

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

## Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

22 January 2020

**Time** 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny

**Venue** Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

### Membership

**Chair** Cllr Rita Potter (Lab)  
**Vice-chair** Cllr Sohail Khan (Con)

#### Labour

Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur  
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi  
Cllr Clare Simm  
Cllr Rashpal Kaur  
Cllr John Rowley  
Cllr Paul Sweet  
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar  
Cllr Paula Brookfield

#### Conservative

Cllr Udey Singh

Quorum for this meeting is four Voting Members.

### Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

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Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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# Agenda

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1            **Apologies**
- 2            **Declarations of interest**
- 3            **Minutes of the previous meeting (27 November 2019)** (Pages 3 - 8)  
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]
- 4            **Matters arising**  
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes]

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5            **Children's Social Care Self- Evaluation Refresh 2019/20 ( report to follow)**  
(Pages 9 - 48)  
[Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker, to present report]
- 6            **Culture of Belonging Programme** (Pages 49 - 60)  
[Robert Hart, Head of Service Inclusion Support and Adrian Leach, Head of SEND to present report]
- 7            **School Improvement Annual Report ( report to follow)** (Pages 61 - 76)  
[Amanda Newbold, Head of School Improvement, to present report]
- 8            **Children, young people and Children Scrutiny Panel 2019 20 - Draft Work Programme** (Pages 77 - 78)  
[Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, to present report]

## Attendance

### Members of the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Beverley Momenabadi  
Cllr Rita Potter (Chair)  
Cllr Udey Singh  
Cllr Rashpal Kaur  
Cllr Sohail Khan (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Paul Sweet  
Cllr Paula Brookfield  
Wolverhampton Youth Council

### In Attendance

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

### Employees

Earl Piggott-Smith  
Dawn Williams  
Andrew Wolverson  
James Barlow  
Bill Hague

Scrutiny Officer  
Head of Service Safeguarding  
Head of Service, People  
Finance Business Partner  
Head of School Organisations

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## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

- 1        **Apologies**  
Apologies were received from the following members of the panel:  
  
Cllr John Rowley  
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
- 2        **Declarations of interest**  
There were no declarations of interest recorded.
- 3        **Minutes of the previous meeting (25 September 2019)**  
That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4        **Matters arising**  
There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**5 Cabinet Member Briefing - Cllr Michael Hardacre**

Cllr Michael Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, presented his paper. The paper was drafted in response to questions submitted by panel. The panel were invited to comment on the responses and also to raise any matters of clarification.

The panel invited the Cabinet Member to comment on the relationship between the Council and academies. The Cabinet Member responded that the good progress has been made to build positive working relationships with academies and the Council continues to work constructively with all schools in Wolverhampton. Bill Hague, Head of School Organisation, added that the Council has no direct control over academies and that partnership working was considered to be essential for achieving educational success. The Head of School Organisation commented on the range of work done to build good working relationships with schools, for example, an annual conversation takes place with individual Academy Trusts to share information and to review progress in the city. In addition, some Academy Trusts are purchasing school improvement support services from the Local Authority. The Cabinet Member wanted to formally acknowledge the success and national recognition of the school improvement offer service that is managed by the Head of School Improvement.

The panel queried the work done to monitor compliance by local schools with the DfE School Admissions Code and the success rate of parents when applying to their preferred school. The Cabinet Member explained that there is a general misunderstanding that parents have a choice of schools, when the legislation refers to parents expressing a preference. The Cabinet Member added that ideally he would have wanted to see 100% of parents getting their first preference as detailed in the report, but welcomes the current figures showing the majority being successful in getting their first preference.

The situation around the provision of additional school places is complicated by current legislation which states that any new school must be either an academy or free school. The Head of School Organisation explained the challenges this creates in trying to increase the number of school places to respond to the expected growth the school age population. The Head of School Organisation commented on the success in increasing extra provision at minimal costs at some schools, but this is expected to be more difficult in the future. There is expected to be an increase in demand for secondary school places in 2021.

The Head of School Organisation outlined the statutory responsibilities of the Council to check that schools are following the DfE School Admissions Code and can refer the matter to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator if there are concerns. The Council has not needed to make a referral since 2004. The Head of School Organisation added that a number of academies had adopted the admission arrangements prepared by the Council. In addition, the continued co-ordination of in-year admissions and subsequent pupil tracking processes have led to a 50% reduction in the number cases of children missing education.

The panel commented that the Council cannot compel schools to increase the number of places to meet demand and the difficulties in getting funding to build extra schools as part of any expansion programme. The panel supported plans to increase the provision of resource bases in schools to meet the need for specialist provision.

The Head of School Organisation commented on the increase in the number of children with educational health care plans and the view that some children with a disability can thrive in a mainstream school without the need for specialist educational provision.

The panel queried feedback received from the public to the Proposed All Age Travel Assistance Policy consultation. The panel were advised that the consultation ends on 29.11.19 and Chair encouraged panel members to complete on the online consultation form. The panel shared a range of views of the current provision and the challenge to provide specialist provision in more schools to reduce the need for long travel journeys.

The panel wanted reassurance that the responses to the proposals in the consultation will be properly taken into consideration before a decision is made. The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills explained the background to the proposals and advised the panel that any changes would not happen till September 2021 and offered a reassurance that all comments would be considered. The Cabinet Member outlined the public consultation events and the work done to encourage interested groups to share their views about the proposed changes. The panel were encouraged take part in the consultation. Andrew Wolverson commented on the importance of encouraging children to be independent travel where it is possible and helping to prepare them for adult life, when level of support offered will change.

The Cabinet Member agreed to bring a report of the findings and recommendations to a future meeting of the panel for pre-decision scrutiny.

Resolved:

1. The panel welcomed the report and thanked the presenters for their contributions.
2. The panel agreed to add the findings of the Proposed All Age Travel Assistance Policy consultation to a future agenda for pre-decision scrutiny.

## 6 **Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2020-2021 to 2023-2024**

James Barlow, Finance Business Partner, introduced the report and outlined changes to the format in response to feedback. The Panel were invited to comment on the Draft Budget and Medium-term Financial Strategy and the specific proposals within the remit of the Panel. The Panel highlighted the need to have information specifically related to destinations for post sixteen-year olds. The Finance Business Partner agreed to note the comment and consider the level of detail when producing future reports.

The Finance Business Partner outlined an analysis of the budget for children and young people services. The majority of the spend in education was funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant which is a ringfenced for specific activities. It was reported that 24% (£56.9 million) of net revenue expenditure budget was for services for children and young people. The Panel made the following comments on the specific budget proposals.

The Head of Service - People, added that a significant amount of the budget expenditure was on service transformation work. Wolverhampton was performing much better when compared to regional and national trends.

The Head of Service explained in the budget proposal for Transforming Children's Services that £500,000 of the predicted budgeted spend would no longer be required due to range of activities that was expected to reduce demand on children services. The Head of Service People gave an example of the longer-term benefits of early investment in speech and language services for children which would reduce demand for more specialist services in the future. The Head of School Organisation commented on the planned consultations about funding options that would be discussed at the Schools Forum.

The Panel queried the options being considered for Towers Outdoor Activity Centre. The Head of School Organisation advised the Panel that no decision had been made about the possible options for the future of the service.

The Panel discussed the importance of investment in speech and language therapy services for children.

Resolved:

1. The Panel comments on the Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24 and the draft budget proposals relevant to the remit of the panel to be included in the response to Scrutiny Board for consideration.
2. A final response to be finalised by the Chair and Vice Chair.

7 **Wolverhampton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements**  
Dawn Williams, Head of Safeguarding, gave a presentation detailing reasons for making changes to the safeguarding arrangements for children and adults. The Head of Safeguarding outlined the current structure of the Safeguarding Board, changes introduced by national guidance and the new governance arrangements for the newly established Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together (WST). The Head of Safeguarding outlined details of the membership of WST and the specific aims of the group. The Head of Safeguarding commented on the importance of learning from child death reviews and improving everyday practice. A focus of the proposed changes is providing appropriate challenge to services about the extent to which they are making a real difference to improving safeguarding arrangements.

The Head of Safeguarding commented on the additional external scrutiny arrangements. The panel queried the sharing of information from meetings about safeguarding matters and sought reassurance that frontline would be kept updated. The Head of Safeguarding accepted the importance of sharing information and also the challenges created under the previous arrangements with frequent changes in representatives who attended meetings of the Safeguarding Board. A smaller group of key people at the executive level is expected to improve the situation.

The panel queried the training given to staff at Wolverhampton Homes on using the ECLIPSE Multi-Agency Safeguarding software system and plans for providing training for new staff.

The panel commented on the success of the promotional video created by Youth Council and whether it could be shared with younger school children done with members of the B-Safe Team.

The Head of Safeguarding commented that the video would not be appropriate to younger children and ideas would be considered that would reach children aged 8-9 years old.

The Head of Safeguarding commented that the new Independent Scrutineer role would be paid for about 15 days' work annually. The job description for the role has been drafted and would be advertised shortly. The panel discussed the issue of raising the importance of safeguarding issues among community and faith groups. The Head of Safeguarding suggested the idea of introducing an accreditation system to encourage people to attend events and improve their knowledge of the issue.

Resolved:

The panel welcomed the report and agreed to note the proposals for strengthening safeguarding arrangements in Wolverhampton.

8 **Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2018 - 2019 (information only)**

The panel agreed to note the report.

9 **Children, Young People and Children Scrutiny Panel 2019 20 - Draft Work Programme**

Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, presented the report and invited panel members to comment and add topics that fall within its remit.

Resolved:

The panel work programme to be updated to reflect issues discussed during the meeting.

The meeting ended at 19:45

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## Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

22 January 2020

<b>Report title</b>	Children and Young people's Social Work Self-Evaluation	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor John Reynolds Children and Young People's Service	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services	
<b>Originating service</b>	Quality and Improvement	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Louise Haughton	Principal Social Worker
	Tel	01902 555534
	Email	Louise.Haughton@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Children and Young People's Management Team	28.11.2019

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Support the development priorities for 2019-20 as outlined within the Self-Evaluation of social work practice.
2. Consider and comment on whether the self-evaluation report answers the three questions asked by Ofsted as outlined in the main body of the report
3. Consider and comment on whether there are any important issues that are not addressed within the report findings.

