

Appendix A4

2020/21 Q2 –

CHILDREN’S SERVICES, EDUCATION & SKILLS

Key Activities Q2

Work with and challenge schools’ performance to ensure that all are good or outstanding

Ofsted has currently suspended all inspection activity for the autumn term 2020. At this stage it is unknown whether they will commence re-inspection from January 2021. They will be visiting schools to examine the response to Covid-19 but this will not contain a judgement.

All examinations were suspended in 2020 and therefore there will no new Island wide data relating to early years, end of primary education, GCSE or A levels until examinations are recommenced in 2021.

The work of the school improvement team has been switched to supporting the response to the coronavirus pandemic. Schools on the Island have performed well during lockdown with higher proportions of children being in attendance than seen nationally. The school improvement team worked alongside schools’ leaders to prepare for the re-opening of schools from the beginning of term. This work has been successful with all schools on the Island reopened in full. Attendance during the initial few weeks has been higher than seen nationally.

The school improvement team is working with public health and the media team to advise headteachers when there is a suspected or confirmed positive case. Where bubbles of children have to self-isolate the school improvement team are supporting schools to switch to remote learning. For primary aged pupils they have developed the first two days of lessons plans, linked to national curriculum year objectives, to assist schools. A multi-agency programme is being delivered based upon national initiatives to support students’ well-being as they return to schools. All well-being leads in all schools will be offered two free twilights of training to attend to support this activity.

School improvement officers are also reverting to more traditional activity however the focus of this will be on how each school is adapting the curriculum to ensure children and young people can make rapid progress to access age related education. There will also be a focus on making sure children from disadvantaged groups make strong progress. This work will stand Island schools in good stead for when Ofsted recommence inspection activity.

Maintain focus on children's safeguarding practice to ensure a high quality of service with effective systems to protect children and keep them safe

The investment in the Transformation Programme continues with the focus on keeping more children safely at home. The implementation of this programme has continued throughout quarter two, despite some of the challenges experienced throughout lockdown.

Demand for children’s social care on the Isle of Wight continues to be higher when compared to statistical neighbours and the England averages.

	CONTACTS	REFERRALS	% PROGRESSED TO CIN REFERRALS
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Q1 2018/19	3522	869	24.7%
Q2 2018/19	3319	923	27.8%
Q3 2018/19	4096	1101	26.9%
Q4 2018/19	3280	920	28.0%
Q1 2019/20	3346	972	29.0%
Q2 2019/20	3601	1074	29.8%
Q3 2019/20	3130	975	31.2%
Q4 2019/20	2923	994	34.0%
Q1 2020/21	2709	877	32.4%
Q2 2020/21	3138	998	31.8%

As with other local authorities, the number of contacts decreased initially during the coronavirus pandemic lockdown as most children remained at home but has since risen as children returned to school and national lockdown ended. However, the percentage that progressed to a referral remained in line with previous quarters and demonstrates consistent thresholds being maintained at CRT/MASH. During lockdown, in line with national data, Police were the highest referrers locally.

The latest published data has the rate of referrals for the Isle of Wight at 974.7 per 10,000, the highest across the Isle of Wight's statistical neighbours (average 531.87) and above the England average of 544.5. This is why continued investment into early help and prevention is a priority to support families before they reach a point of being referred to children's social care.

	The number of children subject to child protection planning	% timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (within 15 days)	% of repeat child protection plans (within 2 years of previous)	% of review child protection conferences held within timescales
Q2 2018/19	155	98	0	100
Q3 2018/19	170	80	19.6	98
Q4 2018/19	167	91	12.5	100
Q1 2019/20	133	100	12.5	94.9
Q2 2019/20	128	89	20.8 (13.3 within 2 years)	100
Q3 2019/20	123	89	8.6	100
Q4 2019/20	126	81	8.8	96.9
Q1 2020/21	136	91	9.2	100
Q2 2020/21	146	92	10.5	100

- It should be noted that due to small numbers involved percentages can sometimes be misleading

During the Covid-19 lockdown period, there has been an increase in the number of children subject to child protection planning-in line with national trends. Child protection conferences were enabled to be held virtually, thus ensuring continuity of multi-agency safeguarding planning. The Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) timeliness remains above the target of 85 per cent as does the percentage of

children subject to a second or subsequent plan above the target of 23 per cent and review conferences in timescale at 100 per cent.

