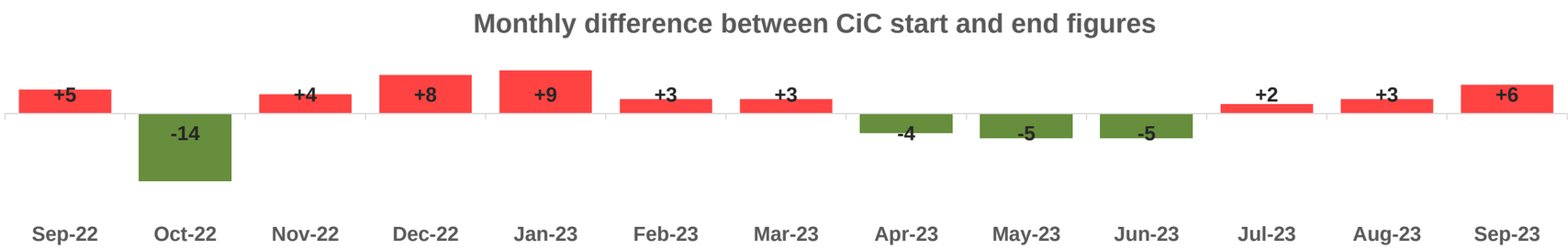
CiC Starts per 10,000 12M Rolling	Target	Variance 12M Rolling
12.2	15	-18.7%
Low is good	Previous month 12M Rolling	Change in performance
	11.9	▼

CiC Starts	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	15	-3
Stat Neighbours	22	-9
Region	18	-6
England	26	-14

CiC Ends per 10,000 12M Rolling	Target	Variance 12M Rolling
11.5	16	-23.3%
High is good	Previous month 12M Rolling	Change in performance
	11.3	▲

CiC Ends	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	18	-7
Stat Neighbours	20	-8
Region	18	-7
England	26	-15





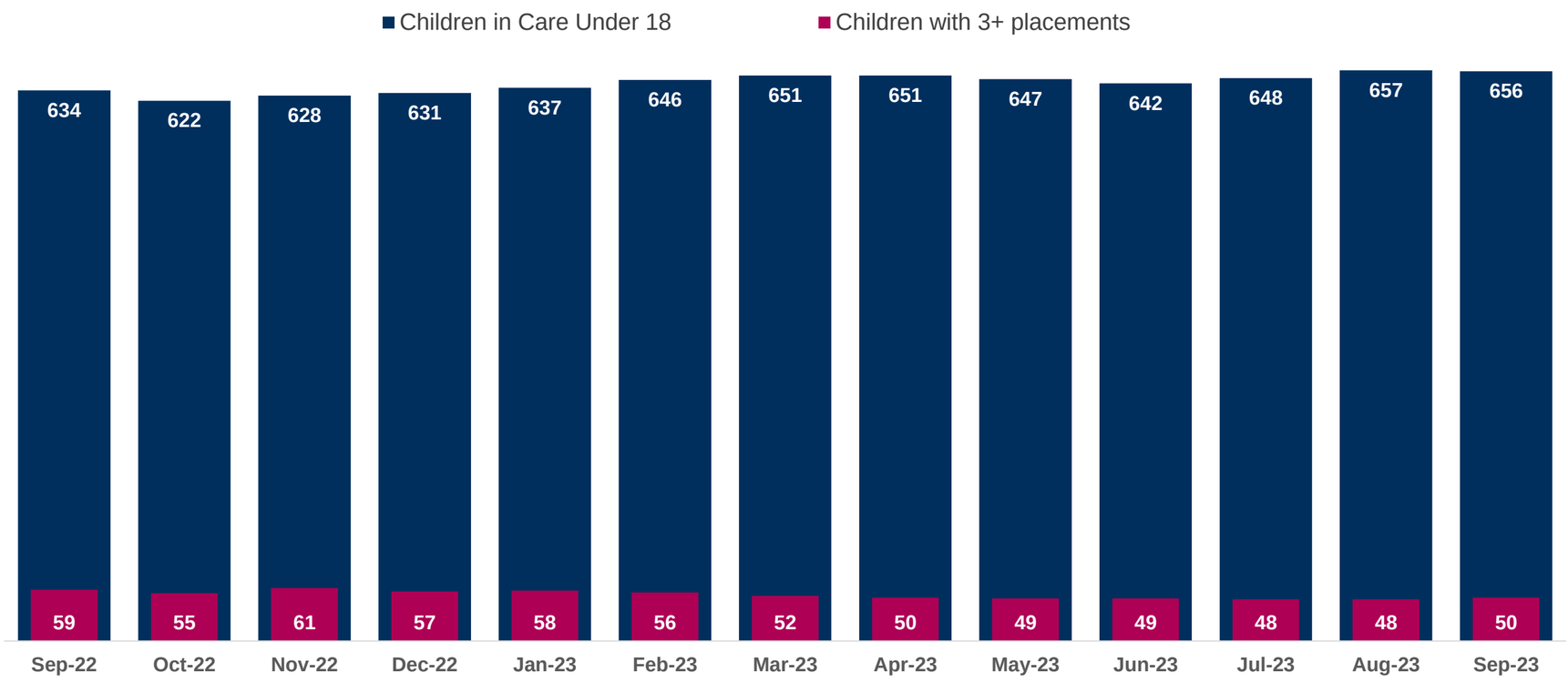
CSC Commentary

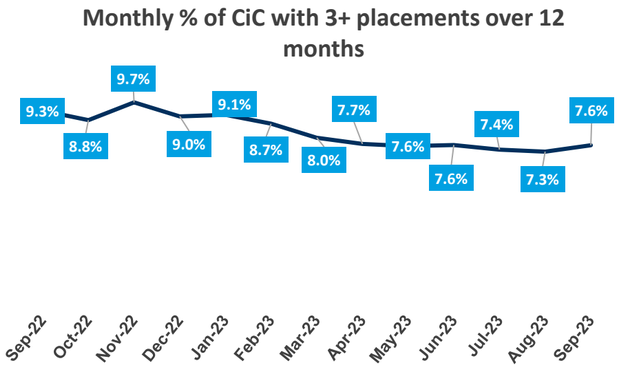
Placement Stability: Children in Care with 3 or more placements in 12 months

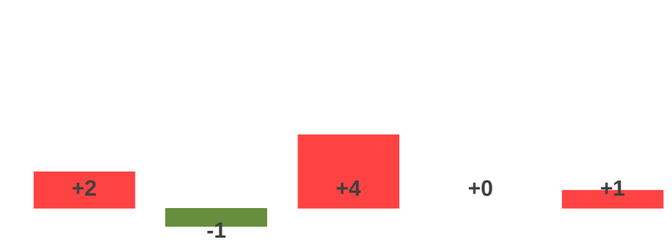
September 2023

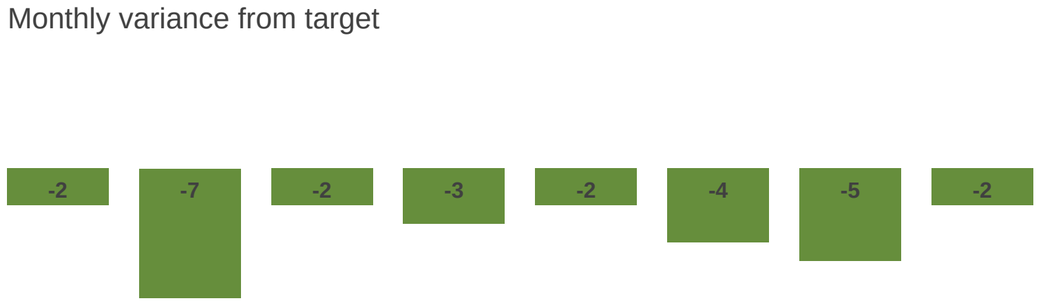
% CiC with 3+ Placements	Target	Variance
7.6%	8%	-0.4%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	7.3%	▼
Low is good		

50 out of the 656 under 18 children in care at the end of September had 3 or more different placements in the last 12 months. This is 7.6%.









	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	12%	-4.4%
Stat Neighbours	11%	-3.0%
Region	10%	-2.4%
England	10%	-2.4%

CSC Commentary

Lion01

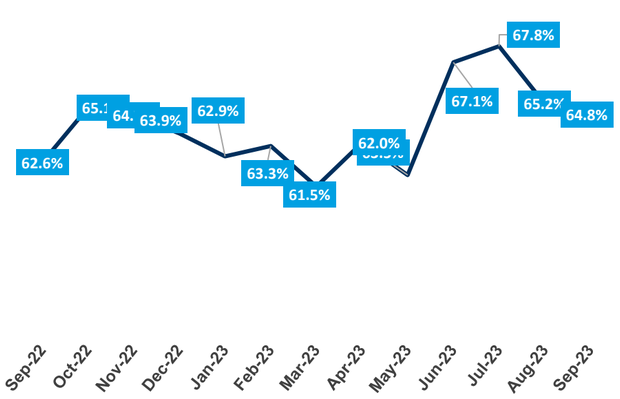
Placement Stability: long-term children in care with stable placements over 2 years

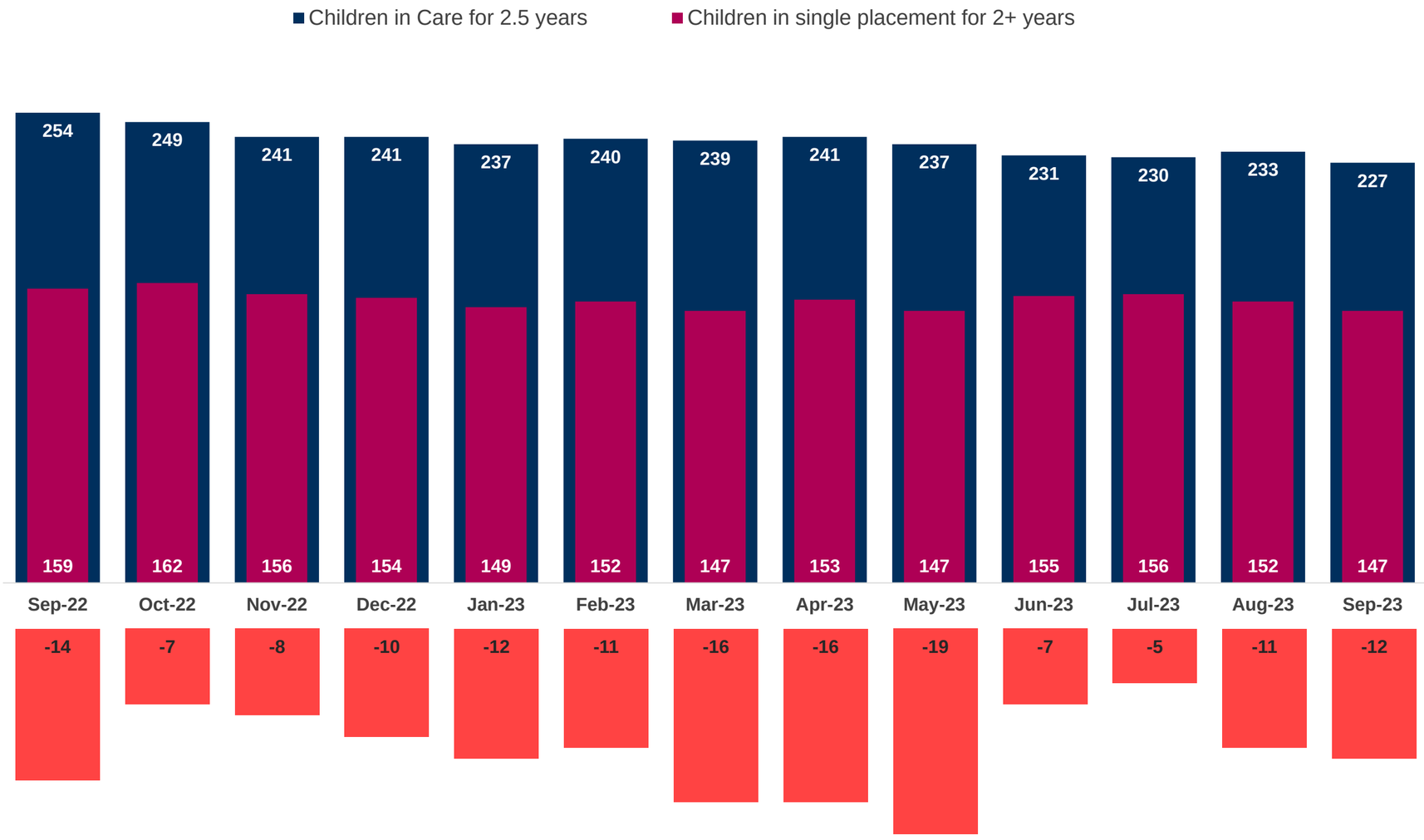
September 2023

% with stable 2+ year placement	Target	Variance
64.8%	70.0%	-5.2%
High is good	Previous month	Change in performance
	65.2%	▼

147 out of the 227 children who were in care for 2.5 years or more and were aged under 16 at the end of September have maintained their current placement for 2 years or more. This is 64.8%.