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft Annual Self-Evaluation of Children's Social Care for the panel to consider and comment upon.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Inspecting Local Authorities Children Services is a system of inspection. Under this system, Ofsted use the intelligence and information they have to inform decisions about how best to inspect each local authority. This system includes:

- local authorities sharing an annual self-evaluation of the quality and impact of social work practice
- an annual engagement meeting between our regional representatives and the local authority to review the self-evaluation and to reflect on what is happening in the local authority and inform how they would engage with each other in future
- our local authority intelligence system (LAIS) (which brings data and information into a single record)
- focused visits that look at a specific area of service or cohort of children
- standard and short inspections where we make judgements using our four-point scale
- joint targeted area inspection (JTAI)

- 2.2 This report relates to the annual self-evaluation which was shared with Ofsted in June 2019 and included data for the financial year. Local authorities are asked to share a self-evaluation of social work practice. The self-evaluation should draw on information and documentation that already exists within local authorities and is used to monitor the quality of services provided to children, young people and their families.

- 2.3 The Self-Evaluation should answer three questions:

- What do you know about the quality and impact of social work practice in your local authority?
- How do you know it?
- What are your plans for the next 12 months to improve?

## 3.0 Progress

- 3.1 The Self-Evaluation of social work practice presents an improving picture of practice across both the Child in Need/Child Protection Service and the Children and Young People in Care Service.

- 3.2 The service has continued to manage demand well. At the end of March 2019 there were 624 children and young people in care, 328 children who had a child protection plan and 906 children who had a Child in Need Plan. These number have reduced to 588 Children and young people in care, 258 Children who have a child protection plan, 844 Children who have a child in need plan.

- 3.3 There are a whole range of workstreams that contribute to the management of demand, these include; an effective Early Help Service, an effective Specialist Support Service for children who are at risk of entering care, effective management of thresholds in the MASH and at admissions to care. As well as this the service works hard to ensure work with children is progressed in a timely manner through good planning and, regular reviews of the work being undertaken within the service are completed by service managers to ensure children are receiving the right support, at the right level.
- 3.4 Quality assurance activity has continued to show an improving picture of frontline social work practice with more audits being judged as good in each Practice Week.
- 3.5 Recruitment and retention is a key area of improvement, Turnover of social workers was 11% in September 2019 which is below the regional and national average. The West Midlands rate is 15.9%.
- 3.6 There has been a steady increase in the number of children in need who are seen within 5 days of their referral. In September 77.5% of these children were seen within the 5-day timescale compared with 55.3% in March 2019. This is an area that was highlighted as a concern in the previous inspection and the improving picture means that children in need are now receiving a timelier response.
- 3.7 Within Children and Young People in Care there are a number of good news stories, the first is that there are now more children in local authority placements than those placed with independent fostering agencies. This means that more children are being supported to remain local and able to access the support offered by Children and Young People in care Services easily.
- 3.8 Improving placement stability remains a key priority. Stability is now in line with statistical neighbours and national averages, but stronger performance is required. At September 2019, 71% of children in care had been in the same placement for two years and the percentage of children with three or more placements in the past 12 months had decreased from 15% to 10%.
- 3.9 It is excellent that there are currently 31 young people attending university which is 18% of the cohort.
- 3.10 The self-evaluation demonstrates that progress has been made against most of the key priorities and Ofsted recommendations outlined in the 2018-2019 self-evaluation. There is however still more to be done and key priorities are outlined below. The Children and Young People's service also has a detailed strategic plan that outlines work to be undertaken in 2019-20 that will further strengthen the quality and impact of the Councils work with Children, Young People and their families:
- Continuing to Improve workforce retention in order to provide children with greater consistency and establish a skilled and knowledgeable workforce who are fully equipped to help children and families achieve positive outcomes.

- There will be a continued focus on the quality of practice delivered through a Practice improvement action plan. This includes improving assessment analysis and planning, improving the quality of direct work to strengthen the voice of the child and ensuring restorative practice is imbedded within supervision which will promote a focus on the impact of interventions on the lived experience of children and explicitly provide opportunity for critical reflection.
- Embedding 'Practice Weeks' to ensure senior managers have a clear reflection of the quality of frontline practice and continue to use dip sampling both within practice week and in addition too.
- Implementing a single child's record system through Platform for Care, this will bring together recording systems for early intervention and statutory social work and enable practitioners to record the experience and journey of the child well.
- Implementing Wolverhampton's new arrangements for the Safeguarding Partnership.
- Review of governance structures relating to Contextual Safeguarding.
- Implementation of House Project for Care Leavers.
- Improving placement stability through a number of actions including embedding and extending the 'Fostering Families United' approach (a model that enables fostering families to intensively support each other).
- Embedding the Regional Adoption Agency.
- Continuing to embed Restorative Practice across Children's Services.
- The inclusion and support team are leading a project (Culture of Belonging) designed to help schools support greater inclusion and reduce permanent exclusions.

#### **4.0 Questions for Scrutiny to consider**

- 4.1 Comment on whether Scrutiny Panel considers the self-evaluation answers the three questions asked by Ofsted as outlined in the main body of the report
- 4.2 Comment on whether Scrutiny Panel is assured that the Children and Young people's Service knows itself well.
- 4.3 Comment on whether Scrutiny Panel considers there are any important issues that are not addressed within the Self-Evaluation.

#### **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.  
[MK/17012020/C]

#### **6.0 Legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications  
[TC/17012020/V]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

7.1 Social workers provide support to the whole community including the full range of diverse groups. Excellent quality social work practice will be more attuned to the equality issues experienced by individuals, families and communities. High quality social work will more competently deploy required skill in the practice situation. This annual Self-Evaluation demonstrates the quality of practice being provided to all groups that are supported by statutory services.

## **8.0 Environmental implications**

8.1 There are no environmental implications

## **9.0 Human resources implications**

9.1 There are no human resources implications

## **10.0 Corporate landlord implications**

10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications

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# Wolverhampton Children and Young People's Self-Evaluation 2019-20





## The City Of Wolverhampton

The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to ensuring children and young people have the best start in life and as such this is a central component of the Council Plan 2019-2024. There are 260,000 people who live in the City, 58,678 of these are children under the age of 18.

The City is home to people from all over the world – one third of the population is from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and 19% of residents were born outside of the UK. There are around 90 languages spoken in the City.

The number of children receiving formal support has decreased across all areas of Children's Social Care. This report will evidence an increase in good frontline practice, resulting in good outcomes for children. We hope the impact of this is that more families are able to enjoy family life independent of state intervention.

### **Children receiving support as at end of September 2019:**

588 Children and young people in care

258 Children who have a Child Protection Plan

844 Children who have a Child in Need Plan





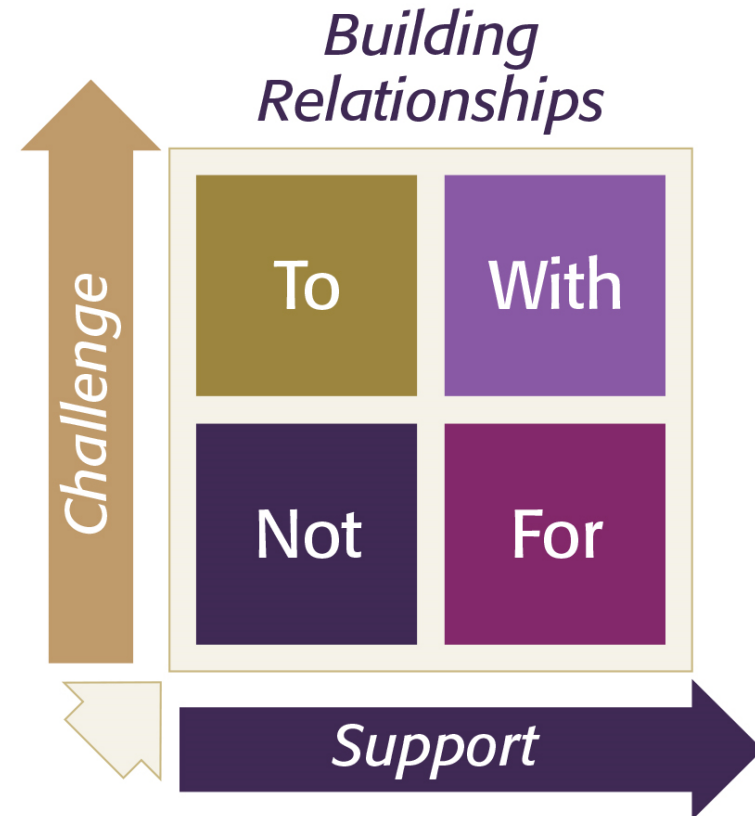
## Our Values for Children Services

- To develop respectful and empowering relationships with children, young people and families
- To ensure children are at the centre of everything we do
- High aspirations, high expectations

The Children and Young People's services began adopting a restorative approach to practice in November 2016. All frontline practitioners receive three days training in the approach.

The approach emphasises the importance of building effective relationships, working With families rather than doing things to them or for them and helping families make sustainable change.