The rate of children subject to child protection planning is 66.3 per 10,000, the second highest in the Isle of Wight statistical neighbours group and above the England national average of 43.70 (based on latest available data 2019)

Average caseload numbers across the service continue to be stable. However, the Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Teams, responsible for assessment, child protection and child in need planning and, have seen increased demand over quarter two. This is being safely addressed through additional investment by the council in temporary agency social workers and planning for the recruitment of more permanent social workers. This continues to allow social workers to undertake direct work with families with effective interventions which sustain change to safeguard children and improve their outcomes.

	Children in Care	% Looked after children reported missing	Care leavers supported	% Care leavers in Education, Employment or Training
Q2 2018/19	240	2.0	119	56.3
Q3 2018/19	239	2.2	121	58.7
Q4 2018/19	244	2.9	117	64.0
Q1 2019/20	256	2.0	110	63.6
Q2 2019/20	256	2.3	109	67.0
Q3 2019/20	260	1.6	114	66.0
Q4 2019/20	267	1.1	110	68.0
Q1 2020/21	274	4.1	113	68.0
Q2 2020/21	277	3.0	110	66.0

The number of children in care remains a significant pressure on the service with regards to costs of placements. The national rise in numbers of children in care is five per cent although locally this is seven per cent per annum. Numbers increased in the second quarter related mainly to parental mental ill-health. Following Covid-19 lockdown ending and a full return to school, it is anticipated that demand in this area will continue to rise. The average rate of children in care per 10,000 in 2019 in England was 65, and the Isle of Wight was second highest out of its statistical neighbour group at 98.

49 percent of children in care are placed with Isle of Wight Council foster carers and an active recruitment campaign continues, with more new fostering households approved. The ongoing Transformation Programme is focussed on keeping children safely at home and returning them home when it is safe to do so.

There is a very small cohort of children that go missing regularly, usually these children are late returning to placement. Robust processes continue to be in operation in terms of multi-agency high risk strategy meetings and return conversations for children who go missing. A child exploitation risk assessment (CERAF) is undertaken with each child and medium/high risk children are considered at a multi-agency risk assessment conference to ensure that information is shared, and effective collaborative plans are in place that reduces the risks to children.

The recruitment of experienced permanent and agency social workers continues to be a challenge locally and nationally. Targeted social media marketing has resulted in five permanent social workers being recruited, four as the second cohort onto the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Graduate Entry Training Scheme (GETS). Four out of the five GETS in the first cohort have passed and one awaits assessment.

The provision of a market supplement and payment of relocation expenses ensures that the Isle of Wight remains competitive in attracting staff compared to other local areas. Current agency social worker rate is eight per cent. Due to a robust recruitment and retention strategy, action plan and working group, the Isle of Wight continues to have lower rates of social worker vacancies, turnover and use of agency staff when compared nationally.

Work with and challenge schools in financial deficit to secure a more sustainable position for the schools and the council

Schools continue to be monitored through receipt of their formal three year budget plans, which for 2020/21 the deadline was extended to the 30 June to allow for Covid-19 related delays and to overcome logistical issues in relation to governor sign off of proposed budgets and all schools honoured this deadline. At March 2020 year end, thirteen schools were in deficit and the June 2020 budget plans indicate this reducing to nine over the course of 2020/21 through implementing active budget recovery plans, assisted by increases in school formula funding factors mainly in the region of 4.6 per cent. The formal approval of the funding formula in January 2020 increased the amount of funding allocated to schools through the Dedicated Schools Grant. School budget plans and balances were reviewed by the Director of Childrens Services in July, with proposed actions or increased oversight applied to those considered to be higher risk financially ahead of the mid-year budget update scheduled for November. Indicative funding allocations and modelling on the 2021/22 funding formula will be prepared through the Autumn.

Work to deliver an Island Higher Education (HE) Prospectus by April 2020, based on current opportunities offered on Island.

The Island HE Prospectus (“Blue Sky Thinking. Your guide to higher education on the Isle of Wight”) was produced on time.