Monthly % of CiC for 2.5+ years who have been in current placement for 2+ years





Monthly variance from target

Target: 2022/2023: 68% 2023/24:70%

CSC Commentary

	2020-21	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	70%	-5.2%
Stat Neighbours	69%	-4.0%
Region	70%	-5.2%
England	71%	-6.2%

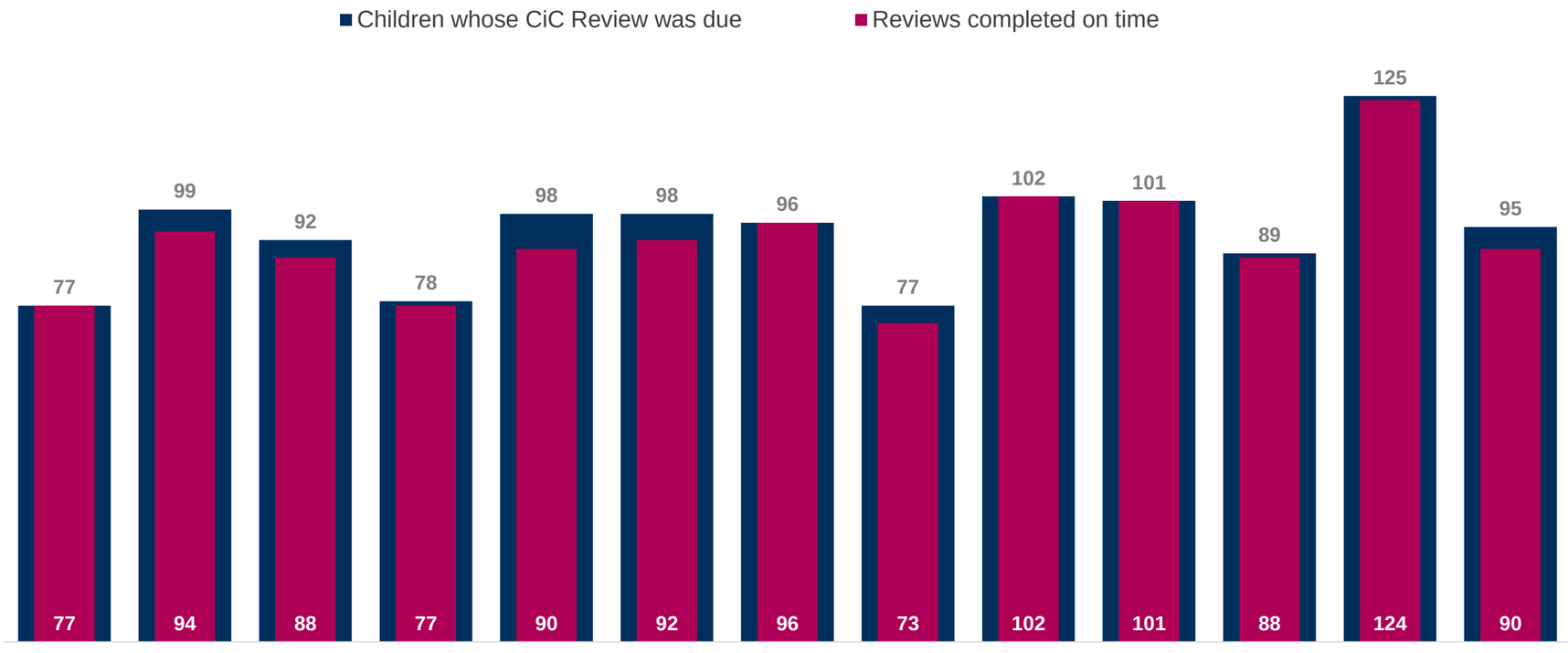
Child in Care Reviews within timescales

September 2023

CiC Reviews on time (% YTD)	Target	Variance YTD
98.1%	98%	+0.1%
High is good	Previous month YTD	Change in performance
	98.8%	▼

For 90 out of the 95 children whose Child in Care Review was due in September, the review was held on time. 94.7% of reviews were completed on time.

Since the beginning of the financial year, the completed Child in Care Reviews of 98.1% of all children were held on time.



Monthly variance from target

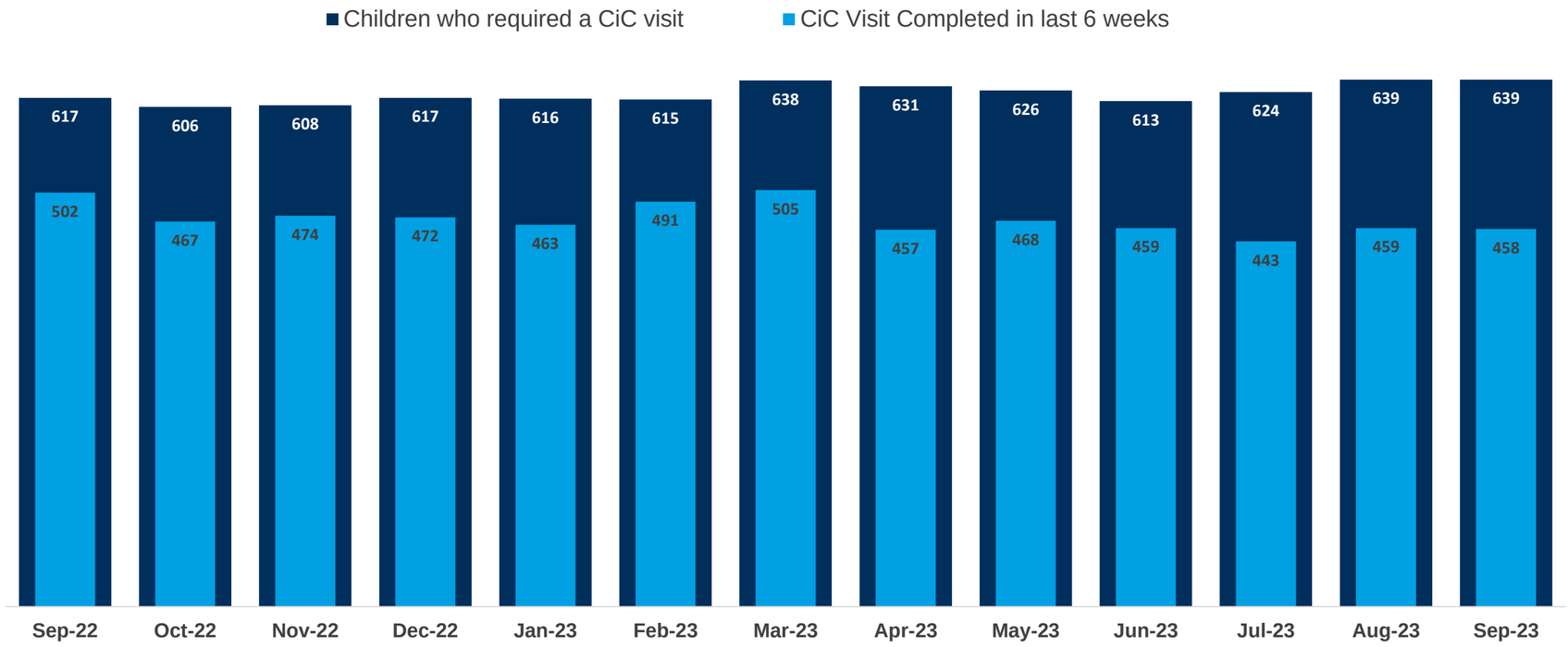
CSC Commentary

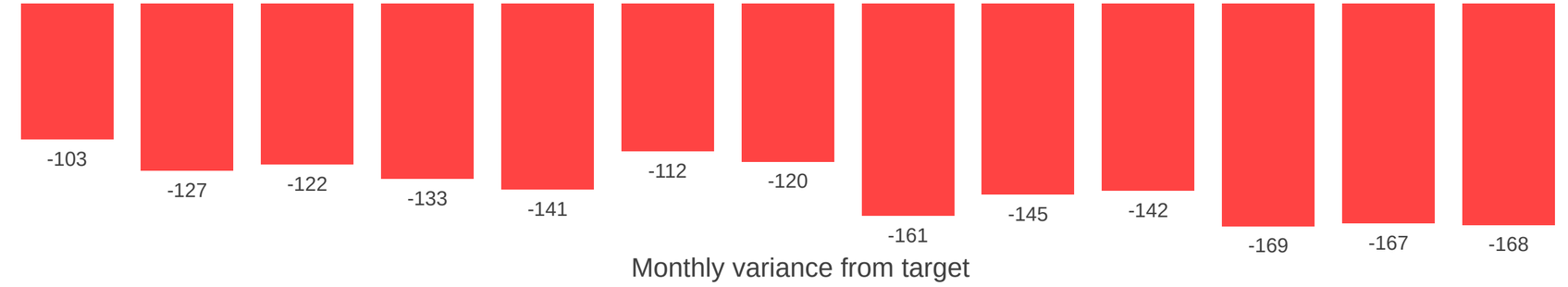
Statutory Child in Care visits carried out on time

September 2023

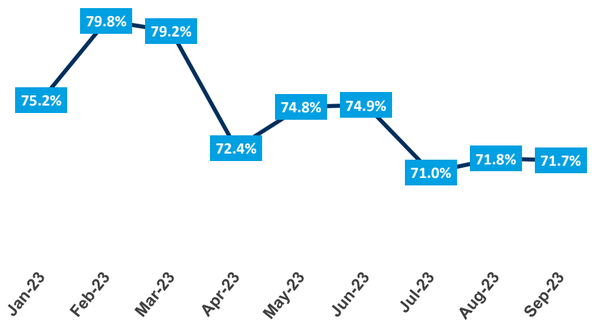
% CiC visits on time	Target	Variance
71.7%	98%	-26.3%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	71.8%	▼
High is good		

A Child in Care Statutory Visit was recorded for 458 children out of the 639 who were due such a visit during the 6 weeks or 3 months (depending on their set visit schedule) leading up to the end of September. This is a ratio of 71.7%.





End of month % of CiC visits held on time



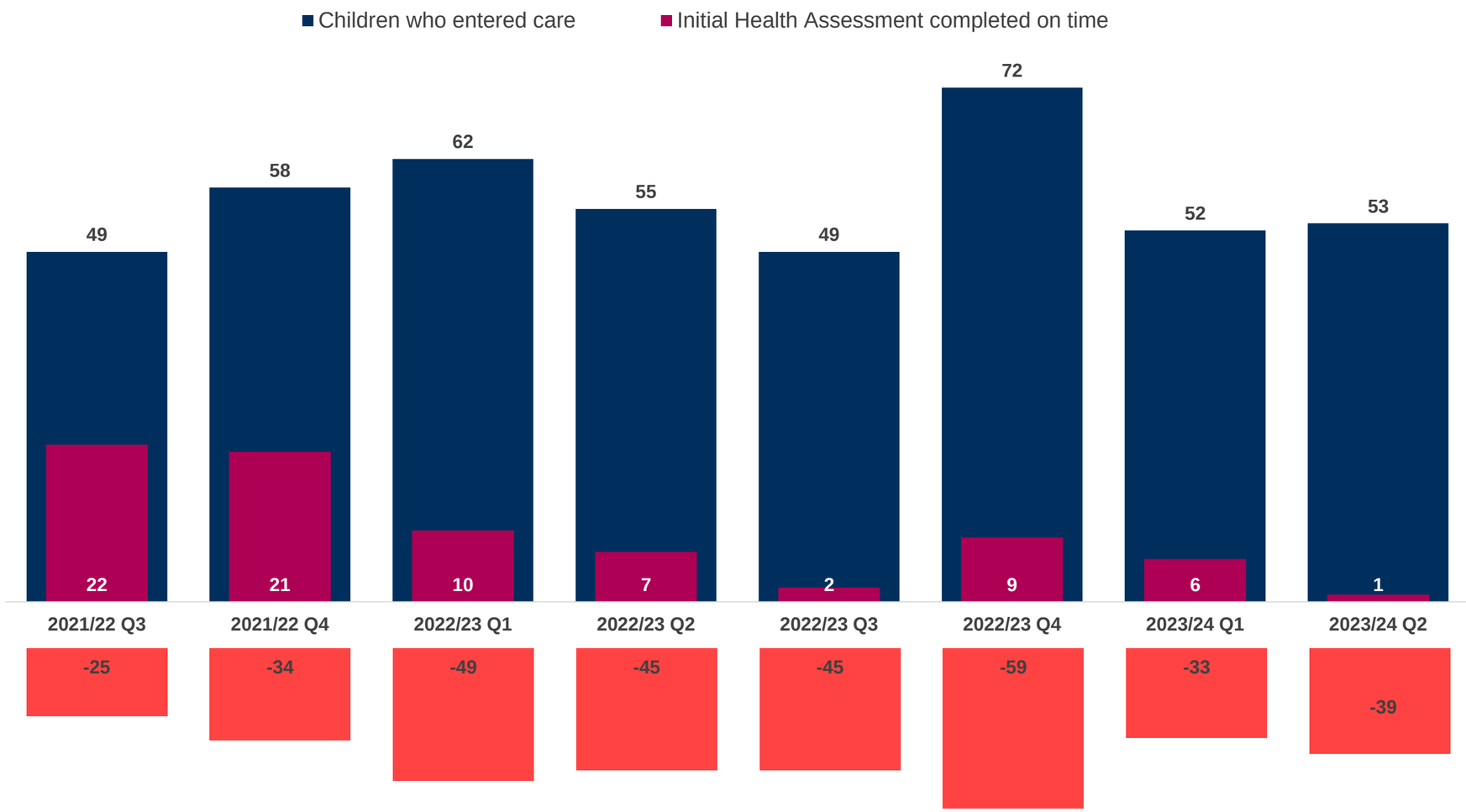
CSC Commentary

Initial Health Assessments Completed on time

September 2023

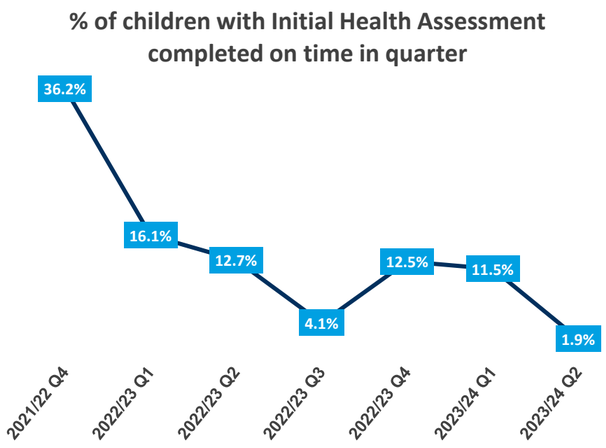
Assessments on time (% YTD)	Target	Variance YTD
1.9%	75%	-73.1%
High is good	Previous quarter (YTD)	Change in performance
	11.5%	▼

Since the beginning of the financial year, an Initial Health Assessment was completed on time for 1.9% of all children entering care who were looked after for more than 4 weeks.