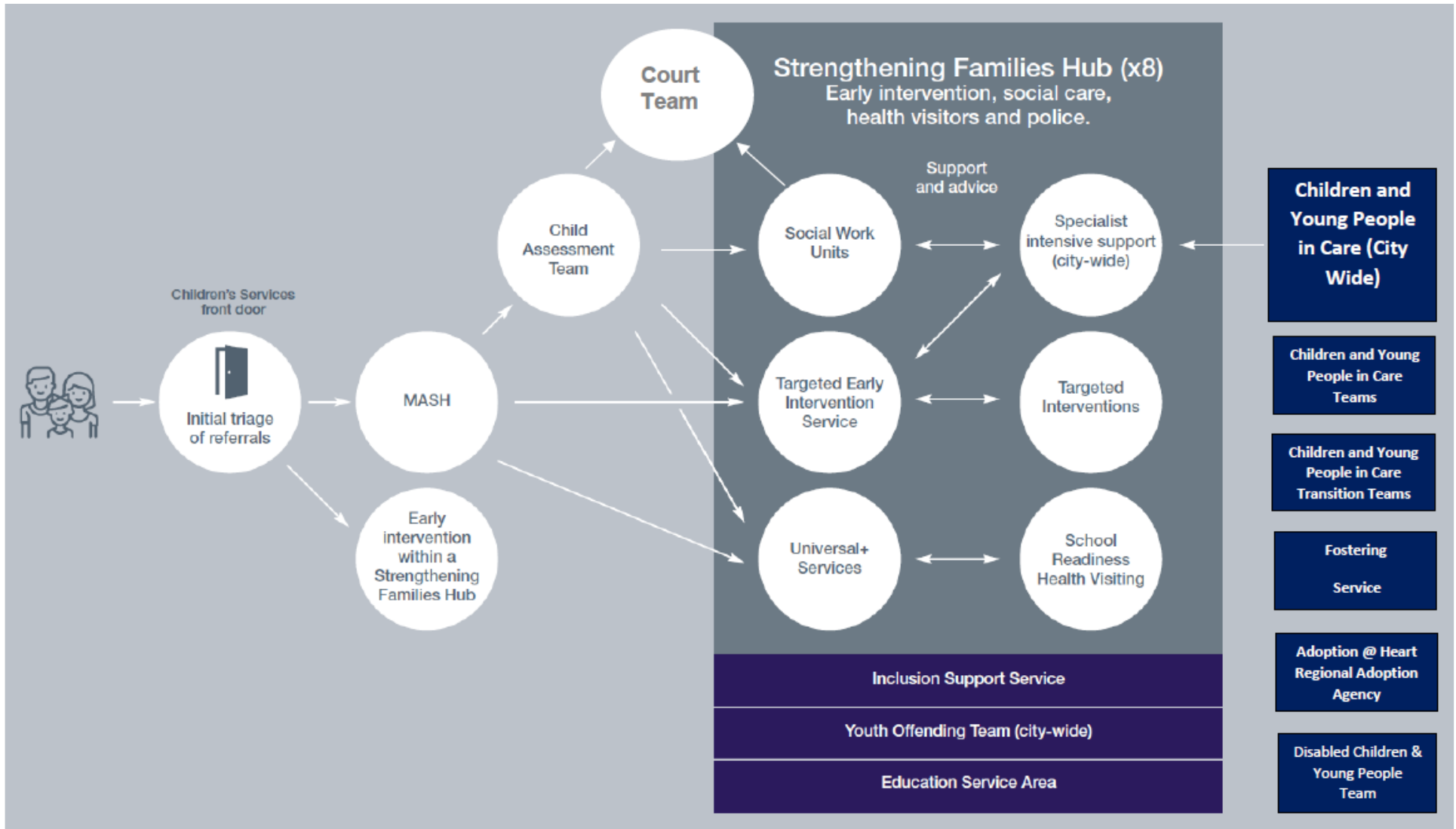
Restorative is a high support high challenge model that supports practitioners to be clear about concerns and set clear expectations whilst providing support to help families achieve these goals.



38 employees have participated in the three day Restorative Practice training between April 2019 and September 2019. There are examples of employees using the approach in family meetings to help family members understand how their actions impact on their loved ones. For some this has been effective in increasing the families motivation to change. Many employees also use restorative solution circles to generate ideas to work creatively with Children and Families where they feel the plan has not been effective in supporting change.

### City of Wolverhampton Children and Young people's Service Operating Model

Page 18



**City of Wolverhampton Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, Report published: 31 March 2017**



**Inspection Findings**

Children’s Services in Wolverhampton are Good

Children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
Children looked after and achieving permanence	Good
Adoption performance	Good
Experience and progress of care leavers	Good
Leadership, management and governance	Good

Since the Inspection an Ofsted focused visit was undertaken in September 2018. This focussed on Assessments and Children in Need and Child Protection Plans. This highlighted the following areas for development; progress against these areas is embedded within the main body of this self-assessment:

1. In locality team hubs, many assessments did not sufficiently describe the changes and emerging needs being experienced by children and families.
2. Plans were not sufficiently effective in reducing needs. They did not adapt to changing circumstances. Actions to address children’s unmet needs not sufficiently clear or specific. Nor did they include achievable actions and outcomes.
3. Social workers in some locality teams experienced excessively high caseloads.
4. While supervision was regular in locality team hubs, and social workers valued the support they received, supervision was not being used effectively to improve practice. Supervision was not sufficiently detailed or reflective.

## Children and Young people get the best start in life

### Strengthening families where children are at risk (Enables children to remain safely within families)

- Continue the successful delivery of the Troubled Families Programme in order to keep children safe and achieve positive outcomes as measured by the maturity matrix to ensure sustainability.
- Develop a sustainability plan that embeds and continues good practice evidenced through the **Headstart** programme
- Continue to embed a restorative approach across children and young people's service to ensure a relational way of working to help families achieve better outcomes.
- Co-produce and deliver a positive engagement strategy for young people
- Ensure effective engagement with national local evaluation to develop an evidence base for what works in supporting children's emotional health and wellbeing.
- Improve the short break offer for children with disabilities across the City.
- Develop an No Recourse to Public Funds Team that provides robust, consistent assessments to appropriately support families.
- Review the existing MASE process with a view to addressing exploitation in its broadest sense.
- Engage MASH partners to improve understanding of thresholds and appropriate referrals with their agency
- Improve transparency of decision making within MASH and communication with partners
- Review MASH structures to ensure effective working across the partnership
- Develop pre-proceedings processes to include multi-agency input
- Increase the use and engagement with family group conferencing to prevent family breakdown and reduce reliance on services. Use family group conferencing as an alternative to initial conference where safe to do so.
- Set up a Specialist Multi Agency Team to use Trauma Informed Practice to support young people at risk of exploitation.
- Support families in a timely manner bringing in relevant and appropriate services where required.
- Implement Working Together 2018 implications for Safeguarding Board
- Develop a governance and delivery framework for the implementation of contextual safeguarding

### Strengthening families where children are at risk (Children experience permanent and stable placements)

- To promote Early identification of vulnerable children likely to be subject to public law procedures to ensure clear plans in respect of early permanence
- Ensure Outline Child Protection plans developed are good quality
- Ensure we have the right young people in care ensuring permanence is secured in a timely manner.
- Improve opportunities for children and young people to live with carers approved by City of Wolverhampton Council to enhance opportunity and support the stability of placements.
- Ensure assessment and planning is of good quality and demonstrates improved outcomes for children
- Ensure children and young people are supported to live in suitable placements or accommodation that meets their needs.
- Strengthen the emotional wellbeing and therapeutic support services available for children and young people in care
- Ensure Sufficiency and Quality of placement for children and young people in care
- Embed a new in-house assessment children's home to reduce number of young people in external residential.
- Prepare for the change in law, from DOLS to Liberty Protection Safeguards, which will now include those **16-17 year** olds, in need of authorised assessments to protect their liberty.
- Ensure good practice is maintained with the implementation of the Regional Adoption Agency
- Demonstrate impact of Quality Assurance and performance management information on services provided to children and young people to meet their assessed needs.

### Strong resilient and healthy communities

- Support migration to Eclipse whilst ensuring we have continued performance information and a fit for purpose electronic recording system
- Work with all children and young people forums to develop a model which will promote a more consistent approach to co-production
- Work with the Department for Education and Future Social to implement the National Accreditation and Assessment System locally and enable 30% of the children's workforce to complete the programme

### Strengthening families where children are at risk (Less children and young people become involved or remain involved in the youth justice system)

- Increase the participation of YOT young people by ensuring their views are heard and used to shape future service provision.
- Increase victim contact and engagement in the Restorative Justice process.
- Implementation of **ChildFirst**. Offender second approach in community referral order panels to reduce the criminalisation of children and young people in care and care leavers.
- Ensure coordination of the partnership response to gangs and youth violence across the City.
- Develop a non-statutory 'prevention' offer within the YOT to reduce the number of first-time entrants into the youth justice system.
- Implement trauma informed practice across the YOT to support young people effected by trauma.

### Education that fulfils potential

- Implement a comprehensive, joined-up approach to identifying and supporting children who are at risk of exclusion or non-engagement in school.
- Improve educational engagement and attainment for children and young people in care, care leavers and young people involved in the youth justice system.
- Improve training and employment opportunities for 16 – 18-year olds children and young people in care, care leavers and young people involved in the youth justice system.
- Improve the integrated approach of assessment and planning for children with disabilities and SEN.
- Develop an improved understanding of our most vulnerable learners in order to inform a clear approach to inclusion and safeguarding
- To review and build on an integrated approach across Inclusion Support and SF Hubs
- To promote awareness and understanding of special educational needs and disabilities to support inclusion and a culture of belonging

Quality Assurance

<u>Audit Period</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>RI</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Overall total</u>
2018-2019	3	37	40 (40%)	43	17	60 (60%)	<b>100</b>
Sept 2019	2	9	11 (40%)	15	1	16 (60%)	<b>27</b>
Sept Dips	7	19	26 (65%)	11	3	14 (35%)	<b>40</b>
Sept 2019 Observations	2	8	10 (91%)	0	1	1 (9%)	<b>11</b>
Trajectory	Continued improvement in the number of outstanding Audits			The proportion of inadequate audits has decreased but the number of RI has remained consistent overall			



The Children and Young People’s service has significantly improved the way in which audit is undertaken across the service. Practice Weeks have been introduced since September 2018. All senior managers including the Director of Children’s Services now spend four days over two weeks undertaking; audits alongside practitioners, observing visits, meetings and practice, spending time with teams. This provides workers with immediate feedback, allows managers to understand how interventions are experienced by children and families first hand and increases the visibility of senior managers.

## Quality Assurance

- **Key areas of strength include;** social workers know their children and families well and can tell their stories, timely permanence for children who can not remain in the care of their parents, there is more evidence of direct work but this needs to be reflected more in plans.
- **Green shoots include;** The timeliness and quality of assessments could be further improved to ensure assessments are leading to effective interventions and improved outcomes for children and young people. Some supervision records evidence excellent practice but greater consistency is required and supervision records need to evidence that supervision is leading to effective social work practice more.
- **Areas for development include;** evidence of the use of specialist assessment tools, although this is starting to improve, family meetings being utilised, quality of PEP's, completion and quality of chronologies, SMART plans which are child focused and include the voice of the child, and greater evidence of different plans like MASE plans being co-ordinated and complimentary. Performance in relation to Voice of the Child and Direct Work decreased in the general audit despite the dip on Direct Work being generally positive. It was notable the some teams performed significant better than others in relation to this. A Practice Action plan is now in development to ensure improvement activity is focused and well co-ordinated