Encourage schools to work collectively in the delivery of improved sixth form provision on the Island.

As part of the i-Aspire project, the Isle of Wight Council is supporting an improvement in post-16 A level outcomes. The programme is currently suspended due to Covid-19 but will recommence as soon as it is possible.

Resolve the issue of surplus primary school places in the West Wight area.

This has now been resolved with the closure of All Saints primary school and the relocation of Yarmouth primary school

Through joint working across council services, work to ensure that care leavers housing needs are properly met.

Isle of Wight children's social care has developed a 'Pathways to Independent Adulthood' commissioned offer of supported accommodation. This is a tiered approach providing different levels of linked supported accommodation depending on need which leads to as full independence as possible. This includes a 'training' house whereby a group of four are supported to learn to live together as a household to prepare them for the private rented sector, a housing application or to buy a house together. The Council's decision, as corporate parents, to waive payment of council tax for care leavers is a key contributory factor to enable care leavers to live independently.

A new Homelessness Personal Advisor continues to support care leavers who are at risk of homelessness. In 2019, the England average was 39 per cent and statistical neighbours 41 per cent. On the Isle of Wight in September this was only fifteen per cent with only six care leavers spending one night or more in hotel bed and breakfast accommodation in the last twelve months. Our innovative supported accommodation approach is part of the Council's Local Offer.

The Local Offer for Care Leavers sets out the support provided to care leavers to access employment, education or training. The team works with Island Futures, Job Centre Plus and the Isle of Wight College. Each care leaver has an individual pathway plan, which is updated regular and ensure support is tailored to young people's needs. Young people report that lockdown provided them with the time and space to think about their futures and to start making plans in terms of education, employment and training.

Grow the number of foster carers and adoptive parents on the Isle of Wight.

Enabling children to remain safely at their family home is the focus of our social work practice. Securing island foster care and adoptive homes for island children when they cannot remain safely at home is a priority. During 2019/2020 the service successfully recruited and approved nine new fostering households. At the end of quarter two 2020, there were further fostering households approved, with the total now 132 registered foster carers in the Isle of Wight constituting 91 fostering households with six more undergoing assessment.

The Fostering Service has a marketing strategy for 2020/2021; with a target to recruit fifteen fostering households.

The recruitment areas of focus for 2020/21 is:

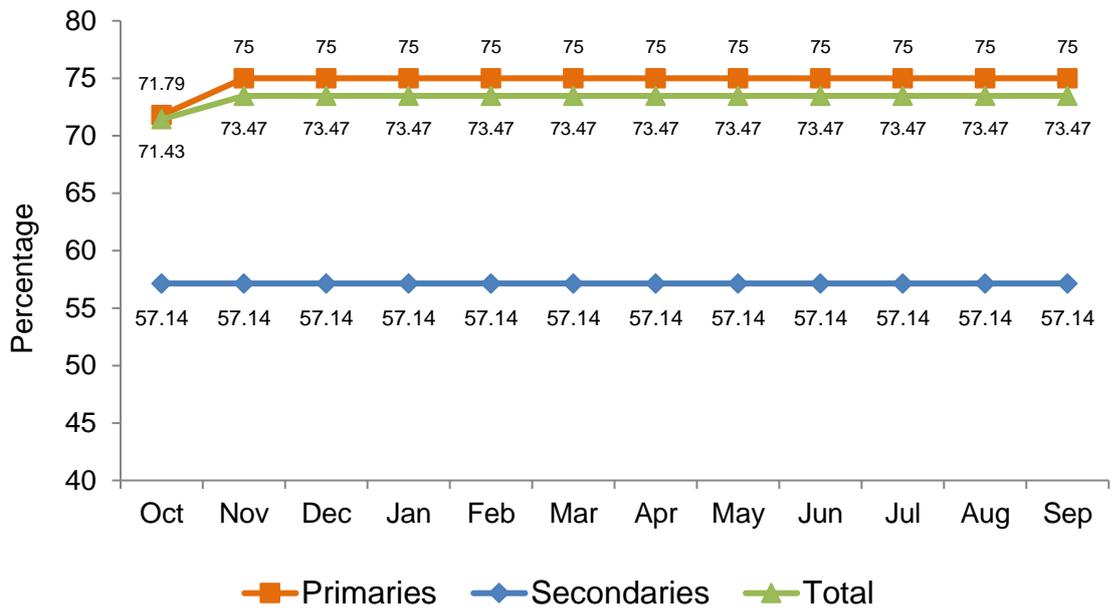
- An increase in mainstream foster carers.*
- An increase in foster carers for teenagers and more complex children*
- More targeted and timely assessments of prospective foster carers.*