Monthly variance from target

Target: 2022/2023: 95% 2023/24:75%



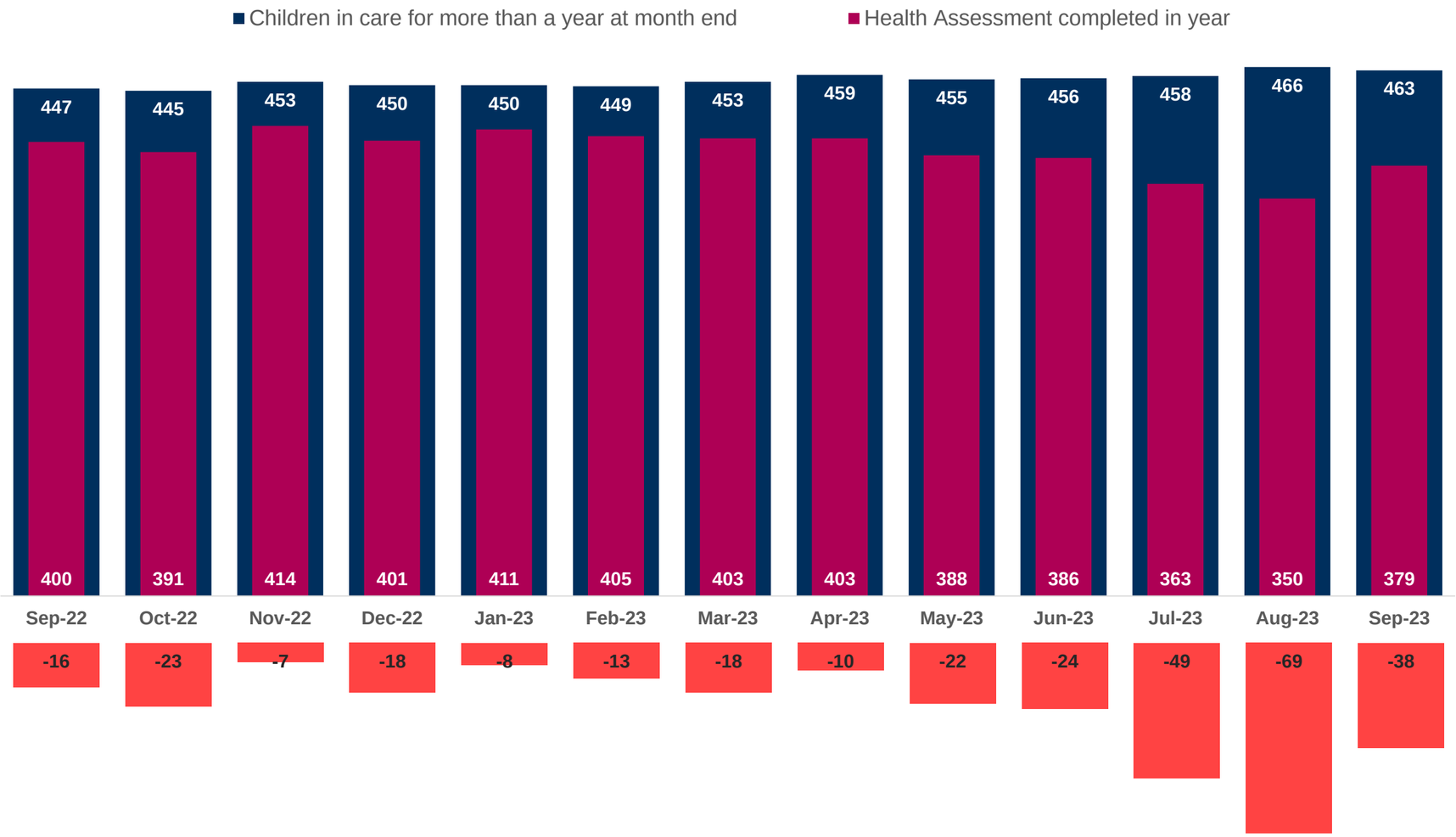
CSC Commentary

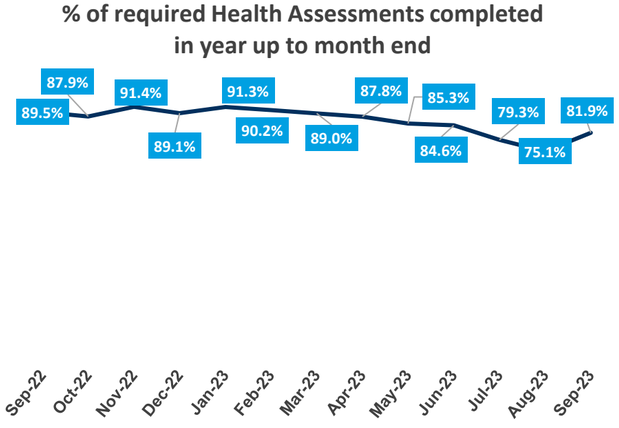
Annual Health Assessments carried out on time

September 2023

Assessments on time (%)	Target	Variance
81.9%	90%	-8.1%
	Previous month	**Change in performance**
	75.1%	▲
High is good		

379 out of the 463 children who had been in care for more than 12 months at the end of September had their latest Health Assessment completed in the last year. This is 81.9% .





Target 2022/2023: 93% 2023/24:90%

CSC Commentary

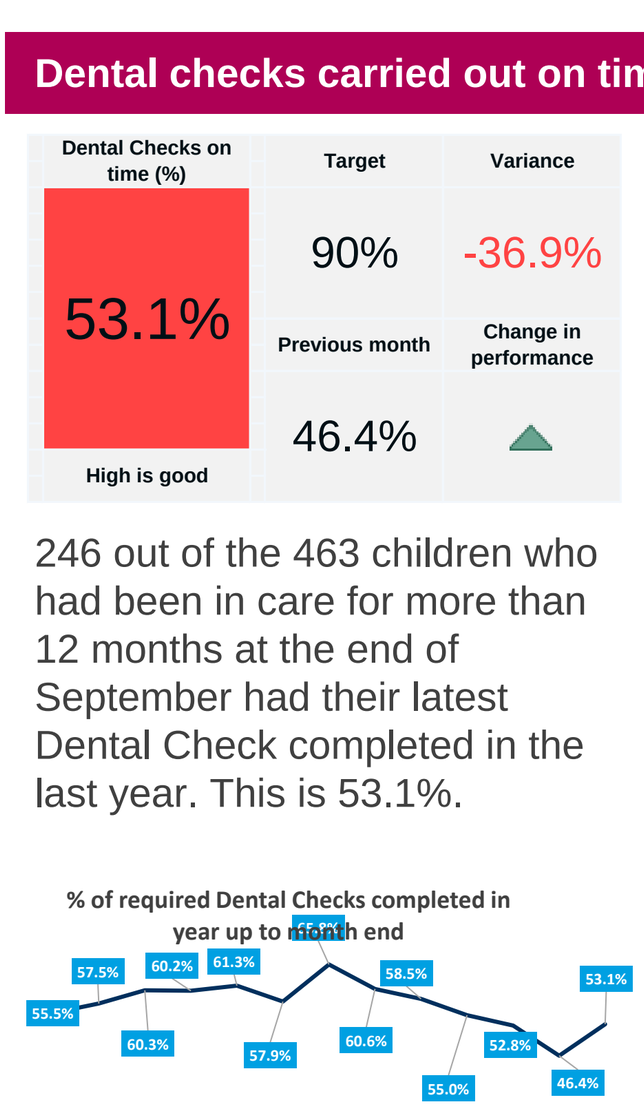
	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	90%	-8.1%
Stat Neighbours	85%	-2.7%
Region	88%	-6.1%
England	89%	-7.1%

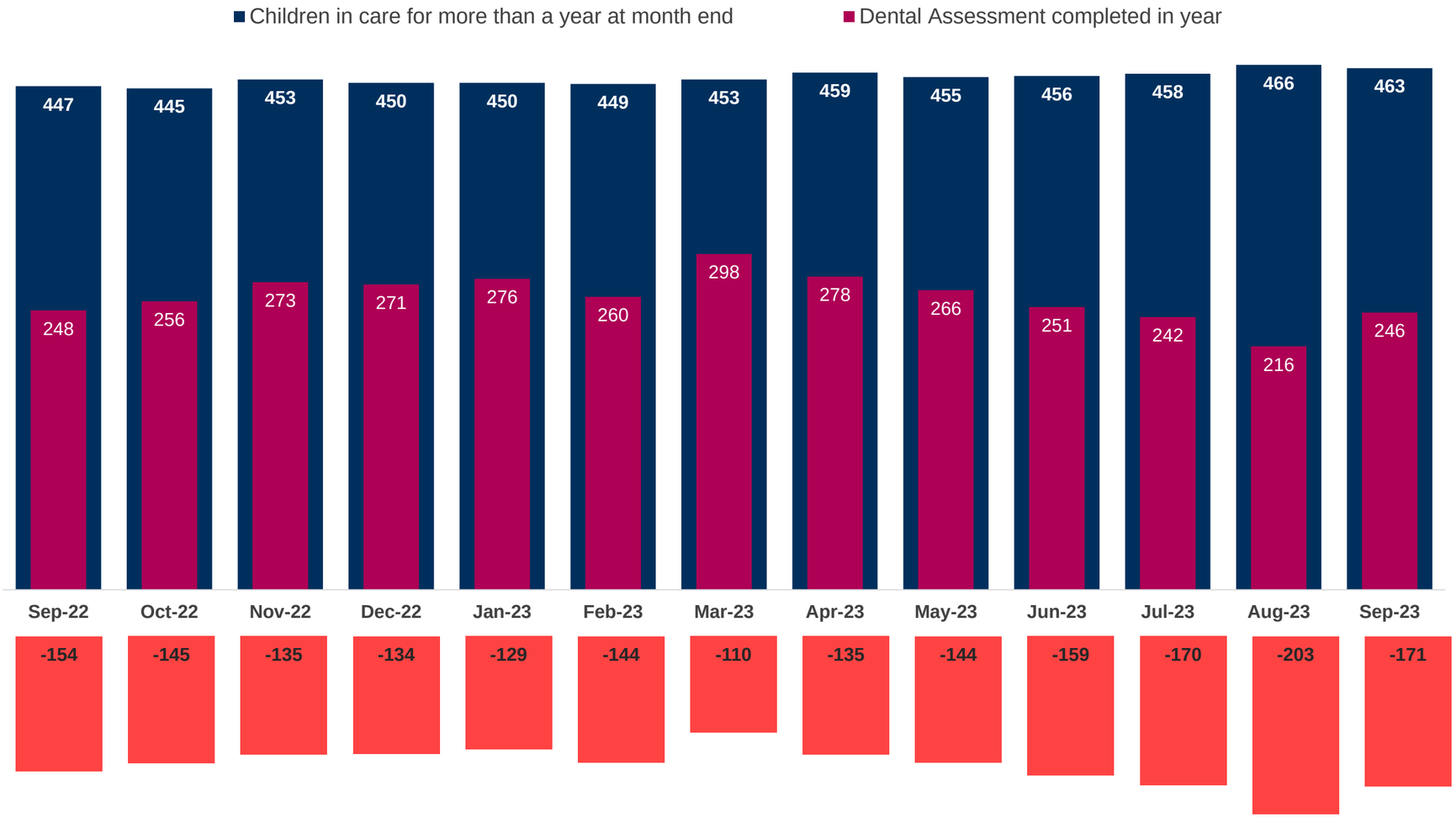
Dental checks carried out on time

September 2023

Dental Checks on time (%)	Target	Variance
53.1%	90%	-36.9%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	46.4%	▲
High is good		

246 out of the 463 children who had been in care for more than 12 months at the end of September had their latest Dental Check completed in the last year. This is 53.1%.





Monthly variance from target

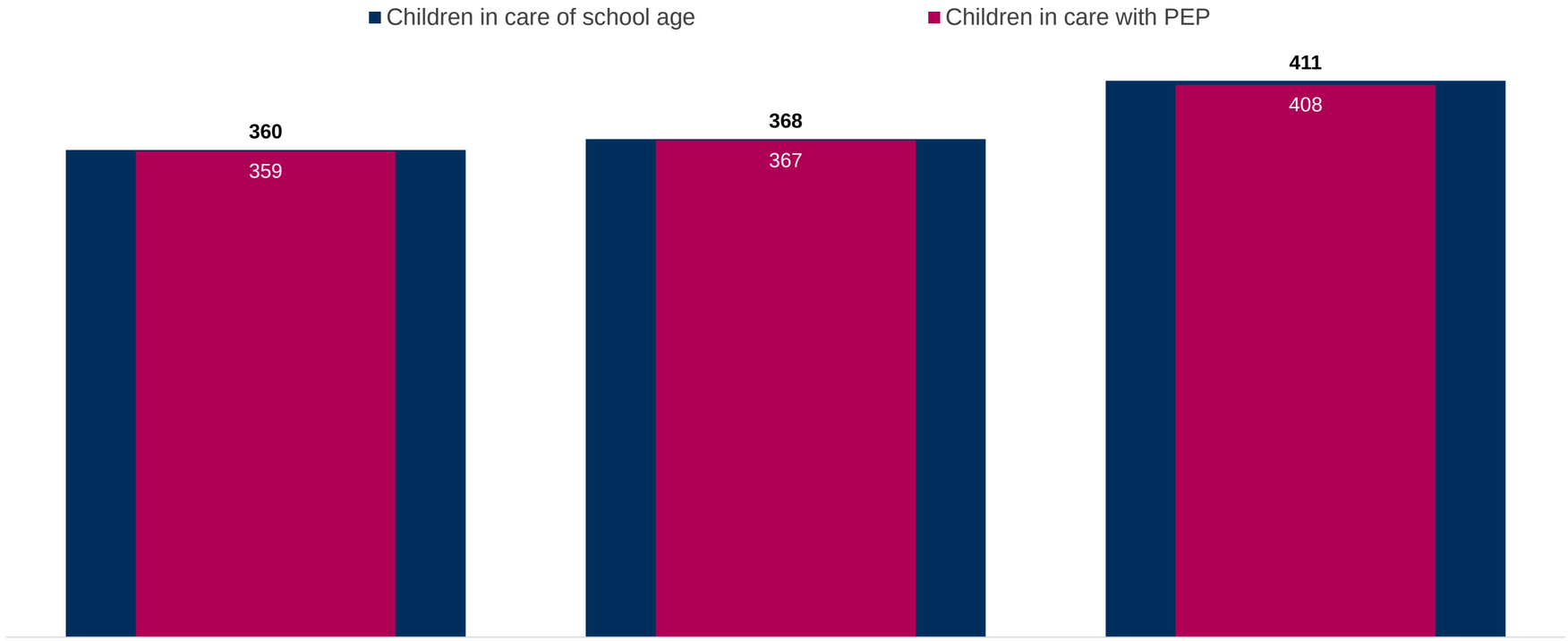
CSC Commentary

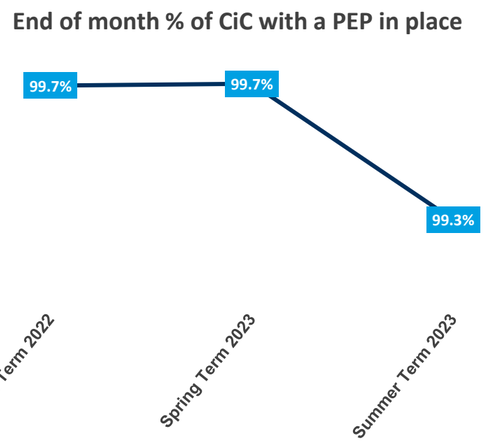
	2021-22	Current rate vs benchmark
Local Authority	56%	-2.9%
Stat Neighbours	68%	-15.0%
Region	74%	-20.9%
England	70%	-16.9%

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

PEPs in place (%)	Target	Variance
99.3%	100%	-0.7%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	100%	▼
High is good		

A Personal Education Plan was in place for 408 out of the 411 children of school age who had been in care for at least a month by the end of the Summer Term 2023. This is 99.3%.