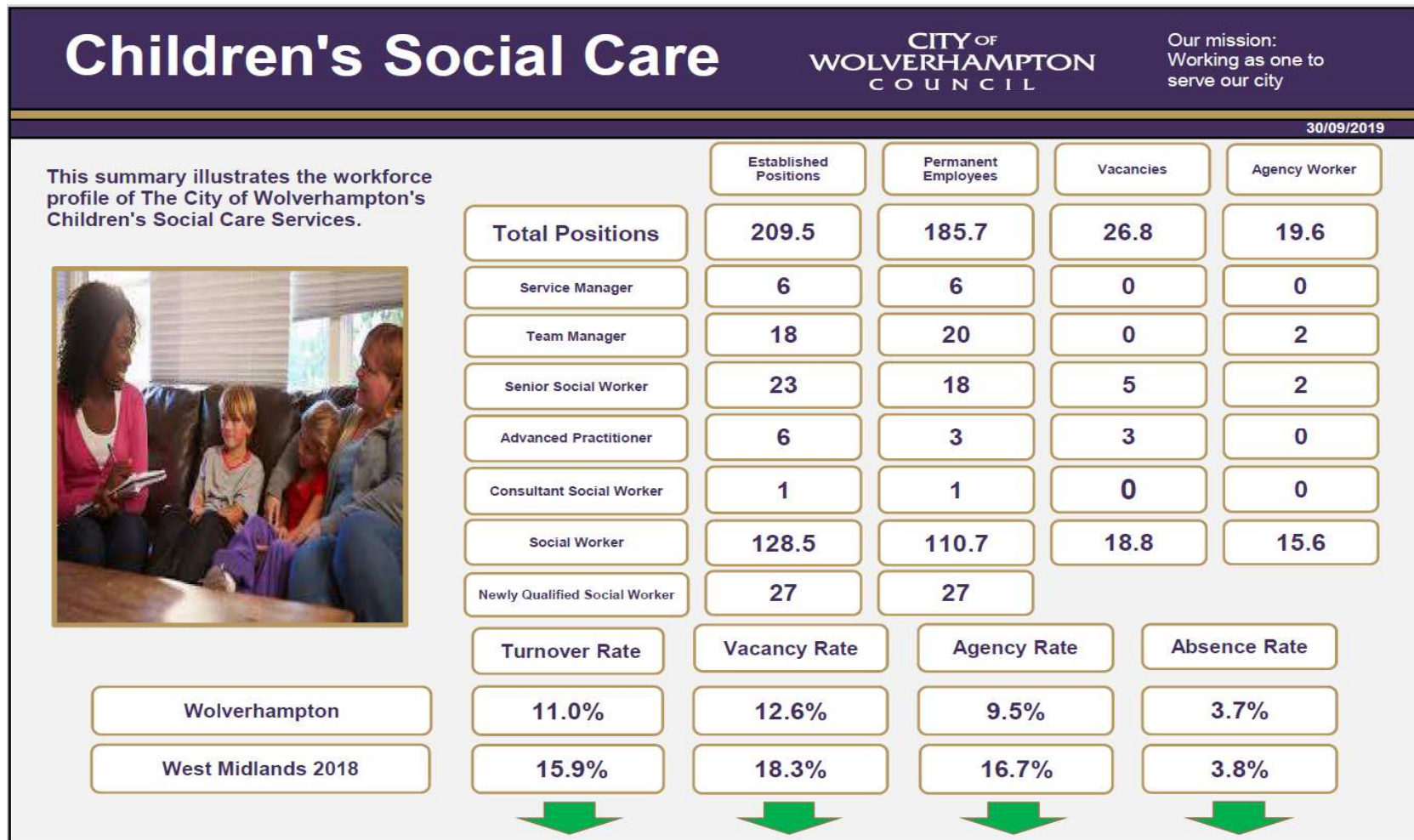
## Action planning

- A Practice Improvement Action Plan is in Development to raise consistency of practice in relation to Voice of the Child, Direct Work and Smart and impact focused planning
- Dip sample for December Practice Week is Voice of the Child
- A Planning Dip sample is also scheduled for December and is being undertaken by social care and the IRO service.



### Workforce

Following a restructure across Children and Young People in November 2018 the social work workforce has begun to stabilise. The service is now fully staffed at service manager and team manager level. This is leading to greater stability for social workers, a greater focus on the progression of work and a reduction in caseloads for social workers holding CiN/CP work. Six additional social work positions have been established within the Children and Young People in Care Service in order to reduce workload inline with CiN/CP and enable good quality support for foster carers.



### School exclusions

Wolverhampton Behaviour & Attendance Team work closely with schools and alternative providers in the city, along with School Admissions and other key partners, to ensure that permanently excluded pupils are referred to alternative provision in a timely manner. Transitions between schools and alternative providers are supported throughout the process and excluded children, and their parents/carers, are enabled to express their wishes and feelings throughout. Exclusion Prevention Meetings are also offered to schools as a proactive means of avoiding exclusion and supporting pupils who are at risk of exclusion.

The graph below shows the numbers of pupils excluded from Wolverhampton schools by academic year. 2018/19 has seen a continued increase in exclusions due to reasons related to drug, alcohol and banned items.

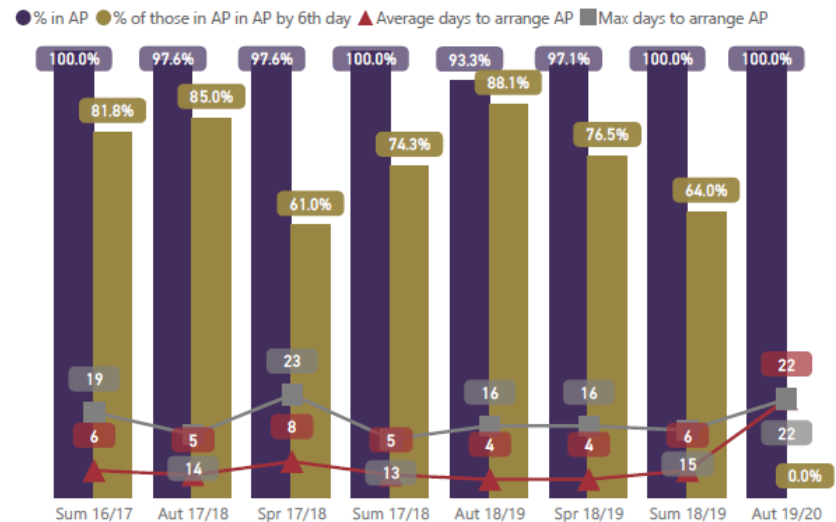
The bottom graph shows numbers and impact of exclusion prevention meetings (EPM) held, by academic year. The use of EPMs has increased and show a high degree of success, with 75% of those who had one not being excluded within 3 months.

Indicator	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Primary (exc. Withdrawn/Overtured/Pending)	14	22	28	21	15	0
Secondary (exc. Withdrawn/Overtured/Pending)	27	67	89	96	89	1
Special/PRU (exc. Withdrawn/Overtured/Pending)	0	3	6	1	1	0
X-City	18	12	7	9	12	0
Withdrawn/Overtured	0/3	5/2	11/7	2/5	4/1	1/0
% of permanent exclusions reported to the DfE by schools	41%	57%	68%	48%	33%	0%
Average number of Days taken to arrange Provision	7	5	8	6	6	12
Fixed Period Exclusions				2323	2781	165

Exclusion prevention meetings	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Meetings Held	89	79	103	5
% Meetings that did not result in Permanent Exclusion within 3 months	78%	84%	88%	100%
% Meetings but still resulted in Permanent Exclusion within 3 months	22%	16%	12%	0%
% Permanent Exclusions with no meeting within 3 months	85%	91%	90%	100%

The number of permanently excluded pupils offered alternative provision, as shown in the graph below, has stayed above 95%. The % of pupils offered provision by the 6<sup>th</sup> day of a permanent exclusion, though generally high, has dropped to 75% in the spring term. This is because of the closure of 'Re-Entry' alternative provision and other potential alternative provision being often full, leading to longer timescales in placing pupils.

Statutory Timeliness for Permanent Exclusions



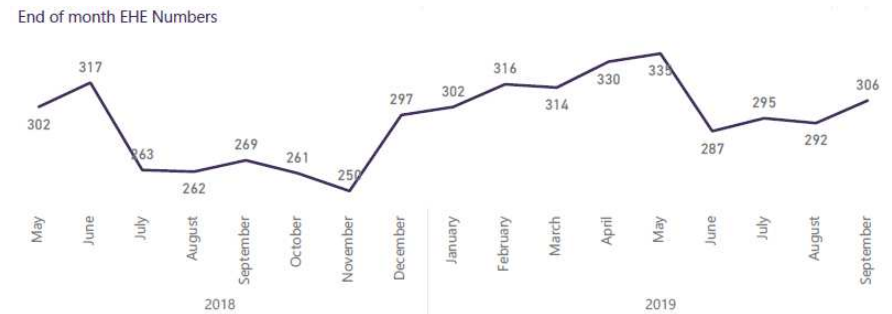
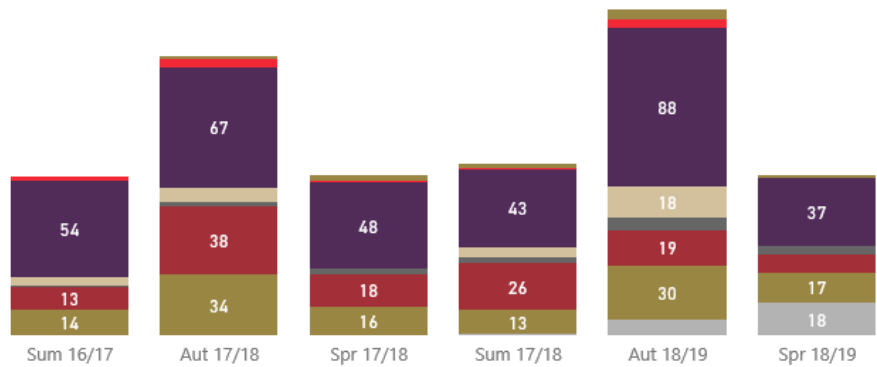


### Children Missing Education and Electively Home Educated

The Behaviour & Attendance Team conduct investigations into all children who are reported as missing from education (CME) in a timely and efficient manner. The bar graph below relates to children who have applied to a Wolverhampton school but have not started at the school after 4 weeks. Additional CME investigations are conducted around children who are reported by other local authorities as having moved to Wolverhampton, but have not yet applied for a school place. School admissions are monitored and supported for these children and School Attendance Orders (SAOs) are issued where appropriate.

Children who are electively home educated (EHE) are all offered support and guidance from a dedicated EHE Officer. Many families take up, and highly value, this support. If any families do not wish to receive our support, they are contacted periodically to offer the support again, should they require it. Wolverhampton had 312 children who are EHE at March 2019. Lifestyle/cultural/religious beliefs is the most common reason for children becoming electively home educated in Wolverhampton

The graphs below illustrate the numbers and outcomes of internal CME investigations by school term, and numbers of children who are EHE by calendar month.