Following a restructuring of fostering and adoption at the start of quarter one, the new combined permanence (fostering and adoption) is in operation. The service continues to work with Adopt South. As part of the departments transformation programme children's social care will be working closely with Hampshire Children's Services over the next twelve months to deliver the 'Modernising Placement Planning' workstream which will address the following areas to further enhance our sufficiency of placements and the quality of provision;

- Develop a culture of Trauma Informed Parenting*
- Change our foster carers' fees*
- Develop a 'Hive' foster care network*
- Develop Urgent and Extended Care Services*

Short Term Measures

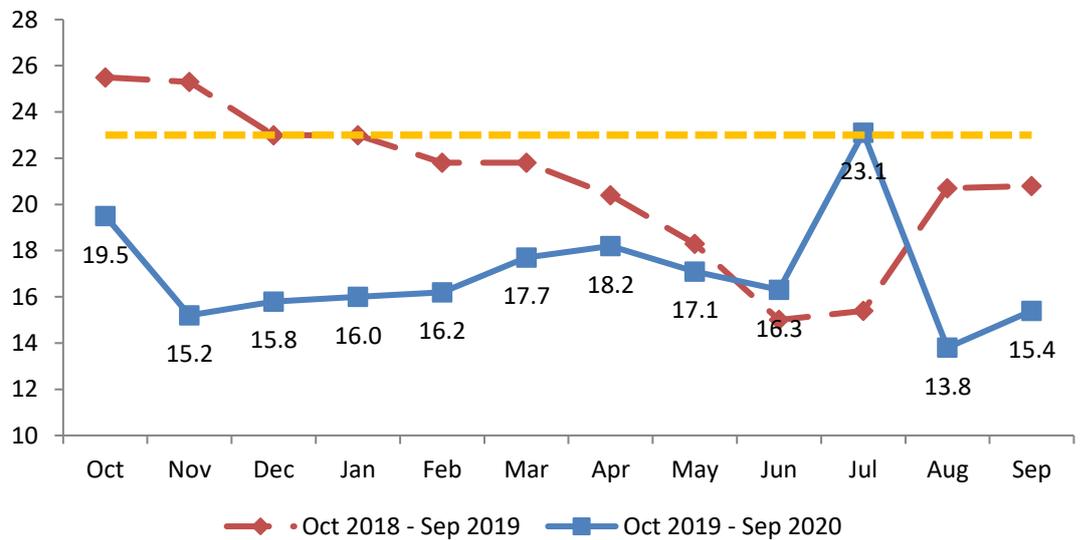
Percentage of schools graded as 'good' or outstanding in the most recent inspection (not including schools with no inspection score)



Ofsted inspections have been suspended during the coronavirus pandemic

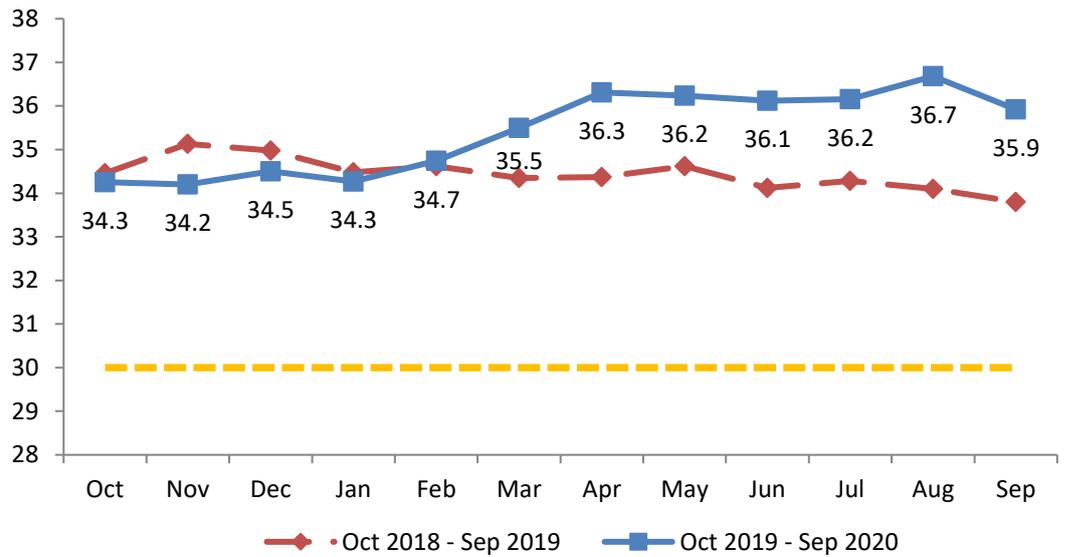
The Bay CE School is included within both primary and secondary statistics as it is an all through school that caters for 5 to 16 year olds.