CSC Commentary

Children missing from home and missing from care

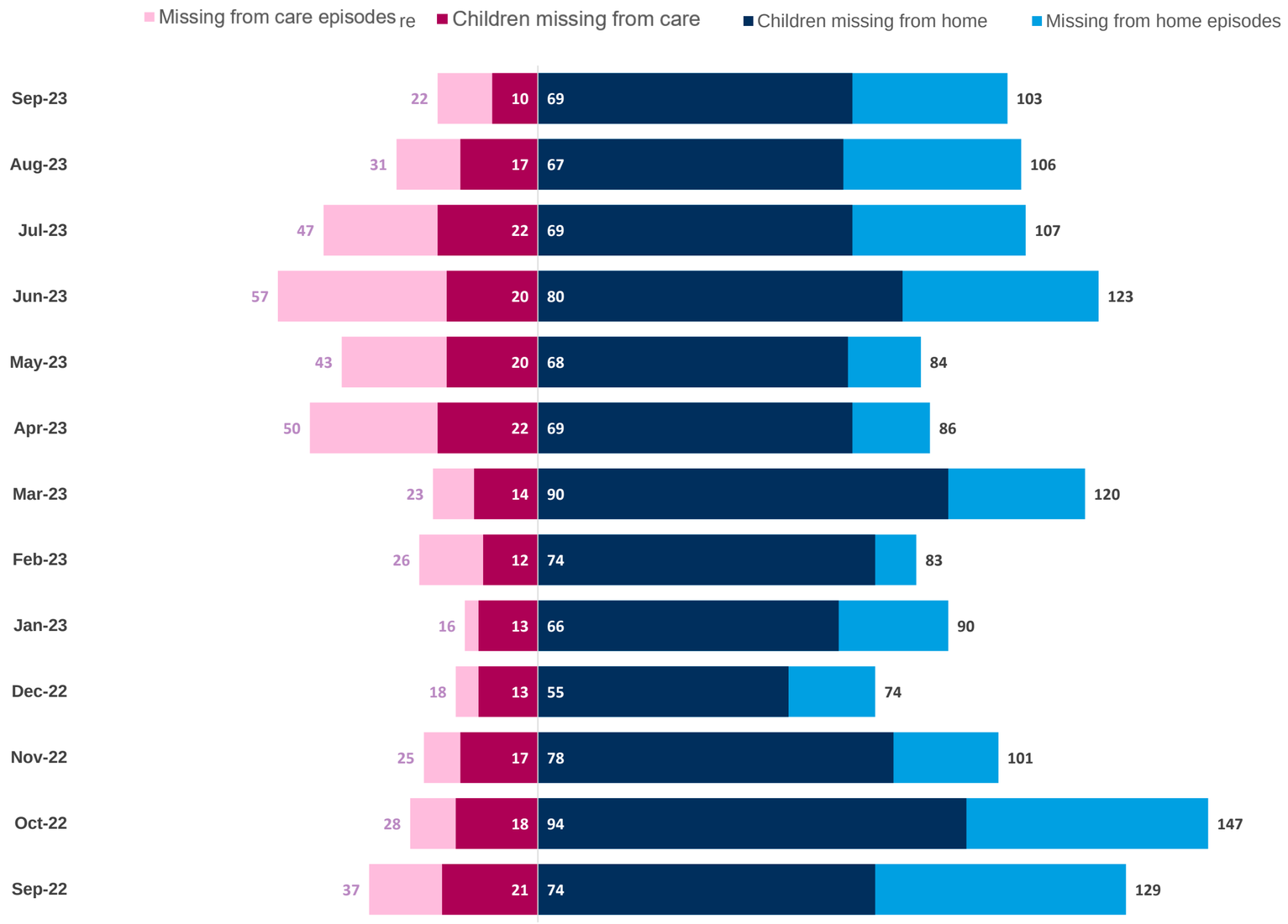
September 2023

Missing from care episodes	Target	Variance
22	25	-
	Previous month	Change in performance
	31	▲
Low is good		

During the month of September, there were 22 missing from care episodes involving 10 individuals.

Missing from home episodes	Target	Variance
103		
	Previous month	Change in performance
	106	▲
Low is good		

During the month of September, there were 103 missing from home episodes involving 69 individuals.



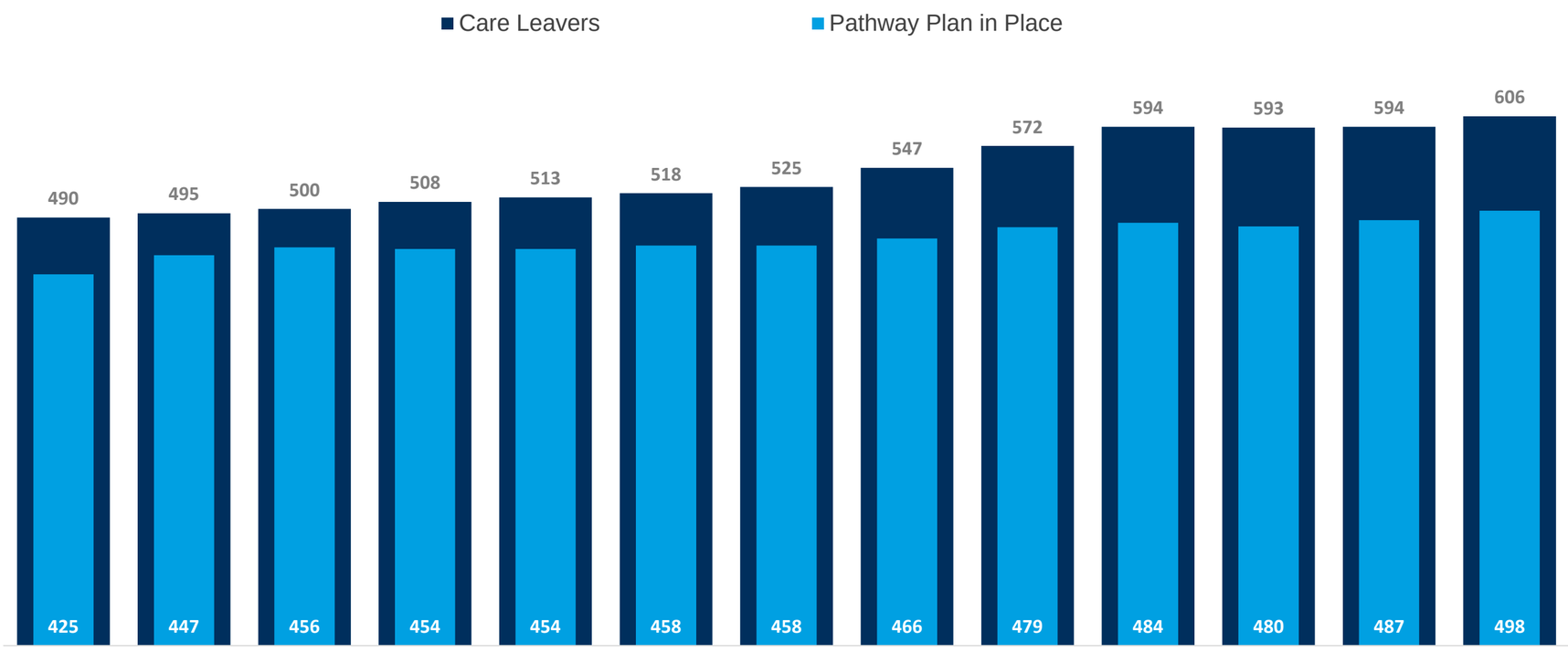
CSC Commentary

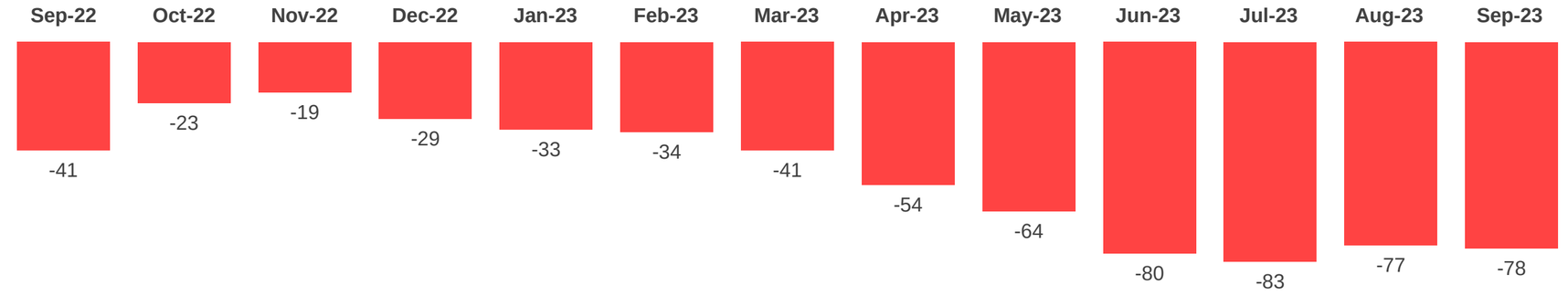
Pathway Plans for 'eligible', 'relevant' and 'former relevant' Care Leavers

September 2023

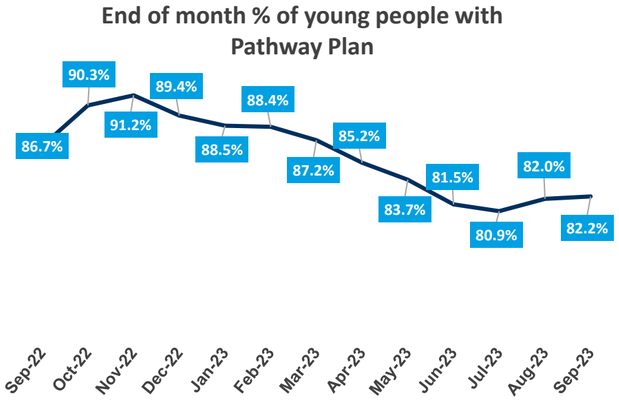
Pathway Plans in place (%)	Target	Variance
82.2%	95%	-12.8%
	Previous month	Change in performance
	82.0%	▲
High is good		

Out of the 606 'eligible', 'relevant' or 'former relevant' young people who were at least 16 year and 3 months old and had an open referral at the end of September, 498 had a Pathway Plan in place. This is 82.2%.





Monthly variance from target



CSC Commentary

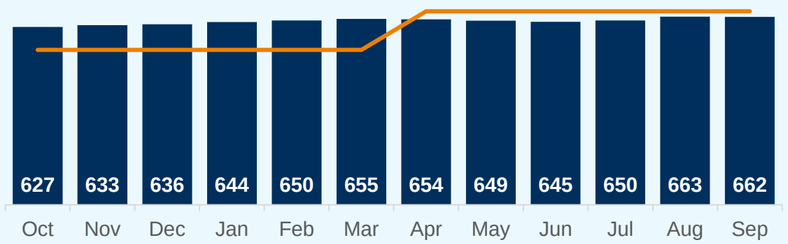
Corporate Parenting Scorecard — September 2023

HEADLINE FIGURES

Number of children in care (CiC) on the last day of the month

662

Target: below 546

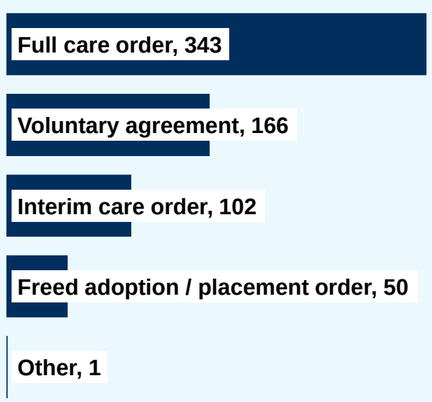


Staffing

	Staff	Average Caseload	Change*	Performance
Children in Care Qualified social workers	#N/A	#N/A		-
Leaving Care Personal Advisors	#N/A	#N/A		-
Independent Reviewing Officers	#N/A	#N/A		-

*Change in average caseload is from December 2021 to March 2022

Legal status of children in care



Length of time children have been in care

Key

Change since previous month	Improved	Stayed the same	Deteriorated
Performance against target	Strong	Acceptable	Poor

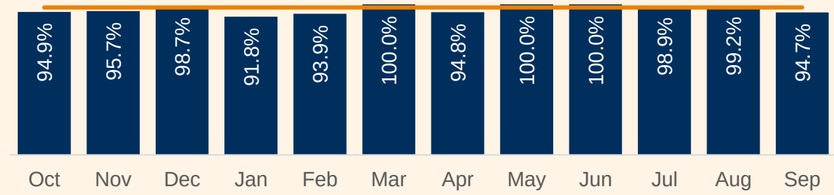
SERVICE STANDARDS

% of CiC reviews which were held on time (year to date, and during each month)

98%

578 out of 589

Target: above 98%

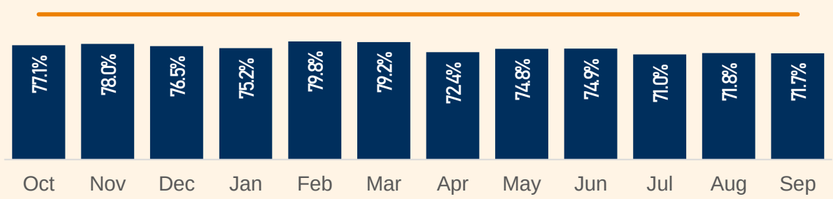


% of CiC statutory visits which were carried out on time (year to date, and during each month)

71.7%

458 out of 639

Target: above 98%



HOMES

Home Stability

3+ Homes

7.6%

50 out of 656

Target: below 9%

7.6% of children in Cambridgeshire's care had 3 or more different homes in the last 12 months.
Out of those children who have been in care for over 2.5 years, 64.8% have been in their current home for two or more years.