CME Investigation Outcomes

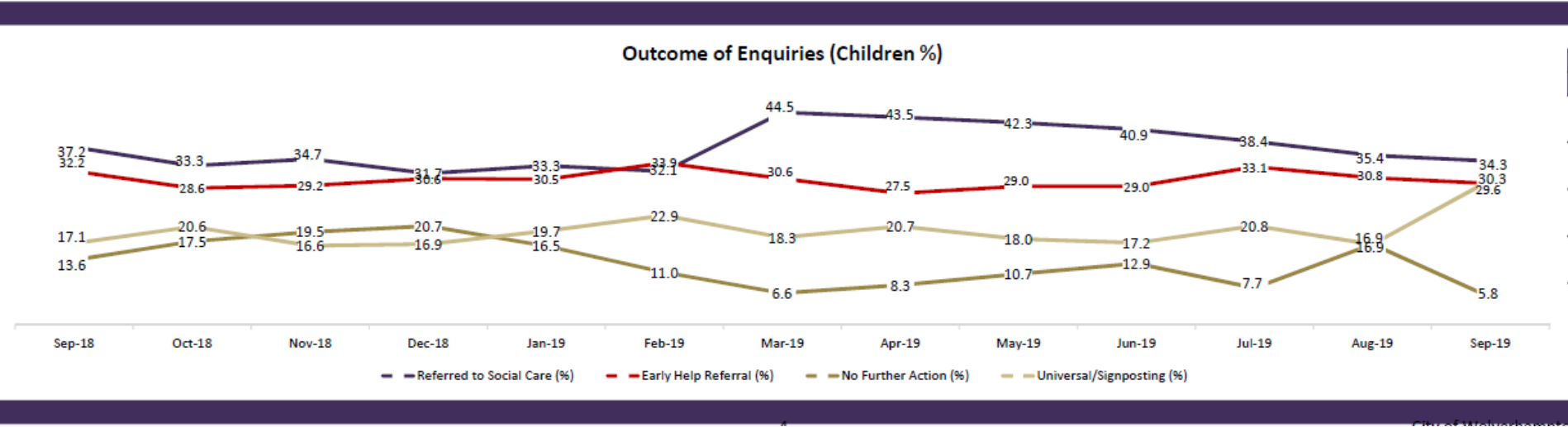
- Outcome ● Pending ● Left City ● Left City Destination Known ● Left City Not Located ● Confirmed CME in City ● Confirmed X-city Education
- Confirmed In-city Education ● Relocation to Wolves cancelled ● Elective Home Ed - Wolves

### Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

The City of Wolverhampton MASH has continued to perform well. It consists of children and adult social care, early help, Police, Wolverhampton Homes, Recovery Near You, Probation Service, Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust. The service ensures responses to referrals to social care are timely and children who may be at risk of significant harm are safeguarded appropriately.

There are on average 468 enquiries per month. The majority of children go on to be supported by Early Help or Social Care. The numbers of referrals into social care in Wolverhampton are decreasing.

It should be noted that the MASH acts as a single front door for all services for Children and Young People, it is felt that this may be having an impact on the number of referrals and therefore this aspect of functions within the MASH is being reviewed.



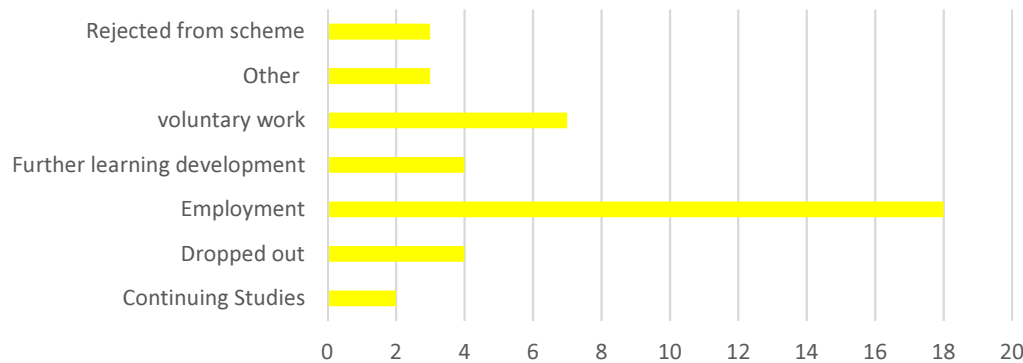
### Early Intervention

Early Intervention is achieved through eight locality based strengthening family hubs. In October 2019 1,283 children were being supported by Strengthening Families workers. Figures also demonstrate that families receive support from a Strengthening Families worker for between 49 – 111 days, this is consistent with the differing needs of the families. Early Intervention is currently working with 227 children that are open to statutory social work services at child in need, child protection and public law proceedings threshold; providing targeted interventions, direct work with children and young people, supporting victims and child witnesses of Domestic Abuse and addressing ‘Troubled Families’ factors that are impacting such as worklessness or school attendance.

**Parent Champions:** Wolverhampton’s Parent Champions is a volunteer, peer to peer model that informs and engages disadvantaged families at the earliest possible point that have not previously engaged with early support services. This is a universal offer overseen by Strengthening Families and identified within the Early Help Strategy. There are currently 51 Parent Champions who have been inducted, 17 of whom are currently active and have committed 627 volunteering hours in 2018/2019. The current data evidences that the most prevalent outcome is related to employment opportunities which is linked to the Early Help strategy identified outcomes.

#### Destination / progress of

#### Parent Champions:



**McEwan group:** is aimed at:

- mothers of children who have been sexually abused or who are at risk of being sexually abused,
- mothers who have risky partners whom the children are exposed to,
- Grandparents who have custody of their grandchildren because of sexual abuse within the family.

The McEwan is a specialist programme of teaching delivered within the Strengthening Families Hubs and increases the potential safeguarding mechanisms for children and young people from their primary carers whilst maintaining them in the care of their immediate family. Preventing or reducing an escalation into child protection planning, pre-proceedings or care proceedings is a potential impact of this programme as the risk of sexual abuse is reduced and the safeguarding ability of the primary care giver is maximised.

September 2017	April 2018	September 2018	January 2019	May 2019	September 2019
10 referrals. Social Care - 10	13 referrals Social Care – 7 Early Help – 4	9 referrals Social Care - 7 Early Help - 2	12 referrals Social Care – 8 Early Help - 4	8 referrals Social Care – 7 Early Help - 1	15 referrals – ongoing
50% attendance - 5 women attended all sessions	38% - 5 women stayed engaged within the group.	77% - 7 ladies attended the group 6 attended each week and 1 did 4/10 sessions.	42% - 5 ladies DNA, 1 lady completed all sessions	62% - 5 ladies DNA, 1 completed all sessions	

**Freedom programme:** is also delivered within the Strengthening Families Hubs. There are two male workers who deliver the program as well as female workers and the feedback from the females attending the group has been positive about all of the facilitators.

The Freedom Programme examines the roles played by attitudes and beliefs on the actions of abusive men and the responses of victims and survivors. The aim is to help them to make sense of and understand what has happened to them. The Freedom Programme also describes in detail how children are affected by being exposed to this kind of abuse and very importantly how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed.

In the last 12 months there have been 917 women who have engaged with and completed the Freedom programme. The table below breaks this down by locality cross the City.

**Future planning:** Given the success of engagement with the Freedom programme there are enquiries being made about the Freedom Programme for Men to broaden the offer from Strengthening Families regarding domestic abuse within the City.

Locality	01.04.18. - 31.03.19.		March 2019 – October 2019
	One Count	All Sessions	All localities
1	36	133	
2	12	60	
3	24	129	
4	30	159	
5	13	65	
6	12	92	
7	29	151	
8	28	128	
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>111</b>

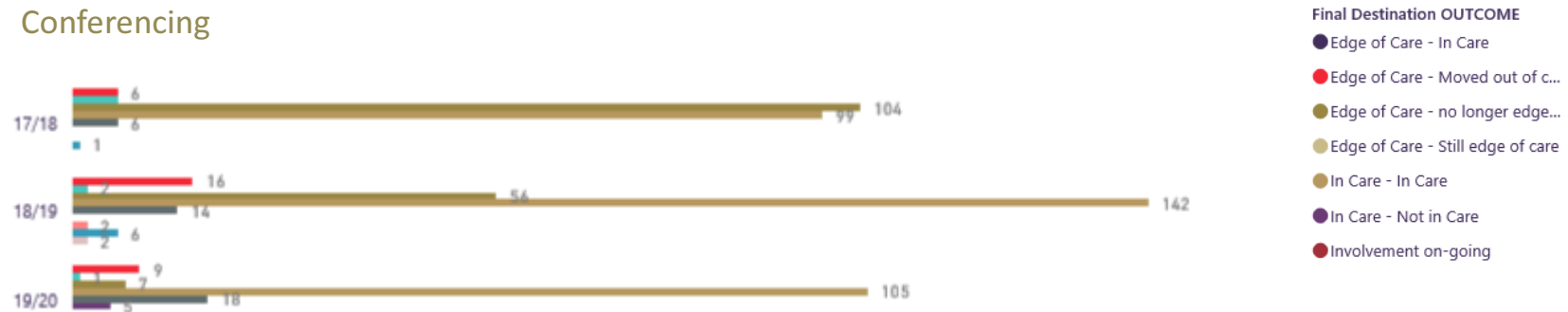
## Specialist Support

The Specialist Support service continues to enable children to remain safely at home through a range of services that help families repair relationships, find solutions to the issues that are affecting children and develop safe, effective boundaries and support parents to make significant lifestyle changes. The service focuses on good quality direct interventions with the City's most vulnerable children and families.