Percentage of children who are subject to a repeat child protection plan (within two years of the previous plan) (Rolling 12 months)



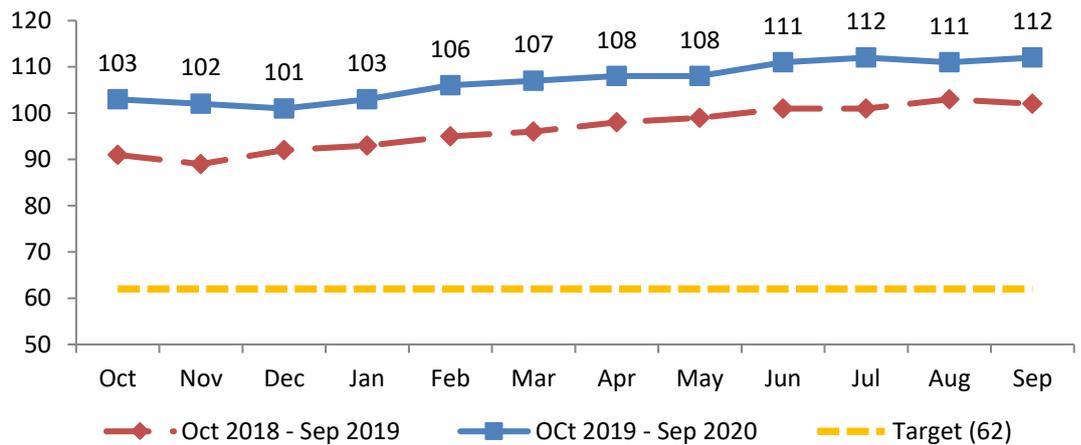
This remains below target. Child protection conferences continue to be held virtually. For a minority of children, their family circumstances will have multiple issues which will present back on a plan. It is anticipated following covid lockdown and the impact on vulnerable families previously on a plan, that this is likely to increase.

Percentage of children with re-referrals within 12 months (Rolling 12 months)



Due to the complexity of the cases being referred during lockdown, cases remain open for longer impacting on rising caseloads.

Number of children looked after at month end (rate per 10,000 population) (Rolling 12 months)



The rate continues to rise locally as it does nationally. It is anticipated that Covid-19 and lockdown may impact disproportionately vulnerable families and could lead to a further long-term increase in this rate.

The rates and projections are factored into the Isle of Wight Sufficiency Duty report to inform future commissioning of places for children to live.

Strategic Risks

Failure to improve educational attainment			Assigned to:		
			Director of Children's Services		
Inherent score	Target score	Current score	Previous scores		
			Jun 20	Mar 20 (pre-pandemic response)	Feb 20
16 RED	6 GREEN	10 AMBER	11 AMBER	9 AMBER	9 AMBER
Risk decreasing					

Failure to identify and effectively manage situations where vulnerable children are subject to abuse			Assigned to:		
			Director of Children's Services		
Inherent score	Target score	Current score	Previous scores		
			Jun 20	Mar 20 (pre-pandemic response)	Feb 20
16 RED	5 GREEN	7 AMBER	7 AMBER	8 AMBER	8 AMBER
No change to risk score					