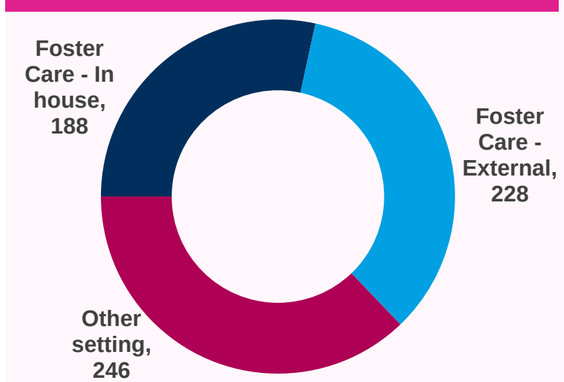
In home 2+ yrs

64.8%

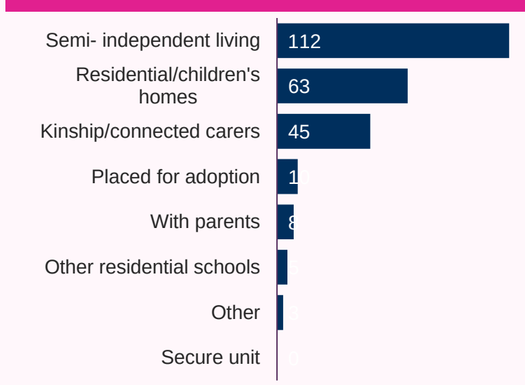
147 out of 227

Target: above 68%

Type of home of children in care



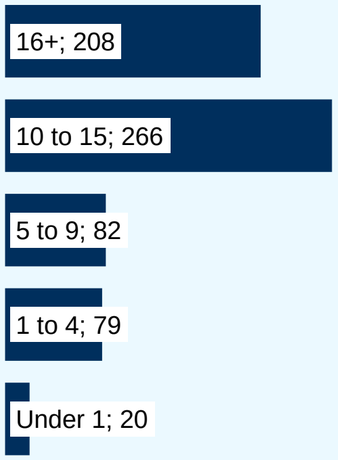
Other settings: breakdown



Corporate Parenting Scorecard — September 2023

EDUCATION

Children in care by age group



% of school-aged children in care who have a PEP in place

99.3%

408 out of 411

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) was in place for 408 children in Y1 - Y11, who were in the care of CCC and on the role of the virtual school at the end of the Summer Term 2023.

% of school-aged children in care in good or outstanding schools

66.6%

269 out of 404

As of June 2022

66.6% of Cambridgeshire's children in care are taught in good or outstanding schools, as at the end of June 2022.

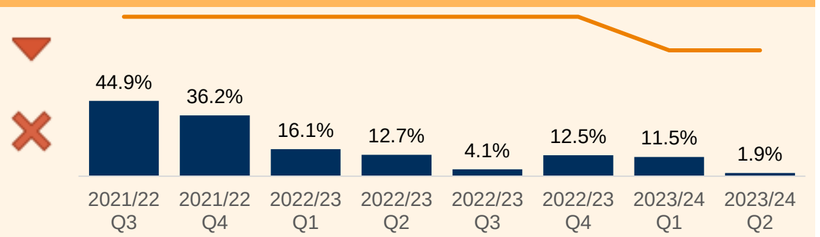
HEALTH - SERVICE STANDARDS

Children in care whose initial health assessment was completed on time (Year to date and by quarter)

1.9%

1 out of 53

Target: above 95%

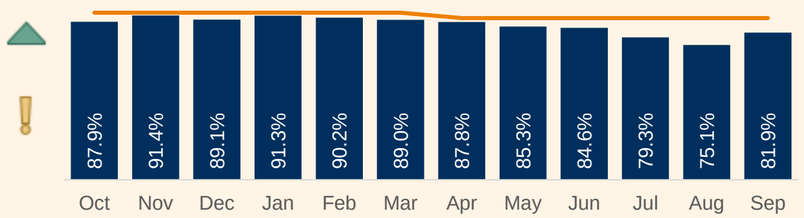


Children in care whose annual health assessment was completed on time

81.9%

379 out of 463

Target: above 93%

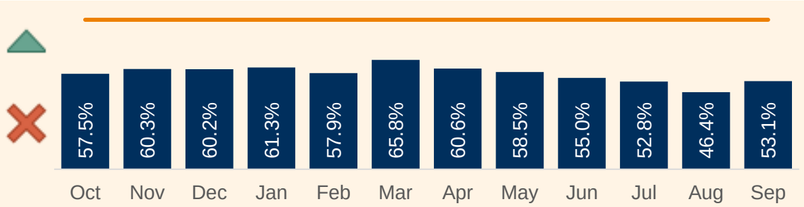


Children in care whose annual dental examination was completed on time

53.1%

246 out of 463

Target: above 90%

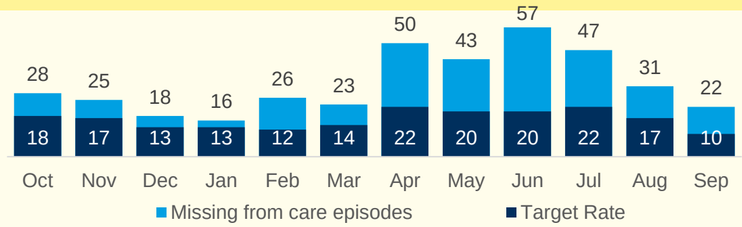


MISSING

Children in care who go missing (with number of episodes)

10
Children

22
Episodes



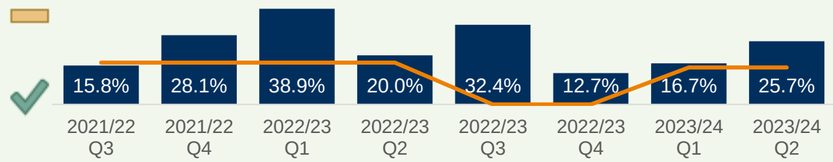
ADOPTION

% of children leaving care who are adopted (Year to date and by quarter)

26.2%

95 out of 363

Target: above 17%



Timeliness of adoption process

Time to placement

659

Target: below 400

For children adopted during the past 12 months, an average of 659 days passed between the child entering care and them moving into their adoptive home. An average of 338.7 days passed between their placement order being granted and approval of a match with their adopters.

Time to match

339

Target: below 183

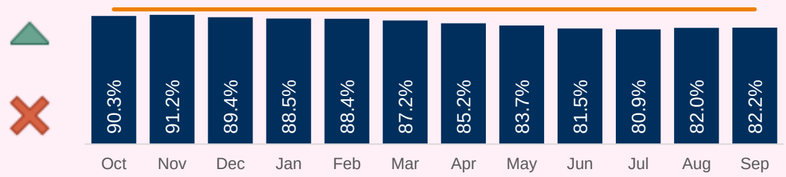
CARE LEAVERS

Care Leavers who have a pathway plan in place

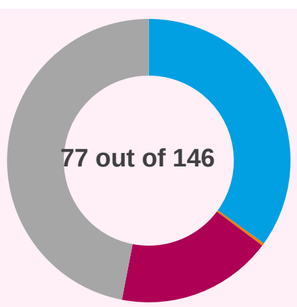
82.2%

498 out of 606

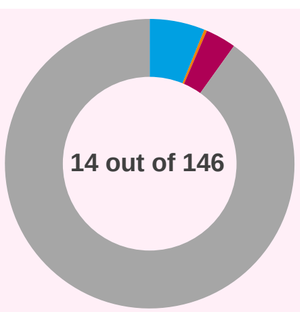
Target: above 95%



19 to 21 year old care leavers who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)



19 to 21 year old care leavers who live in unsuitable accommodation



Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022/23

To:	Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee
Meeting Date:	15 November 2023
From:	Service Director, Corporate Parenting
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	No
Outcome:	Provide a summary of information shared at with the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee in 2022/23, including a review of key performance information.
Recommendation:	The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee is recommended to: a) Agree the report and areas of development listed for Corporate Parenting in 2023/24

Officer contact:
Name: Catherine Isaacs
Post: Head of Service, Corporate Parenting
Email: Catherine.isaacs@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01480 376318

1. Background

1.1 The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee for Cambridgeshire has been in existence since 2017. It is a well-established Sub-Committee and is regularly attended by Council Members, Council Officers and representatives from Cambridgeshire Foster Carer Association. In that time, it has developed and changed into its current formulation of a thematic approach to key areas of activity. These are: placements and care planning; health and education of children in care; and those that have had a care experience.

1.2 The purpose of the report is to provide the Children and Young People Committee with an overview of the work carried out by the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee 2022-23. The report addresses the terms of reference of the Sub-Committee over the last 12 months and the impact the Sub-Committee has had in delivering on its objectives.

1.3 The meeting format changed in 2021 to thematic and has worked well in enabling Council Members to focus on key areas of Council and partnership activity in more depth, offering scrutiny and challenge to Council Officers. The Sub-Committee is ambitious in its aspirations for Children in Care and Care Leavers and supports the needs and aspirations through a more in-depth review of three key themes. These are Education, Health and Placements. The meetings rotate to ensure all subject matters are reviewed regularly.

1.4 In the past year, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council have separated. This has not affected the running of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, or its focus which continues to be the children and young people of Cambridgeshire, their families and their carers.

1.5 Reporting Mechanism and Work Programme – The Sub-Committee has three informal and three formal meetings per year. The purpose of these are to enable children and young people to attend the informal meetings without the intrusion of this being a public meeting. The three informal meetings enable children who are in care and those that have left care to jointly chair the meeting alongside the Sub-Committee Chair. In doing so the Sub-Committee takes a strong interest in understanding those who have experience of being in care and those who have left care, their views of the service and how best to improve it. The formal meetings include the voice of Foster Carers who are recruited by Cambridgeshire Fostering Service. Their voice and views have enabled the Sub-Committee to understand more fully their aspirations for Children and Young People along with feedback on the service. At each meeting, monthly performance data called the Scorecard (attached as Appendix) is reviewed by the Sub-Committee. This enables Members to scrutinise in more depth any issues related to the performance of the Council in its responsibilities to promote and be aspirational in its outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers. The Chair remains as Councillor Anna Bradnam and Vice Chair Councillor Michael Atkins. Links exist to Participation and Promoting the Views of Children with Care Experience. The Sub-Committee listens directly to the views and feedback from Children and Young People relating to their experiences. Children and Young People

share their achievements with Council Members along with how they are influencing the delivery of services for Children in Care.

2. Main Issues

2.1 Summary of reports reviewed by Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee 2022/23

2.1.1 A dip sample of Review Health Assessments – The overall quality of the cases reviewed was found to be good, and in all cases the Health Action Plans and Leaving Care Health Assessment/Passport felt personal to the individual child/young person. There were improvements in performance compared to the previous year's audit, including the number Review Health Assessments (RHAs) completed face to face, birth and family history available, and completion of growth measurement. It identified that ongoing partnership work is required to enable improvements around accessing routine dental care and improving the number of strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed by foster carers and returned to the Children in Care Health Team so that they are available at the health assessment. This work is supported by the Children in Care Health Team Lead Nurse, who is pivotal to supporting the recommendations of the audit.

2.1.2 The process and some audits of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire used by the health service during their Health Assessments, and by education and children's social care – if the scores are elevated, they are discussed at the personal education plan (PEP) and at the Children in Care review.

2.1.3 The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service in the previous year – there were 592 children in care that year. The IRO service held 1,655 Child In Care Reviews during the year, and timeliness of these reviews remained excellent. Children and families' feedback reflected positively the IROs use of their skills to amplify the voice of the child in Care Planning. IROs use of the Escalation Protocol remains fully embedded across the service and evidences the IROs oversight of care planning for children.

2.1.4 The Siblings Together Forever Project – brings together siblings who have been separated through care for a short residential multi-activity trip at Grafham Water.

2.1.5 The work of the Participation Team in the previous year – whose role is to promote the voice of children and young people in care by offering a variety of opportunities for engagement and feedback, and ensuring action is taken as a result of that feedback. They offered a summer participation programme; an art challenge; children in care committee; meeting with corporate parents. They attend interviews and support recruitment of a range of roles and undertake "youth inspections" of some services in the county.

2.1.6 The Care Leaver Forum (CLF) presented their project – a performance-based project to give young people in care the opportunity to build confidence and

skills in this area, by the end of the summer. Care Leavers designed and facilitated a workshop at the Virtual School Conference in late June.

2.1.7 Virtual School Annual Report – their role encompasses supporting children in to the best possible school at transition point; offering advice support and training and trauma responsive approaches in schools; the Virtual School employ a PEP Champion who provides training and support to social workers and designated teachers; used Pupil Premium to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best educational outcomes for children in care; worked to develop positive working relationships with Multi Academy Trusts; attendance continued to be impacted by Covid-19 but was being closely monitored; no children were permanently excluded; and the children's educational attendance and achievements were summarised.

2.1.8 Regional Adoption Agency Report 2021/2 – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough matched 58 children, placed 65 children and supported 69 children to be adopted. 40 prospective adoptive assessments were commenced, and 42 adopters were approved.

2.1.9 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Adoption and Permanence Panel Report – in 2021/22, 44 mainstream adoption approvals and 6 early permanence dual approvals were achieved. The overall quality of adoptions reports is good. The quality of Child Permanence Reports continued to vary but Panel noted that there had been an improvement over the year. Areas for development included making sure that CPRs included a clear narrative of the child's journey; consistent inclusion of parents' views and post adoption contact plans; in particular, contact with siblings and Social Workers progressing actions recommended from panel.

2.1.10 Children in Care/Care Leavers in Education, Employment and Training (EET) Promotion Action Plan Update – the DfE figure for 19 to 21-year-old care leavers in EET was 49% for 2021, with an East of England average of 52%. There was an improvement in performance of 5% from 2020. A range of activities are undertaken to promote Education, Employment and Training for Care Leavers.