### Intensive Family Support



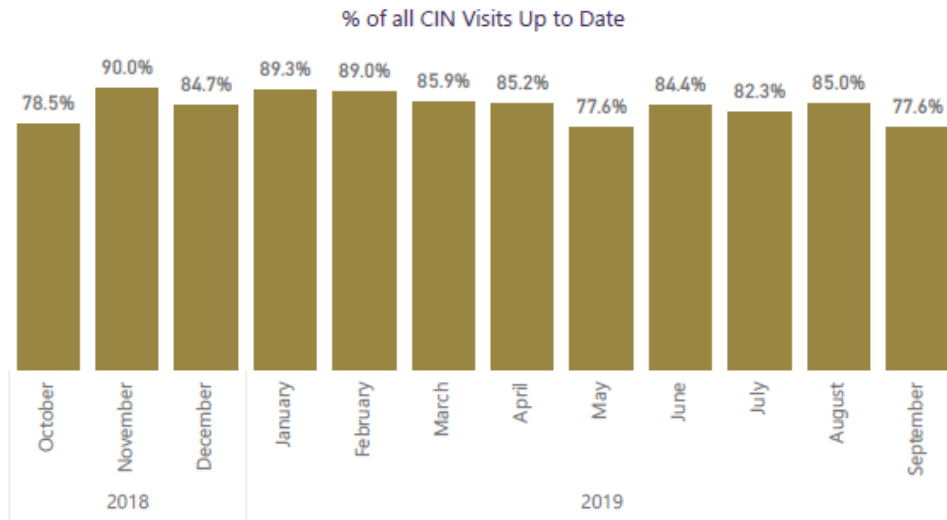
### Family Group Conferencing



## Children in Need

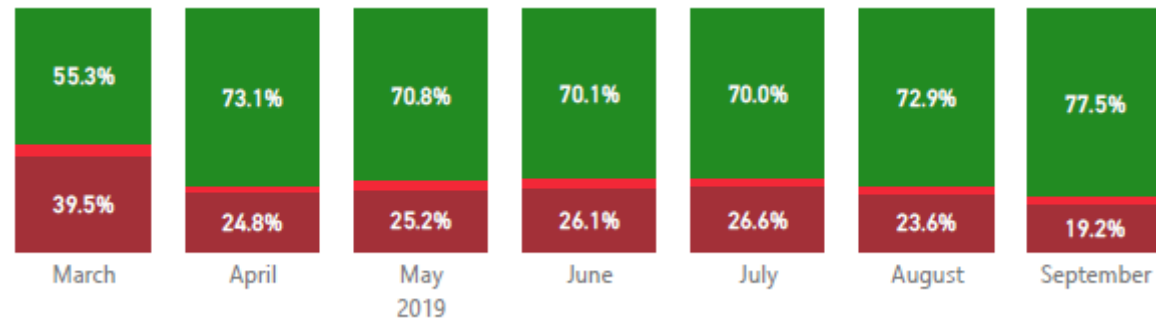
As at September 2019 there were 844 children subject to CiN planning of these 179 are children with disabilities. 78% of children had a visit within the expected times scales which are set at a minimum of once a month. Some children were seen more frequently as per their CiN plan. 80% of assessments are completed within 45 days.

Page 31



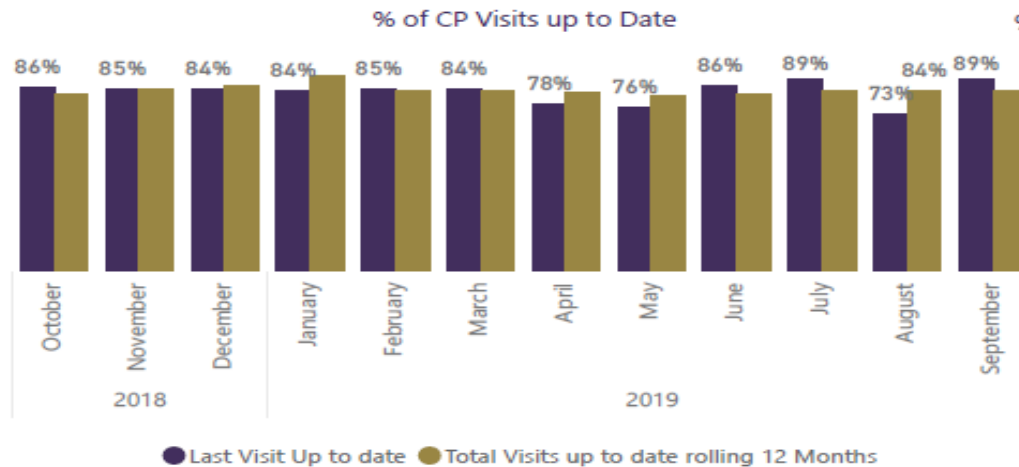
Performance in relation to CiN visits has not been consistent across all teams. CiN visits completed within timescales has increased to above 80% in all but one team and is currently above 90% in most teams. Caseloads have decreased and most social workers are now working with less than 20 children and young people. This should help to improve practice across all areas.

There has been steady improvement in the number of children who are seen within 5 days of referral.



## Child Protection

The number of children subject of a child protection plan was 258 in September 2019. The Safeguarding manager monitors child protection decisions and is confident that threshold is being applied appropriately. The number of child protection cases that are repeats within 2 years has dropped slightly from 9% to 6%. This indicates that in the main families are sustaining the changes made whilst children have been subject to child protection planning.

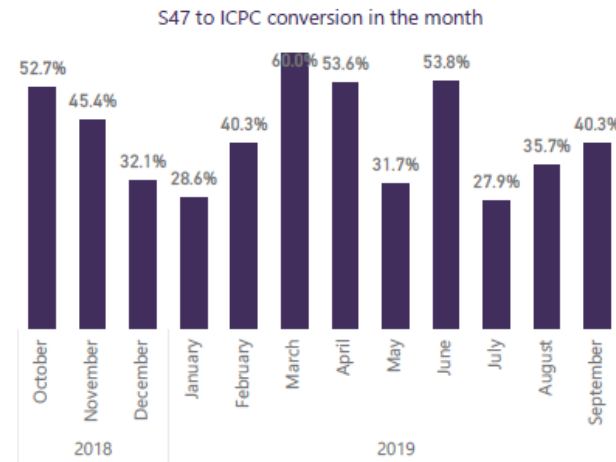
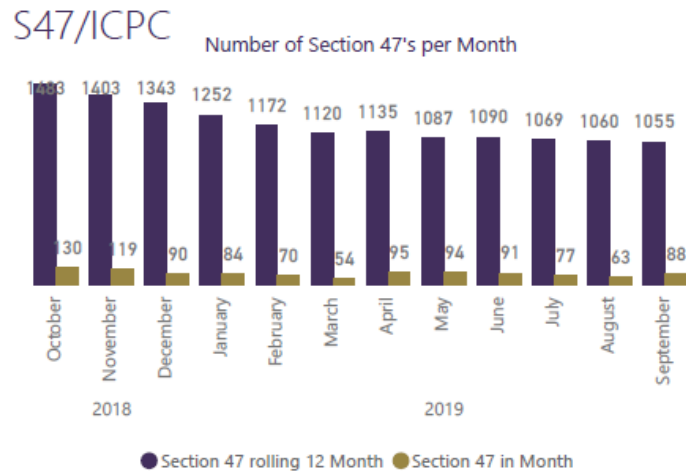


Timeliness of Child Protection visits remains an area of focus. Some locality teams are consistently performing well. There has been a general improvement in localities that were previously consistently failing to see most children within time scales.

Evidence gathered during Practice Weeks indicates the quality of work being undertaken during visits needs to be more consistent. Good or outstanding evidence of direct work was evident in 57% of records audited and good or outstanding evidence of the voice of the child had decreased slightly to 68%. Of 11 observations of practice that took place 10 were judged to be good or outstanding with the remainder being inadequate. Social workers were able to articulate their work with children and families well in 88% of cases. This indicates that improvements are required in relation to writing up visits, assessments and planning documents.



## Child Protection Investigations



Where child protection concerns are raised investigations are undertaken in a timely manner and child protection procedures adhered to well. The number of child protection investigations has decreased in the 12 month rolling period but as at January 2019, only 8% of investigations result in no further action. It is important for children and families that concerns are addressed in a safe and proportionate manner. A range of work is being undertaken to ensure this is the case, including work with partners within the MASH and the adoption of a risk management approach that will enable practitioners to think more reflectively about risk. A DIP sample has been completed of S47's undertaken in the MASH and these were largely felt to be appropriate. Training is being provided to social workers based in locality teams and a further DIP sample is being undertaken of Section 47's undertaken within locality areas.

## Child Exploitation

In Wolverhampton Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is overseen by the Safeguarding Service however, it is a recognised as a child protection issue and is not treated as a stand-alone, or a specialist issue. This enables the workforce to be more confident in identifying and responding to CSE as it is part of everyday practice.

### Local CSE Figures

Quarter	No of YP	At Risk	Significant	Serious
Apr-June 18	139	122	15	2
Jul-Sept 18	140	122	17	1
Oct -Dec 18	131	117	12	2
Jan-Mar 19	132	116	10	6
Apr-Jun 19	99	78	14	7
Jul – Sept 19	98	83	8	7

In April a data cleanse was conducted that involved ensuring young people who were no longer at risk of CSE were removed from the data set. Professionals in Wolverhampton continue to identify young people at risk of CSE and provide preventative intervention through MASE, direct intervention or support from voluntary/specialised services.

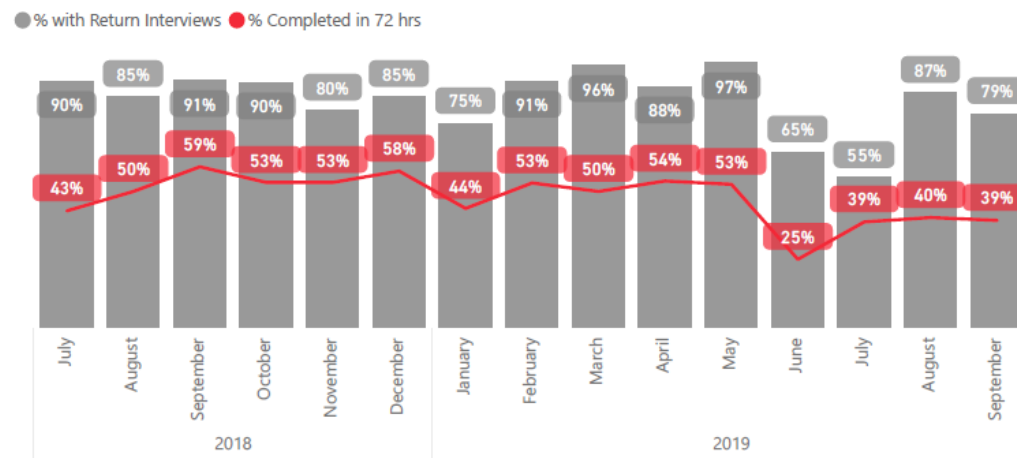
In the last quarter, 85% were identified as being at low risk and therefore are supported in their understanding of risk via early help and Child in Need (CIN) services; this is in keeping with statistical data from others in the combined authority area. The remaining 8% are significant risk and 7% at serious risk young people who are deemed significant to serious risk are in receipt of specialist support usually via Children’s Social Care and/or Intensive Family Support; these young people are also subject of a discreet Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation plan which seeks to protect and reduce their risk. Where risks increase despite intervention plans, alternative protection options are explored; for example, the use of civil injunctions.

Disruption activity is of the utmost importance and the recent Operation led by the police started as drug dealing investigation within the City involving Kurdish males. It then broadened to consider county lines exploitation and/or links to CSE. Four males arrested and three victims identified who are open to MASE and a Sexual Risk Order is being considered for one man.

## Missing

In September 2019, there were 61 missing incidents for 40 young people within the City, 30 incidents related to children and young people in care, six were children in need and five related to children subject to child protection planning. The number of missing episodes has increased steadily over the last few months, due to the police changing their processes regarding missing and absent classification.

Chart 9b - Monthly Breakdown of Completed Interviews, and Completed within 72 hrs



As part of the return interview, the CSE screening tool is always completed to ensure consideration is given to missing young people being at risk of CSE.

The number of missing episodes followed up with a missing return interview is monitored on a monthly basis. Whilst not all of these are completed within the 72 hour timescale there remains a commitment to always persisting in engaging with young people. As a result of this, on average most missing return interviews are completed within 5 days of the young person's return unless the meeting was declined. When interviews were not completed within the 72 hour timescale, this was mainly due to the young person not being able to be contacted or because the young person had gone missing again.

## Tackling Violence and Exploitation

Wolverhampton has taken the bold stance of committing to a fresh approach to address issues of violence and exploitation (V&E) in the city, recognising that the ever-evolving landscape of exploitation requires a more flexible and agile approach across partners and a commitment to tackle violence and exploitation in its entirety.

The complex and exploitative world of organised Crime Groups<sup>1</sup> (OCGs), which are often driven by money, power or control, leaves the door open for adults or children to be enticed or coerced into situations they then struggle to remove themselves from. Our insights into these practices highlight an increasing level of cross-over between crime types that have historically been dealt with separately from one another.

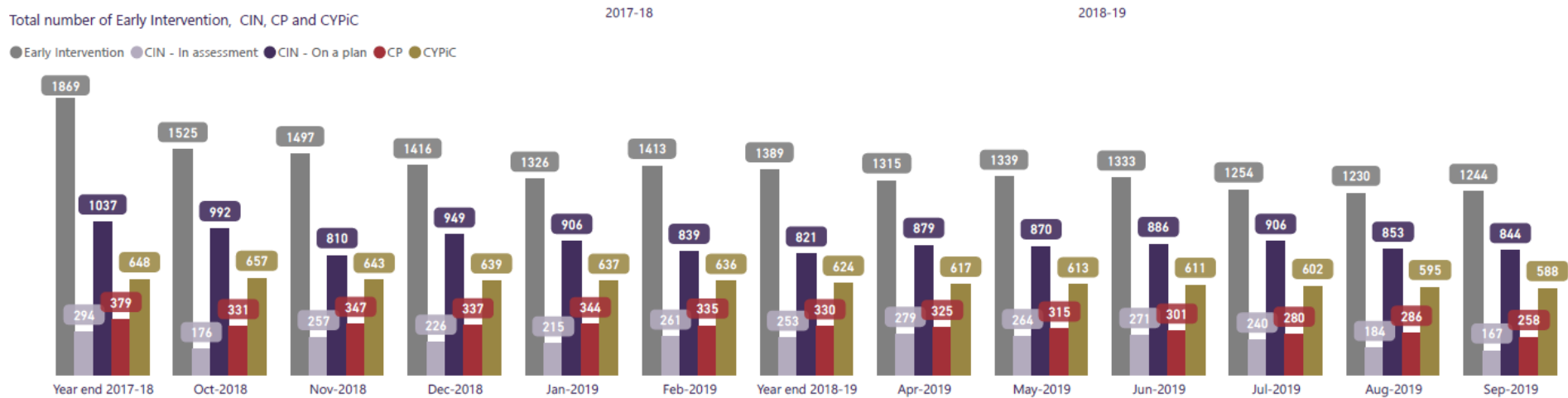
Our ambition is for swifter information flow, earlier identification and support for those at risk, a raised awareness across communities and a lessening of the risks of being forced or lured into these situations. The approach is not solely focused on supporting victims however; strengthening our collective response and the intelligence picture of how OCGs operate will also inform the criminal justice and disruption practices of our enforcement partners.

In collaboration with the West Midlands Local Authorities, WMP, and colleagues in the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership the Safeguarding Service is actively involved in defining the Exploitation agenda, considering Criminal and Sexual Exploitation, and restructuring internal resources to reflect local and regional need. This work is in the early stages but is starting to identify synergies which can be effectively built on.

The region is developing a single exploitation Screening Tool which serves to identify potential indicators which increase the likelihood of young people becoming exploited, is being developed.

### Children and Young People in Care

There is a clear vision that is shared across the Children and Young People in Care service which is focused on achieving permanence and stability for children. The number of children in care in Wolverhampton has been considerably higher than comparator authorities, over the last ten years. The rate increased annually from 2009 until 2014, reaching 807 at its peak. In May 2014, the Families R First Programme was introduced which put greater emphasis on tackling problems within the family unit and offering support at an earlier stage, preventing the need for children and young people to become looked after. This work, together with the co-location of early intervention and statutory social work teams and the introduction of a relational and strength based practice framework has contributed to year on year reductions in the number of looked after children. The number as at the end of September 2019 was 588.

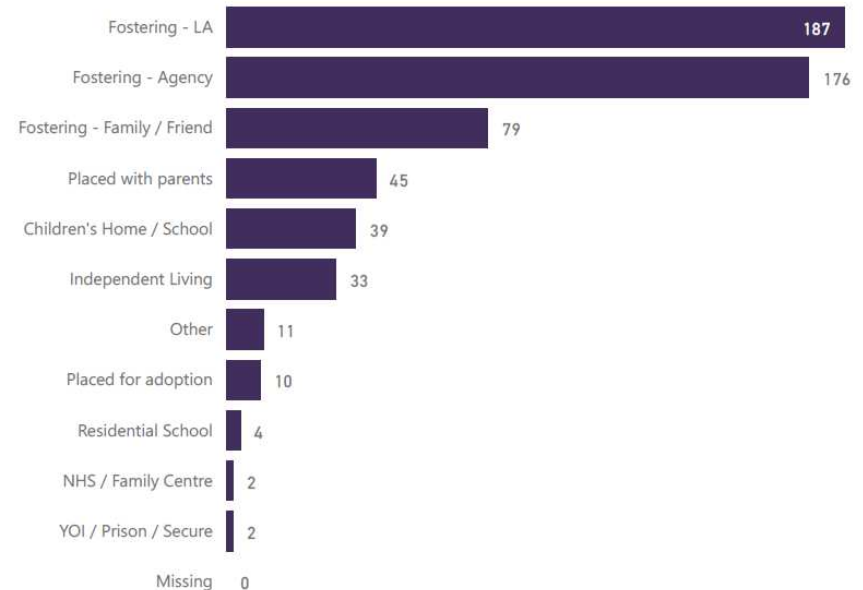


Robust decision-making processes are in place to ensure that when children cannot be cared for at home, their entry into care is planned appropriately ensuring there is a care plan in place that focuses on achieving permanence in a timely manner. Following the admissions to care process, care planning is subject to additional oversight through the Head of Service Permanence Panel. The effectiveness of care planning is evidenced by good timeliness in proceedings and improved timeliness for children with a plan of adoption. Average duration of proceedings is 22.8 weeks and overall adoption timeliness compares favourably against 2018/19 for A1 (457 days from 779 days), A2 (103 days from 160) and A10 (329 days from 357).

## Placements for Children and Young People in Care

In Wolverhampton we believe that wherever possible children should live with families in or close to our City. The Fostering Family Values project is focussing on increasing number of internal fostering households and improving the offer of support to increase the retention of foster carers. The foster carers support has been improved by the introduction of therapeutic caring and restorative practice training, greater use of buddies and effective use of respite. The ambition is to increase the net gain of fostering households approved by the City of Wolverhampton by 81 households by 2020/21. There has been a net gain of 11 mainstream fostering households in the year with 15 mainstream carers and 10 connected persons approved and 4 de-registrations.

Snapshot of Placement Type on last day of month



Improving placement stability remains a key priority. stability is in line with statistical neighbors and national averages but stronger performance is required. At September 2019 71% of children in care had been in the same placement for two years and the percentage of children with three or more placements in the past 12 months had decreased from 15% to 10%. In order to achieve better placement stability plans include:

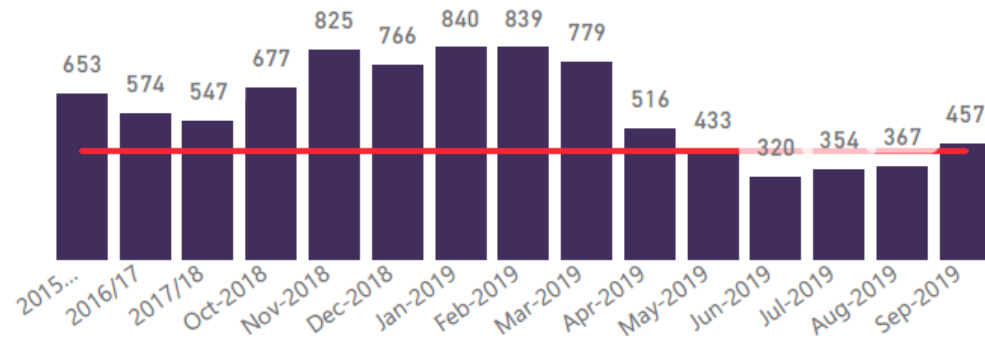
- Key 2 Inspiration opened in June 2019 (this is a local authority short term children's home that assesses the needs of children with more complex needs and provide targeted intervention that will support children and young people transition into foster homes)
- Fostering families Unites was launched in May 2019, It is in early stages of implementation but appears to have supported Children who have experienced three or more placement achieve a greater level of stability.

### Regional Adoption Agency; Adoption@Heart

From 1 April 2019 the City of Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley local authorities and Sandwell Children’s Trust are operating as one adoption agency, Adoption@Heart. The overriding factors that influenced the four agencies to work together to form a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) were historic relationships, partnership arrangements and geography. It was agreed that the hosted model would be the best option and the City of Wolverhampton Council would be the host authority. Adoption@Heart Regional Adoption Agency was launched on 1 April 2019, all current staff are in situ and have been inducted into the City of Wolverhampton Council.