2.1.11 The report of the Cambridgeshire Fostering Service and Cambridgeshire Foster Care Association – The Cambridgeshire Foster Care Association (CFCA) meet regularly and gather the views and experiences of foster carers. The Chair and Vice Chair meet with the Head of Service for Fostering regularly. They have established a Fostering Recruitment Ambassador to support recruitment activities for foster carers. There had been work to develop their Mentoring Scheme to support all new foster carers. Support Groups for carers were running face to face. They have developed a Feedback Loop system with the Fostering Service to create forums to hear feedback from the foster carers. There had been work about setting up Junior ISAs and Trust Fund accounts.

2.1.12 As of March 2023, there were 163 registered foster carers to Cambridgeshire County Council.

2.1.13 Health Report – 23 of 88 Initial Health Assessments (26%) were completed in timescales (within 20 days of becoming accommodated) for in County Placements and 4 of 79 Initial Health Assessments (5%) were completed in timescales for out of county placements. The cause of the delay was delayed consent and referral forms from children's social care, and carers, and children not being able to attend the initial appointment offered to them. For children out of county, capacity to complete the appointments will have had an impact. There is a designated nurse to support in developing practice in this area. For Review Health Assessments, these are completed in the child or young person's home with a specialist nurse and for children placed in county 231 out of 248 assessments were completed in time (93%). Children and young people were clear that they prefer an in-person appointment. Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires (SDQs) are completed as part of the health assessment process. For children in care living in Cambridgeshire who experience a mental health difficulty, they can be referred by a professional to YOUnited which is a range of mental health services. Post covid, supporting children to register with the dentist is really challenging.

2.2 Key practice areas

2.2.1 Statistics about Children in Care

There were 646 children in care at the end of March 2023, which is an increase of 14 from March 2022. 86 of them are Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. The increase in children in our care is partly due to Cambridgeshire County Council accommodating more Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children from 8% of our looked after children population in 2021/22 to 13.3% in 2022/23.

2.3 Statutory Visits

In 2022/23, 78% of our visits to children in care took place at the statutory timescale of every 6 weeks (or at 8 or 12 weeks for children who have been looked after for more than a year and where the IRO has agreed this). Our service ambition for 2024/25 will be to aim for at least 90% of visits taking place every 6 months.

2.3.1 Placement Stability

a) Progress has been made in relation to key performance areas that we have to report to the government in our annual returns with regard to placement stability for children in our care.

b) The first measure is focused on short term placement stability and considers children who have experienced three or more placements (so two or more moves) in the past year. Last year, 51 (7.9%) of our children experienced three or more placements. This is lower than the national average of 10% of children in care experiencing three or more placement moves.

c) The second measure is long term placement stability and relates to children who have been in our care for more than 2.5 years and have been in the same placement for at least 2 years. Last year, 162 out of 233 children (69.5%) achieved long term placement stability. This is in line with the national average of 71% of children achieving long term placement stability.

2.3.2 Placement Sufficiency

Placement sufficiency continues to be a local and national challenge. This has resulted in some children in our care in 2022/23 being in unsuitable placements, including placements that are not regulated by Ofsted; children aged under 12 being in residential placements; and children and young people experiencing a high number of placement moves. Our placements service are leading on a placement sufficiency strategy that includes a focus on placements within Cambridgeshire, appropriate commissioning of residential placements, and a housing pathway that supports our 16- and 17-year-olds to develop independent living skills.

2.4 Areas for development

The Corporate Parenting Service in Cambridgeshire has been through a significant amount of change in the last year, with the decoupling from Peterborough City Council and a number of changes in senior leadership. This has impacted on the functioning of the service and the new Interim Director for Corporate Parenting has been leading on improvement plan work across the service.

Key areas of focus and development that have been identified are:

2.4.1 Caseloads are currently very high with an average of 20 children per Social Worker (excluding newly qualified Social Workers). To allow best practice for the children in our care we would hope to have a maximum of 15 children per Social Worker as this would allow them to have the time and capacity to undertake more in-depth direct work and life story work.

2.4.2 We have an increasing number of Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) across all of children's services. Our UASC children and young people require very particular interventions including the potential need for age assessments, support around their asylum claims, support in relation to the trauma they have experienced in their home country and their journey to the UK. Consideration is being given as to whether a UASC specialist team needs to be created in order to develop a specialist team in the Corporate Parenting service which can develop best practice for these children and young people.

2.4.3 Permanency planning is an area of weakness in the service, particularly for children and young people where the plan is long term foster care. There is a

plan to review Permanence Planning across the whole of Children's Services and develop an agreed strategy in this area.

2.4.4 Placement stability is an area of concern – work is being undertaken to build in early identification of placements at risk, so that support can be put in at the earliest possible point.

2.4.5 Children on care orders placed with parents or with family and friends' carers – a review of all of these arrangements will take place in the upcoming year.

2.5 Children Leaving Care

2.5.1 Care Leavers on their 17th and 18th Birthday:

	21/22	22/23	Difference
LA In-Touch	94%	87.8%	- 6.2%
Engaged in EET	74%	57.1%	- 16.9%
Living in Suitable Accommodation	92%	83.3%	- 8.7%

2.5.2 Care Leavers on their 19th - 21st Birthday:

	21/22	22/23	Difference
LA In-Touch	91%	91.9%	+ 0.9%
Engaged in EET	54%	55.1%	+ 1.1%
Living in Suitable Accommodation	86%	86.9%	+ 0.9%

**Cambridgeshire SSDA903 Looked After Children Summary 22-23 (SN and regional data is not yet published for comparison)*

2.6 Key Strengths and Progress

There has been significant improvement in the Leaving Care Service over the last 12 months focusing on recruitment and retention. By 30 October 2023 there are no vacancies within teams (previously 29% vacancy rate) supporting stability in the service, and a shared understanding and work towards achieving the improvements that need to be made to ensure improved outcomes for our young people. Example includes securing further DfE Rough Sleeper funding for the dedicated Homeless Prevention Personal Adviser Role.

2.6.1 Other developments and impact:

a) Reconnecting with care leavers we had lost touch with; efforts have been made (and continue) developing purposeful relationships. This is reflected in caseloads largely remaining unchanged (current 27.1/ full time equivalent (FTE), 6 months ago 27.9/FTE).

b) Improved and launched our Staying Put offer (Sept 23) broadening post 18 accommodation options.

c) Strengthened our Higher Education Offer to ensure an equitable offer to young people.

d) Developed the business case to support an uplift in the care leaver Local Offer, reducing social inequalities.

e) Talking Therapies via Stop Breathe Think (12-month initiative) providing direct access to counselling services with no wait list.

f) Progressed Mentor Programme for care leavers aged 18+.

g) Developed Education, Employment and Training Empowerment Forum to bring practitioners together with partners who can support EET planning from 16-25 years.

h) Strengthening quality in Pathway Planning with a bespoke annual training schedule for Leaving Care, including Pathway Planning, Housing for Young People, Mental Capacity Act, understanding benefits to ensure a consistent approach in how we support our young people and baseline knowledge and skills across the Leaving Care workforce.

i) Joint Housing Protocol to provide clear guidance and framework for practitioners and key partner agencies with a working group to inform future developments (to be approved at Departmental Management Team).

j) Improving systems and processes to support day to day practice, including reporting on young people aged 21-25 years closed to service but whom we need to offer annual in-touch.

k) Management oversight and working restoratively with teams to improve our in-touch and quality of relationships. In addition to the SSDA903 data, weekly performance clinics take place and routine case discussions to review all young people we are not in touch with, live in unsuitable accommodation and are NEET, to explore how we can adjust our practice to improve outcomes. As an example, in April 2023 we were in-touch (face to face) with 58.8% of our young people aged 16-25 years (all eligibilities), by October 2023 this has increased to 76.7%. In the same period 70.9% of young people aged 16-25 years (all eligibilities) were living in suitable accommodation, by October 2023 this has increased to 92.4%.

2.6.2 <u>Areas we are developing:</u>

a) Review of our establishment to ensure care leavers have the right support at the right time giving space to develop caring and meaningful relationships.

b) Promoting voice and influence, complimenting the work undertaken by the Participation Teams, we are undertaking our own consultation with key groups amongst our care leavers to ensure our improvement plan aligns with the experience of our young people; this includes parents and parents to be, young people in custody, and our separated migrant young people.

c) Developing ‘Welcome to Leaving Care’ frequent event for young people and their carers.

d) Adjusting the Pathway Plan and review format to improve experience and quality.

e) Quality Assurance and in-house dip-sampling alongside monthly management audits.

f) Monthly Team Manager led Pathway Plan review meetings to support and upskill practitioners.

g) Improving pathways into Adult Services.

h) Expanding Housing Options and support post 18 years.

2.6.3 Recommendations:

Area to address	*Action*	*Who by*	*Timescale*
We do not have a Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2022-25	Corporate Parenting Strategy to be written and encompass Children in Care, Children Leaving Care, and Fostering, Special Guardianships and Adoption.	Brian Relph, Executive Director, supported by Catherine Isaacs, Head of Corporate Parenting	To be presented at the next Corporate Parenting Board
Unaccompanied and Separated children (UASC) are currently receiving support across the whole of children's services and the offer can be inconsistent.	Review of our offer to our UASC and whether the service would benefit from the creation of a specialist UASC team.	Brian Relph, supported by Catherine Isaacs and Louisa Kay (Service Manager, Leaving Care Service)	Within 3 months
We do not have an up to date leaving care offer.	Review Leaving Care Offer so that we have a clear formal offer for young people aged 16+.	Catherine Isaacs and Louisa Kay	Within 2 months
Our performance for initial and review health assessments is poor in terms of completing them on time.	Review of current system involving Corporate Parenting and Health to take place.	Catherine Isaacs and Health colleagues	Within 2 months
Permanency planning for children in our care can be weak, particularly for children where the plan is long term foster care.	There is a review of Permanence Planning taking place across all of Children's Services. This should lead to Permanence Protocol for the whole of Children's Services.	Heads of Service across Children's Services	Within 3 months.

Many of our children and young people have increasingly complex mental health needs, and this impacts on all aspects of their lives.	We have an excellent clinical team that are able to offer a varied range of consultations and interventions. The clinical team to be clear about what their offer is to children, young people, their carers, their families and their Social Workers.	Vanessa Kinsey-Thatcher, Clinical Lead for Corporate Parenting.	Within 2 months
Our ability to recruit and retain good quality Social Workers is challenging in Cambridgeshire Children in Care Service.	There will be a Children's Service wide review of pay and conditions that the Children in Care service will feed into.	Martin Purbeck Executive Direction and Tapiwa Julius, Principle Social Worker	Within 3 months
There are not always timely, child-based assessments for children in our care.	A review of guidance about when assessments should be completed, and which assessments are needed will be undertaken. The aim is for there to be agreed policies across Children's Services for guidance about when assessments will be done.	Catherine Isaacs	Within 3 months

3. Alignment with the Council's ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care and leaving our care to meet this priority.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care and leaving our care to meet this priority.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care and leaving our care to meet this priority.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

The recommendations outlined in this report should support the development of practice for children in our care and leaving our care to meet this priority.

4. Significant Implications

Not applicable

5. Source documents

5.1 None

Post Adoption and Special Guardian Support Pathway

At Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Adoption we provide a range of services aimed to offer the right level of support at the right time for our adoptive and SGO families.

We support children traumatised by their experiences to feel safer and more secure within their families with a focus on attachment and we have relationships are at the heart of what we do.

We offer support that will empower families to be able to support themselves with the right knowledge, skills, and tools.

Universal Services – Information, Signposting & Training

There are various parts of our service that is open to all.

- Supporting Post Box contact
- Advise on managing contact
- Supporting birth families with accessing counselling
- Signposting to relevant and helpful groups and organisations
- Support groups for our families
- Information about adoption support
- Summer picnics for our adoptive and SGO families
- Wide range of information resources

Advice & Support

We have a duty Social Worker who you can contact for advice and support. They take time to listen and understand your situation to help you to think about where support can be accessed - family & friends, peer support or community universal services including school, health, safeguarding or Early Help services.

Just contact our duty worker on 01480 379679 or email us at:

AdoptionandSGO.SupportDuty@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Assessment of Need & Support

If having spoken to our duty worker further support is needed, we can arrange for social worker to be allocated to complete an assessment of need. There is simple referral form to complete so we can understand your perspective from the outset. We aim to allocate families

to a Social Worker as quickly as possible but there can be a wait of up to two months as busy times. Whilst waiting, our duty Social Workers are able to offer advice and support.

The assessment will be an opportunity to discuss with an allocated Social Worker the challenges being faced, to reflect on what may be going on and why, and together consider the presenting adoption and SGO support needs.

Following assessment, a plan of support will be drawn up and may include support from universal services as well as therapeutic support from the Adoption Support Fund. The social worker will guide you through the process of finding a provider and setting up the support. Once the therapeutic support is in place, you will not have an allocated social worker, however you are able to contact us at any time through the duty social worker.

If it is felt that your family need specific support from the team, we will continue to have a social worker for you and your family. Such support may include therapeutic parenting support, therapeutic Life Story Work, 1-1 support with a child and co-ordinating support with other professionals.

Contact

We offer a Post Box Contact service for letter contact between adopted children and their birth family. The Post Box Team can be contacted on:

- Cambridgeshire Local Authority Post Box Service:
  - PostBox@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
- Peterborough Local Authority Post Box Service:
  - Peterborough.Postbox@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

We can provide advice and support around other types of contact– please contact our duty social worker and they can help you with the next steps.

Crisis Support

Unfortunately, the Adoption & Special Guardianship Support Team are unable to offer immediate support to families in a crisis. We are able to offer support and guidance and will work alongside other professionals who are supporting you as a family however this can not be immediate.

You are able to access support from Children's Social Care and to access such support please contact them via phone:

- 0345 045 5203 (9-5pm Monday to Friday) – Cambridgeshire
- 01733 864170 or 01733 864180 (9-5pm Monday to Friday) – Peterborough
- 01733 234 724 (out of hours)

Alternatively you can contact them via email on referralcentre.children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

You are also able to access urgent mental health need please immediately call your local CAMHS provider and request an urgent assessment. Further information can be found at

https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/service-detail/service/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs-63/

Additionally, you can contact the contact the CPFT's First Response Service by calling NHS 111 (option2).

Suggested Resources

While you are waiting, you may find the following services/information helpful:

- PAC-UK advice line - 020 7284 5879 or emailadvice@pac-uk.org. They can offer help and advice regarding all matters relating to adoption whether you are an Adoptee, a Birth Parent, or an Adopter.
- You may also be interested in accessing support the National Association of Therapeutic Parents https://www.naotp.com/
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Offer website may help direct you to sources of support all families are entitled to such as the Disability Team or Early Help https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer
- For advice and support around therapeutic approaches we recommend first looking at the Beacon House website https://beaconhouse.org.uk/resources/and researching Brené Brown on YouTube specifically around shame and empathy.
- Adoption Uk - Adoption UK Charity

Cambridgeshire SSDA903 Looked After Children Summary

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Includes historical and national performance comparison.

Children in Care and Adoption Performance Tables

	England 2021-22	SNs 2021-22	East of England 2021-22	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Placement 1: Children looked after at period end with three or more placements during the year	10%	11%	10%	Low	9.0%	12.0%	7.9%	↓	51	646
Placement 2: LAC in care at least 2.5 years at period end living in their current placement for at least 2 years	71%	69%	70%	High	71.0%	70.0%	69.5%	↓	162	233
Placement 3: Percentage of LAC at 31 March placed outside LA boundary and more than 20 miles from where they used to live.	16%	23%	20%	Low	35.0%	33.0%	30.5%	↓	197	646
Adoption 1: Percentage who ceased to be looked after who were adopted	10%	10%	12%	High	14.0%	19.0%	7.8%	↓	15	192
Adoption 2: Percentage who ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order	13%	14%	8%	High	7.3%	11.1%	14.1%	↑	27	192
Leaving Care 1: The percentage of children leaving care over the age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday	79%	88%	84%	High	x	100.0%	76.2%	↓	77	101
Leaving Care 2: The percentage of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in education, employment or training	55%	58%	56%	High	49.0%	54.0%	55.1%	↑	211	383
Leaving Care 3: The percentage of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in suitable accommodation	88%	89%	88%	High	84.0%	86.0%	86.9%	↑	318	366
Leaving Care 4: The percentage of former relevant young people aged 19-21 who were in higher education	7%	3%	7%	High	3.0%	5.0%	5.0%	–	19	383

Children looked after at 31 March

	England 2021-22	SNs 2021-22	East of England 2021-22	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
LAC at 31 March					x	x	646			
LAC at 31 March per 10,000	70.0	56.0	50.0		x	x	47.0		646	
LAC at 31 March by legal order										
Interim care orders	20%	16%	17%	Lower	16.0%	16.0%	15.3%	↓	99	646
Full care orders	58%	57%	56%	Higher	58.0%	60.0%	52.6%	↓	340	646
Freed for adoption	x	x	x		x	x	-		0	646
Placement order granted	5%	6%	6%		9.0%	x	7.3%		47	646
Accommodated under S20	17%	22%	21%	Lower	17.0%	17.0%	24.8%	↑	160	646
Detained on child protection grounds in LA accommodation	x	0%	x		x	x	-		0	646
Youth justice legal Statuses	x	0%	x		x	x	-		0	646
LAC at 31 March by placement										
Foster placements	70%	69%	71%	**Higher**	74.0%	77.0%	**72.1%**	↓	**466**	**646**
Concurrent planning foster placements							2.6%		12	466
Foster placements with relative(s) or friends(s)							9.2%		43	466
Foster placements confirmed as permanent (long term)				Higher			25.1%		117	466
Placed for adoption	3%	3%	3%		3.0%	1.0%	2.0%	↑	13	646
Placement with parents	7%	5%	3%		1.0%	2.0%	0.6%	↓	4	646
Other placement in the community	2%	4%	5%		-	-	-	–	0	646
Children's homes, secure units and hostels	16%	19%	17%	Lower	21.0%	20.0%	24.9%	↑	161	646
Other residential settings	1%	2%	1%		x	x	-		0	646
Residential schools	x	0%	x		x	x	0.2%		1	646
Other placements	1%	1%	x		-	-	0.2%	↑	1	646

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	7%	8%	10%		9.0%	8.0%	13.3%	↑	86	646
LAC at 31 March by Gender										
Male	56%	58%	58%		56.0%	59.0%	61.9%	↑	400	646
Female	44%	42%	42%		44.0%	41.0%	38.1%	↓	246	646
LAC at 31 March by Age										
Under 1	5%	5%	5%		4.0%	5.0%	2.9%	↓	19	646
1 to 4	14%	12%	11%		11.0%	11.0%	11.9%	↑	77	646
5 to 9	18%	17%	16%		16.0%	14.0%	12.8%	↓	83	646
10 to 15	39%	40%	40%		41.0%	46.0%	40.7%	↓	263	646
16 and over	25%	27%	28%		27.0%	24.0%	31.6%	↑	204	646
LAC at 31 March by placement location										
Under 20 miles and inside LA boundary	49%	50%	44%		31.0%	37.0%	31.9%	↓	206	646
Under 20 miles and outside LA boundary	23%	13%	14%		11.0%	11.0%	11.9%	↑	77	646
Over 20 miles and inside LA boundary	4%	6%	11%		13.0%	12.0%	12.1%	↑	78	646
Over 20 miles and outside LA boundary	16%	23%	20%		35.0%	33.0%	30.5%	↓	197	646
Distance not known or not recorded	4%	4%	7%		2.0%	1.0%	13.6%	↑	88	646

LAC at 31 March by placement provider

Own provision (by the Local Authority)	46%	42%	49%		41.0%	44.0%	39.2%	↓	253	646
Other Local Authority provision	1%	3%	1%		x	2.0%	2.9%	↑	19	646
Other public provision (e.g. by a PCT etc.)	x	1%	x		x	-	-	–	0	646
Private provision	38%	40%	43%		52.0%	49.0%	52.9%	↑	342	646
Voluntary/third sector provision	7%	10%	3%		5.0%	4.0%	4.2%	↑	27	646
Parents or other person with parental responsibility	7%	5%	3%		1.0%	2.0%	0.6%	↓	4	646
Placement Provider not Reported	1%	2%	x		-	-	0.2%	↑	1	646

LAC at 31 March by ethnicity

White	73%	78%	74%		80.0%	81.0%	73.1%	↓	472	646
Mixed	10%	9%	10%		9.0%	9.0%	7.9%	↓	51	646
Asian or Asian British	5%	3%	3%		x	x	5.1%		33	646
Black or Black British	7%	4%	6%		5.0%	4.0%	5.6%	↑	36	646
Other ethnic groups	4%	4%	6%		3.0%	3.0%	8.0%	↑	52	646
Other	1%	2%	x		x	x	0.3%		2	646

Children who started to be looked after during the year

	England	SNs	England	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Children starting a LAC episode during the period (no duplicates)					149	195	247	↑		
Children starting a LAC episode per 10,000 children	26.0	21.6	18.0		11.0	15.0	18.0	↑	247	
Gender										
Male	60%	60%	62%		56.0%	62.0%	68.4%	↑	169	247
Female	40%	40%	38%		44.0%	38.0%	31.6%	↓	78	247
Children starting a LAC episode by age										
Under 1	17%	17%	17%		26.0%	19.0%	13.8%	↓	34	247
1 to 4	15%	16%	13%		15.0%	20.0%	13.4%	↓	33	247
5 to 9	15%	16%	13%		10.0%	16.0%	14.6%	↓	36	247
10 to 15	27%	27%	26%		14.0%	26.0%	24.3%	↓	60	247
16 and over	25%	25%	30%		36.0%	19.0%	34.0%	↑	84	247
Children starting a LAC episode by category of need										
Abuse or neglect	58%	55%	56%		52.0%	54.0%	45.7%	↓	113	247
Child's disability	2%	4%	2%		4.0%	4.0%	1.6%	↓	4	247
Parents illness or disability	2%	3%	3%		x	x	1.6%		4	247
Family in acute stress	7%	11%	9%		7.0%	10.0%	11.3%	↑	28	247
Family dysfunction	11%	16%	8%		7.0%	10.0%	2.4%	↓	6	247
Socially unacceptable behaviour	2%	3%	2%		x	x	0.4%		1	247
Low income	x	0%	-		-	x	-		0	247
Absent parenting	18%	17%	20%		27.0%	21.0%	36.8%	↑	91	247

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Children starting a LAC episode by legal order

Interim care orders	33%	29%	32%		44.0%	45.0%	32.4%	↓	80	247
Full care orders	1%	1%	1%		x	-	0.8%	↑	2	247
Freed for adoption					x	x	-		0	247
Placement order granted	x	0%	x		-	-	-	–	0	247
Accommodated under S20	54%	59%	56%		50.0%	49.0%	58.3%	↑	144	247
Detained on child protection grounds in LA accommodation	11%	10%	x		**4.0%**	**x**	**7.7%**		**19**	**247**
Police protection and in LA accommodation	9%	8%	7%		4.0%	4.0%	4.9%	↑	12	247
Emergency protection order	2%	3%	2%		-	x	2.8%		7	247
Child assessment order and in LA accommodation	x	0%	x		-	-	-	–	0	247
Youth justice legal Statuses	x	1%	2%		**x**	**x**	**0.8%**		**2**	**247**
Accommodated on remand or committed for trial	2%	1%	2%		x	x	0.8%		2	247
Accommodated under Police and Criminal Evidence [PACE] act	x	0%	-		-	-	-	–	0	247
Supervision order with residence requirement	x	0%	-		-	-	-	–	0	247

Children who ceased to be looked after during the year

	England	SNs	East of	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Children ceasing to be LAC during the year (and not coming back into care during the period)					220	243	192	↓		
Children ceasing to be LAC during the year per 10,000 children	26.0	19.5	18.0		16.0	18.0	14.0	↓	192	

NB: the DfE definition for LAC starts and LAC ends do not mirror each other, ie they can't identify the increase/decrease in LAC.

Reason left care

Adopted - consent dispensed with	10%	10%	12%	High	14.0%	19.0%	7.8%	↓	15	192
Died	x	0%	x	Low	-	-	0.5%	↑	1	192
Care taken by another LA	3%	0%	1%		x	-	0.5%	↑	1	192
Returned home to live with parents or relatives as part of care planning process	18%	14%	11%	High	4.0%	7.0%	3.1%	↓	6	192
Returned home to live with parents or relatives not as part of care planning process	4%	5%	4%	Low	x	x	5.7%		11	192
Left care to live with parents, relatives or other person with no parental responsibility	6%	9%	10%		10.0%	6.0%	13.0%	↑	25	192
Residence order / Child arrangement order granted	4%	4%	3%	High	4.0%	4.0%	4.2%	↑	8	192
Special guardianship order	13%	14%	8%	High	7.3%	11.1%	14.1%	↑	27	192
Moved into independent living (with support)	12%	13%	13%		21.0%	14.0%	9.4%	↓	18	192
Moved into independent living (with no formalised support)	3%	5%	5%		11.0%	10.0%	6.8%	↓	13	192
Transferred to residential care funded by adult social services	2%	3%	3%		3.0%	3.0%	2.6%	↓	5	192
Sentenced to custody	1%	0%	1%	Low	x	-	0.5%	↑	1	192
Accommodation on remand ended	x	1%	1%		x	-	1.0%	↑	2	192
Age assessment determined child was 18 or over	1%	1%	1%		-	x	1.0%		2	192
Child moved abroad	x	0%	x		x	-	0.5%	↑	1	192
Aged 18 and remained with current carers	-	-	-		-	-	12.5%		24	192
Care ceased for any other reason	11%	11%	16%		10.0%	7.0%	16.7%	↑	32	192

Gender

Male	58%	58%	60%		59.0%	56.0%	60.9%	↑	117	192
Female	42%	42%	40%		41.0%	44.0%	39.1%	↓	75	192

Age

Under 1	5%	6%	5%		x	4.0%	5.7%	↑	11	192
1 to 4	21%	20%	20%		17.0%	21.0%	20.8%	↓	40	192
5 to 9	12%	11%	8%		10.0%	13.0%	9.9%	↓	19	192
10 to 15	14%	13%	12%		7.0%	9.0%	10.9%	↑	21	192
16 and over	47%	49%	54%		x	49.0%	52.6%	↑	101	192

Duration of latest period of care

Under 2 weeks							3.1%		6	192
From 2 weeks to under 8 weeks							2.1%		4	192
From 8 weeks to under 6 months							15.6%		30	192
From 6 months to under 1 year							27.1%		52	192
From 1 year to under 2 years							21.4%		41	192
After more than 2 years							30.7%		59	192

Children looked after during the year

	England 2021-22	SNs 2021-22	East of England 2021-22	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Looked after during the year (excluding short breaks) per 10,000	92.1	73.9	66.7		x	x	60.9		838	
Looked after during the year under short breaks per 10,000	0.7	0.0	0.4		x	x	0.1		2	
New placements made during the year					x	x	561			
New placement under 20 miles and inside LA boundary	48%	50%	43%	High	33.0%	37.0%	33.3%	↓	187	561
New placement under 20 miles and outside LA boundary	21%	11%	12%		10.0%	9.0%	16.2%	↑	91	561
New placement over 20 miles and inside LA boundary	5%	8%	12%		12.0%	14.0%	11.9%	↓	67	561
New placement over 20 miles and outside LA boundary	16%	19%	19%	Low	32.0%	29.0%	25.7%	↓	144	561
New placement not recorded or not known	11%	14%	14%		14.0%	10.0%	12.8%	↑	72	561
Reason for change of placement										
Change to/ Implementation of care plan	35%	34%	26%		27.0%	20.0%	26.5%	↑	105	396
Resignation or closure of provision	1%	2%	1%		x	1.0%	0.3%	↓	1	396
Allegation (s47)	1%	1%	x		x	x	-		0	396
Standards of care concern	1%	1%	2%		x	3.0%	0.8%	↓	3	396
Approval removed	x	0%	x		-	-	-	–	0	396
Carer requests placement ends due to child's behaviour	10%	13%	15%		27.0%	25.0%	24.5%	↓	97	396
Carer requests placement end other than due to child's behaviour	6%	9%	8%		4.0%	7.0%	5.8%	↓	23	396
Child requests placement to end	4%	6%	4%		4.0%	2.0%	3.5%	↑	14	396
Responsible/Area authority requests placement to end	2%	2%	1%		2.0%	x	1.5%		6	396
Change in the status of a placement only	17%	15%	17%		12.0%	11.0%	9.8%	↓	39	396
Custody arrangement					x	x	-		0	396
Other	23%	28%	26%		22.0%	31.0%	27.3%	↓	108	396

Care Leavers - status on their 19th to 21st birthday

	England	SNs	East of	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Having a birthday in the year (excludes those who have subsequently died or returned home for 6 months)					346	364	383	↑		
Contacts between local authority and care leaver										
In touch with care leaver	92%	92%	92%	High	88.0%	91.0%	91.9%	↑	352	383
Young person refuses contact	1%	1%	1%		x	x	0.3%		1	383
Young person no longer requires services	2%	3%	2%		x	x	0.3%		1	383
Not in touch with care leaver	5%	14%	4%		x	8.0%	7.6%	↓	29	383
In education, employment or training	55%	58%	56%	**High**	49.0%	54.0%	**55.1%**	↑	**211**	**383**
In higher education i.e. studies beyond A level	7%	3%	7%	High	3.0%	5.0%	5.0%	–	19	383
In education other than higher education	23%	24%	25%	High	26.0%	26.0%	32.9%	↑	126	383
In training or employment (including apprenticeships)	26%	27%	24%	High	20.0%	23.0%	17.2%	↓	66	383
Not in education, training or employment	38%	35%	38%	**Low**	45.0%	40.0%	**37.1%**	↓	**142**	**383**
illness / disability	7%	8%	7%		4.0%	6.0%	6.0%	–	23	383
other reasons	26%	22%	26%	Low	37.0%	30.0%	27.7%	↓	106	383
pregnancy or parenting	5%	5%	4%		4.0%	4.0%	3.4%	↓	13	383
Local Authority does not have information	7%	7%	7%	**Low**	6.0%	5.0%	**7.8%**	↑	**30**	**383**

Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (excluding 'gone abroad', 'deported' and 'residence not known')	88%	89%	88%	High	84.0%	86.0%	86.9%	↑	**318**	**366**
Accommodation generally deemed suitable										
With parents or relatives	10%	10%	11%		12.0%	9.0%	10.7%	↑	39	366
With former foster carer	9%	8%	8%	High	8.0%	6.0%	5.2%	↓	19	366
Foyers and other accommodation providing EET support	2%	7%	2%	High	7.0%	5.0%	6.6%	↑	24	366
Supported lodgings	4%	7%	6%	High	3.0%	5.0%	6.3%	↑	23	366
Ordinary lodgings	1%	2%	2%		5.0%	4.0%	5.2%	↑	19	366
Semi-independent transitional accommodation	18%	13%	19%	High	22.0%	22.0%	27.0%	↑	99	366
Community home or other form of residential care	3%	4%	4%		3.0%	4.0%	5.5%	↑	20	366
Independent living	36%	38%	32%		19.0%	24.0%	18.6%	↓	68	366
Accommodation generally deemed unsuitable										
Emergency accommodation	1%	1%	1%	Low	x	x	0.3%		1	366
Bed and breakfast	x	0%	x	Low	-	-	-	–	0	366
In custody	3%	2%	3%	Low	3.0%	3.0%	1.4%	↓	5	366
No fixed abode / homeless	1%	2%	1%	Low	4.0%	3.0%	1.1%	↓	4	366
Other accommodation	3%	4%	5%	Low	4.0%	4.0%	4.1%	↑	15	366
Local Authority does not have information	7%	6%	5%	Low	5.0%	5.0%	8.2%	↑	30	366
Accommodation excluded from suitability										
Deported	x	0%	-		x	-	-	–	0	366
Gone abroad	x	0%	x		-	x	0.3%		1	366
Residence not known	1%	1%	2%		4.0%	5.0%	4.4%	↓	16	366

Care Leavers - status on their 17th & 18th birthday

	England	SNs	East of	Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Having a birthday in the year (excludes those who have subsequently died or returned home for 6 months)					137	126	98	↓		
Contacts between local authority and care leaver										
In touch with care leaver	94%	93%	95%	High	88.0%	94.0%	87.8%	↓	86	98
Young person refuses contact	x	0%	x		-	-	-	–	0	98
Young person no longer requires services	1%	0%	1%		-	-	-	–	0	98
Not in touch with care leaver	5%	9%	3%		12.0%	6.0%	12.2%	↑	12	98
In education, employment or training	66%	71%	66%	**High**	61.0%	74.0%	**57.1%**	↓	**56**	98
In higher education i.e. studies beyond A level	4%	x	4%	High	x	7.0%	11.2%	↑	11	98
In education other than higher education	48%	49%	51%	High	40.0%	56.0%	39.8%	↓	39	98
In training or employment (including apprenticeships)	15%	17%	11%	High	x	11.0%	6.1%	↓	6	98
Not in education, training or employment	28%	27%	29%	**Low**	30.0%	20.0%	**30.6%**	↑	**30**	**98**
illness/ disability	3%	x	3%		x	x	6.1%		6	98
other reasons	22%	22%	24%	Low	28.0%	17.0%	23.5%	↑	23	98
pregnancy or parenting	2%	0%	2%		x	x	1.0%		1	98
Local Authority does not have information	6%	7%	4%	**Low**	9.0%	6.0%	**12.2%**	↑	**12**	**98**

Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (excluding 'gone abroad', 'deported' and 'residence not known')	90%	91%	90%	High	88.0%	92.0%	83.3%	↓	80	96
Accommodation generally deemed suitable										
With parents or relatives	13%	14%	13%		13.0%	13.0%	13.5%	↑	13	96
With former foster carer	19%	21%	17%	High	8.0%	9.0%	9.4%	↑	9	96
Foyers and other accommodation providing EET support	3%	11%	2%	High	5.0%	x	4.2%		4	96
Supported lodgings	7%	13%	8%		7.0%	6.0%	4.2%	↓	4	96
Ordinary lodgings	1%	0%	1%	Low	x	x	3.1%		3	96
Semi-independent transitional accommodation	31%	25%	36%		39.0%	30.0%	36.5%	↑	35	96
Community home or other form of residential care	4%	6%	4%		x	10.0%	1.0%	↓	1	96
Independent living	9%	11%	6%	Low	11.0%	6.0%	7.3%	↑	7	96
Accommodation generally deemed unsuitable										
Emergency accommodation	x	1%	1%	Low	-	-	1.0%	↑	1	96
Bed and breakfast	x	0%	x	Low	-	-	1.0%	↑	1	96
In custody	2%	1%	2%	Low	x	-	1.0%	↑	1	96
No fixed abode / homeless	x	0%	x	Low	x	-	1.0%	↑	1	96
Other accommodation	3%	0%	4%	Low	x	7.0%	4.2%	↓	4	96
Local Authority does not have information	6%	6%	4%	Low	9.0%	6.0%	12.5%	↑	12	96
Accommodation excluded from suitability										
Deported	0%	0%	-		-	-	-	–	0	96
Gone abroad	x	0%	x		-	-	-	–	0	96
Residence not known	x	0%	1%		x	6.0%	2.1%	↓	2	96

Outcomes for children looked after

Children looked after who were missing or away from placement without authorisation				Good is	2020-21	2021-22	Prediction 2022-23		Numerator	Denominator
Missing incidents during the year					533	756	438	↓		
Children looked after having a missing incident	11%	11%	13%	Low	12.0%	11.0%	10.9%	↓	91	838
Average number of missing incidents per child	6.3	5.2	6.2		5.2	8.1	4.8	↓		
Going missing more than once during the year				Low	x	x	6.7%		56	838
Missing at year end					0.0	0.0	0	–		
Away from placement without authorisation incidents					0.0	0.0	0	–		
Children looked after having an absent incident	2%	1%	1%	Low	-	-	-	–	0	838
Offending										
Convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year (10 and above)	2%	3%	2%	Low	-	3.0%	2.3%	↓	8	346
Substance misuse										
Identified as having a substance misuse problem during the year	3%	4%	3%		-	-	-	–	0	447
Received intervention for their substance misuse during the year	43%	23%	44%		-	-	n/a		0	0
Offered intervention for their substance misuse but refused it during the year	38%	35%	12%		-	-	n/a		0	0
Healthcare (for those in care 12 months on 31 March)										
Number of children whose immunisations were up to date	85%	81%	85%		54.0%	53.0%	52.6%	↓	235	447
Number of children who had their teeth checked by a dentist	70%	68%	74%		30.0%	56.0%	67.6%	↑	302	447
Number of children who had their annual health assessment	89%	85%	88%		89.0%	90.0%	89.3%	↓	399	447
Number of these children whose development assessments were up to date (LAC 12+ months and aged 5 or younger at 31 March)	89%	95%	93%		71.0%	88.0%	69.4%	↓	34	49

Strengths and difficulties questionnaire

Children looked after for at least 12 months aged 4 to 16 with an SDQ score	77%	71%	76%	High	47.0%	51.0%	76.5%	↑	263	344
Average score per child	14	15	15	Low	14.1	14.9	15.1	↑		
Banded "Normal"	50%	46%	46%		49.0%	41.0%	43.7%	↑	115	263
Banded "Borderline"	12%	14%	13%		10.0%	16.0%	14.4%	↓	38	263
Banded "Cause for Concern"	37%	40%	40%	Low	42.0%	43.0%	41.8%	↓	110	263

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Workshop and Training Plan

Each committee at the County Council has its own training plan to help its members learn more about the business that the Committee covers. Each training session is listed, and a record is kept of which members of the committee attend.

Subject	Desired learning outcome	Priority	Date	Responsibility	Format	Audience	Attendance	% of Sub-Committee members attending
Member Induction Programme: Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	To brief new and returning Members and Substitute Members on the responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	High	Monday 12 July 2021	Nicola Curley/ Myra O'Farrell	Teams meeting	Members and Substitute Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	Cllrs Ambrose Smith Bird Bradnam Bulat Goodliffe M King Slatter van de Ven	60%
Member Induction Programme: Safeguarding	To brief on Members on safeguarding issues.	High	08 October 2021	Charlotte Black/ Lou Williams	Teams meeting	All Members	Cllrs Bulat Goodliffe Bird Bradnam Coutts Cox Condron Nethsingha van de Ven	40%

Subject	Desired learning outcome	Priority	Date	Responsibility	Format	Audience	Attendance	% of Sub-Committee members attending
Corporate Parenting and Foster Care	To brief Members on their role as corporate parents, with a particular focus on the work of foster carers.	High	22 October 2021	Fiona van den Hout	Teams	All Members	Bulat Goodliffe Hay Slatter Nethsingha van de Ven	40%
Supporting the mental and emotional health needs of children in care/on the edge of care	The aim of this session is to introduce CYP Members and the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee to the clinical framework and how it supports our foster carers and contributes to the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.		7 April 2022 1.30 – 2.30pm	Alison Bennett	Teams meeting	All CYP and CPSC members	Cllrs Atkins, Bradnam, Goodliffe, M King, Hay, Hoy and Slatter	80%

Subject	Desired learning outcome	Priority	Date	Responsibility	Format	Audience	Attendance	% of Sub-Committee members attending
The Role of the Foster Carer	To brief Members of the role of foster carers.	Medium	21 October 2022	Ricky Cooper	Teams meeting	All Members	Cllrs A Bradnam, A Bulat, Cox Condron, Daunton, B Goodliffe, S King, S Taylor, Whelan, Wilson	40%
Member Induction Programme: Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	To brief new and returning Members and Substitute Members on the responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	High	(from 2024 annually in June)	HOS CP / Service Director	Virtual	All CPSC Members invited		
Safeguarding & the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	To brief Members on safeguarding issues and responsibilities	High	TBC	Service Director QAPI/ Janet Farr	Virtual	All CPSC Members invited		

Subject	Desired learning outcome	Priority	Date	Responsibility	Format	Audience	Attendance	% of Sub-Committee members attending
Contextual Safeguarding	To brief member on contextual safeguarding approach	High	TBC Nov 2023	Service Director/HOS Youth Services	Virtual	All CPSC Members invited		
Meeting the Needs of Children in Care	To include briefings from Education, SEND, Clinical Team	High	TBC Feb 2024	Service Director/HOS CP	Virtual	All CPSC Members invited		
Potential LGA training	Confidence in undertaking the role of a corporate parent and the scrutiny of the work to support CIC and promote the best outcomes. (Greater depth than induction)	High	TBC	Service Director	Virtual/or in person	All CPSC Members invited		

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Agenda Plan

Notes

The definition of a key decision is set out in the Council's Constitution in Part 2, Article 12.
* indicates items expected to be recommended for determination by full Council.
\+ indicates items expected to be confidential, which would exclude the press and public.

The following are standing agenda items which are considered at every Committee meeting:

- Minutes of previous meeting and Action Log
- Workshop and Training Plan
- Agenda Plan

Summary

The Agenda Plan shows the dates and times of future meetings and what reports are expected to be considered. Unless otherwise stated, all public meetings will be held in the Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon PE28 4YE.

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Public Meeting
Meeting Theme: Education

Date: 15.11.23	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
	1. Sub-Committee Agenda Plan	Brian Relph / Ranjit Chambers		02.11.23	06.11.22
	2. Sub-Committee Workshop/Training Plan	CP HOS Catherine Isaacs			
	3. Participation Report	Participation / Emma Dawes			
	4. Performance Scorecard	Brian Relph / Ranjit Chambers			
	5. Virtual Schools – College/school results report/VS Annual report	Claire Hiorns			

Date: 15.11.23	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
	6. Children in Care/Care Leavers EET Promotion Action Plan Update	Mark Cowdell			
	7. Cambridgeshire Foster Carers' Association Update	Tracey Stephenson / Jo Spender			
	8. Development of Cambridgeshire Fostering Service	Jo Spender			
	9. Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2022/23	Catherine Isaacs CCC CP HOS			

Informal Meeting (Not open to the public)
Meeting Theme: Health

Date: 17.01.24	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
	1.				n/a
	2.				

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee Public Meeting
Meeting Theme: Health

Date: 20.03.24	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
	1. Agenda Plan	Ranjit Chambers		07.03.24	11.03.24
	2. Workshop/Training Plan	Catherine Isaacs CP HOS			

Date: 20.03.24	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
	3. Participation Report	Participation Emma Dawes / new Service Manager			
	4. Performance Scorecard	Ranjit Chambers			
	5. Cambridgeshire Foster Carers' Association report	Tracey Stephenson / Jo Spender, Fostering HOS			
	6. Corporate Parenting 3-yr strategy	Ranjit Chambers			