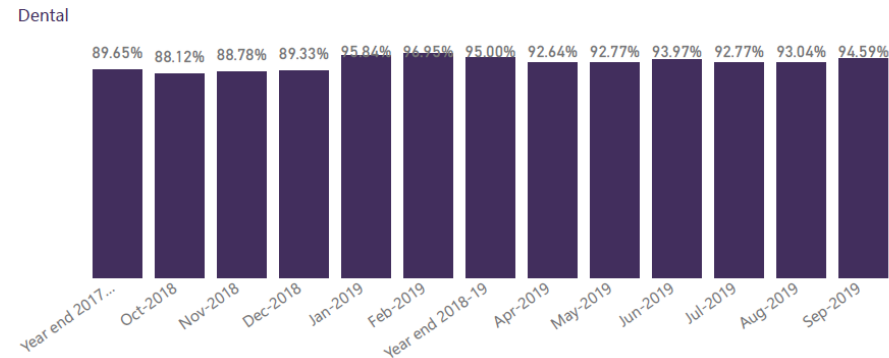
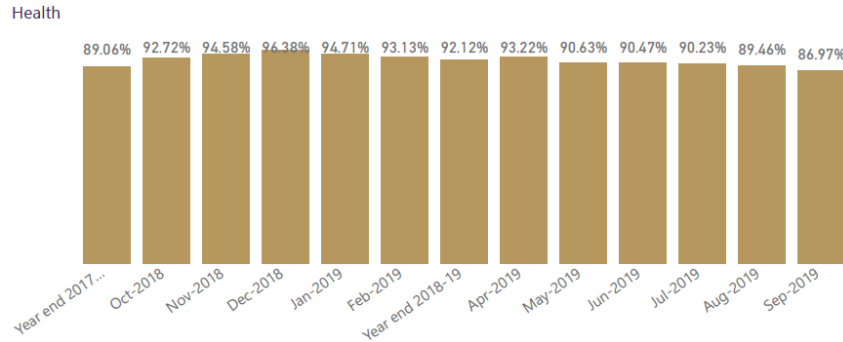
There were eight new adoptions in September 2019 therefore, we have 29 adoptions in the year to date. Overall adoption timeliness compares favourably against 2018/19 for A1 (457 days to 779 days), A2 (103 days to 160) and A10 (329 days to 357).

A1



### The Heath and wellbeing of Children and Young people in Care

Children and Young People in care have regular health and dental checks. All children have Health Passports which have been established with the support of partners in the CCG, ensuring health information is readily available to children and their carers.



SDQ score of 13.8 gives Wolverhampton an average of 'normal'. This score shows Wolverhampton positively in comparison to regional, statistical and national comparators. Wolverhampton is ranked as the 47th best performing authority in this area. Further to this the percentage of children and young people who completed the questionnaire increased to over 90% in the year.

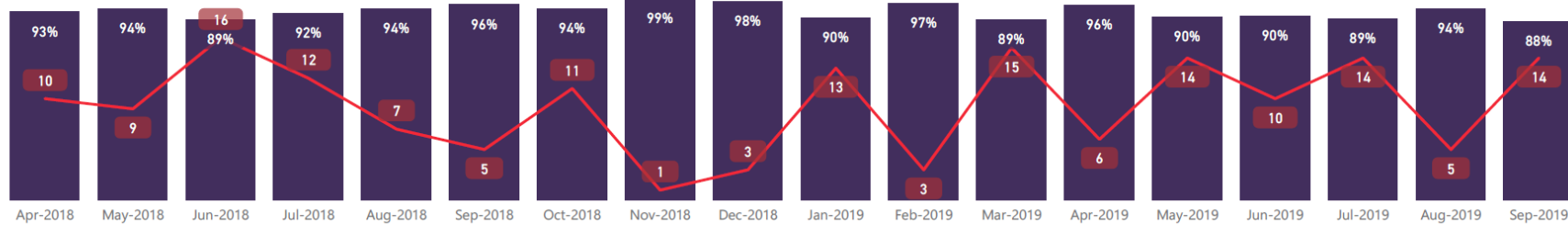
Emotional and Behavioural Wellbeing - SDQ average scores	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 Provisional
<b>Wolverhampton</b>	12.6	12.3	13.2	14.2	14.4	13.7	13.8
<b>West Midlands</b>	13.7	13.5	13.5	14.1	13.9	13.7	
<b>Statistical Neighbours</b>	14.77	14.51	14.52	15.16	14.26	14.3	
<b>England</b>	14	13.9	13.9	14	14.1	14.2	



## How we work with Children and Young People in Care

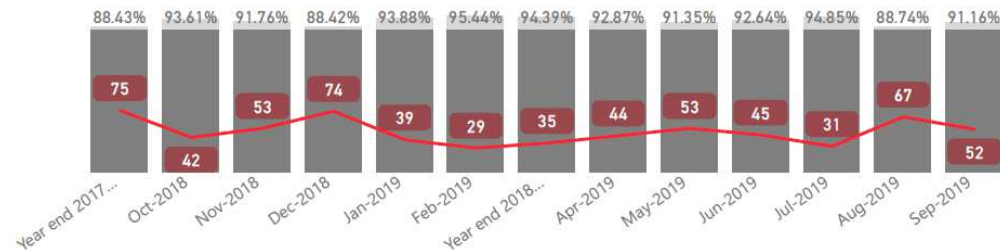
CYPiC Participation

● CYPiC Review Passes ● CYPiC Review Fails



Up to date visits

● Visits in timescale ● Visit Fails

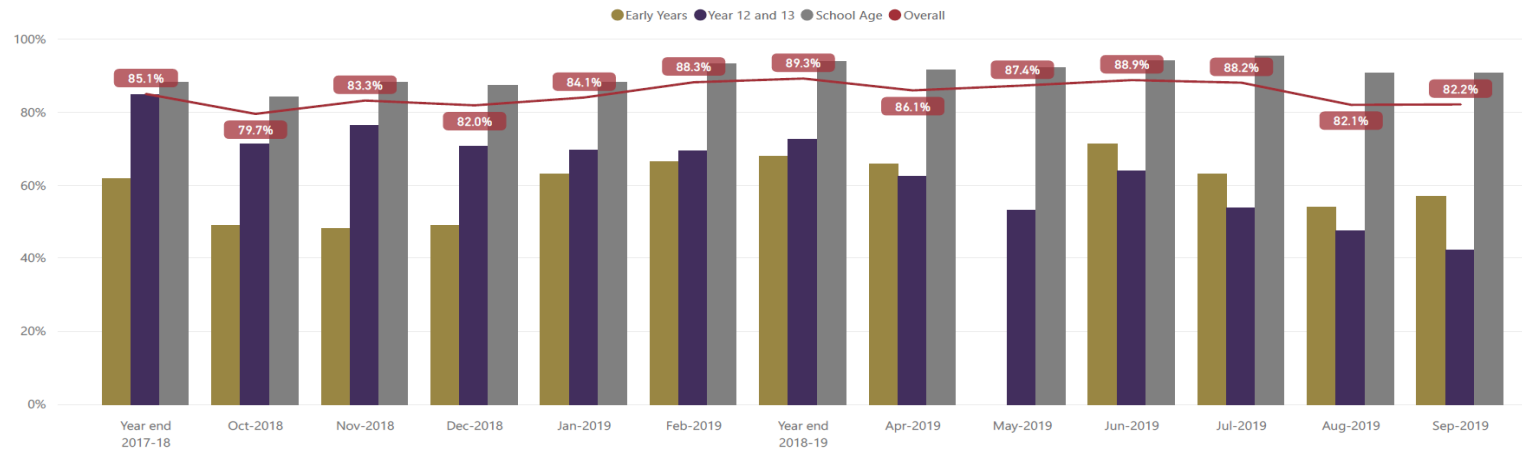


Social work visits to Children and Young People in Care fulfil a range of critical roles and functions to enable the child’s circumstances to be observed and monitored. Visits are carried out at least once every 6 weeks or once every 12 weeks in a stable placement. At the end of September, 92% of Children and Young People in Care had up to date visits. Audits have identified some evidence of excellent relationship building and direct work but this is not consistent enough and plans for children at risk of exploitation need to be better reflected within care plans. There is however, increased evidence of children contributing to their plans and as at September 2019, 88% of children participated in their Children and Young People in Care review, the majority of children participated by speaking for themselves and some children chaired their own review.

## Impact of work with Children and Young People in Care

Audits of files suggest that the work undertaken by social workers alongside other professionals and strategic activity is contributing to improved outcomes for children and young people. Two children have achieved early permanence through foster to adopt placements and disruption rates for children placed for adoption are low. Many more Children and Young People in Care are achieving educationally. Outcomes for the whole cohort at KS1 – 4 are broadly in line with national and regional averages; while the in-city results are generally higher than children and young people in care averages, the Out of City results are lower. A Dedicated Education Support Worker focuses on Out of City Children and Young people in Care. ‘Welfare Call’ have been commissioned to provide daily attendance/exclusions monitoring and termly attainment data for Out of City children. There are currently 31 young people attending university which is 18% of the cohort.

### Percentage of Children with a Personal Education Plan

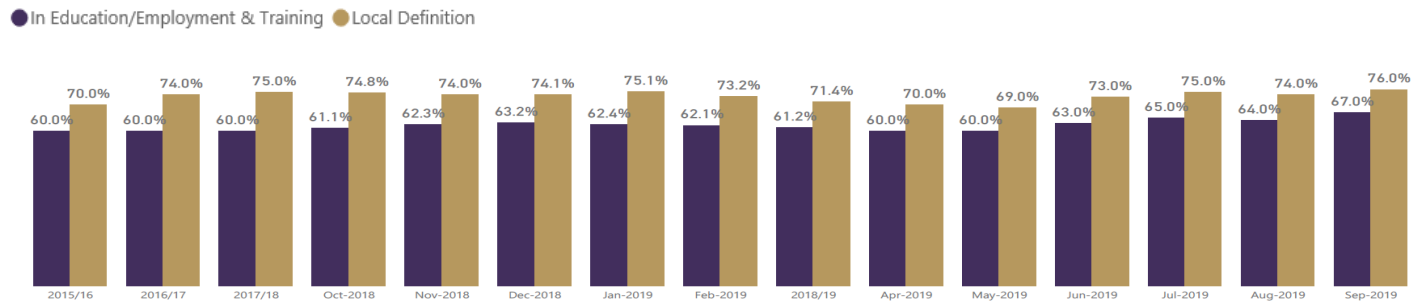


The pupil premium is used effectively to ensure children are achieving. Regular Personal Education Plans (PEP's) are in place for the majority of children and the recently developed Electronic PEP will support a detailed understanding of progress that children are making in schools as well as identifying areas that require additional support.

### Children and Young People in Care - Transitions

The City of Wolverhampton’s Transition Team’s key purpose is to improve the life chances and achieve the best outcomes for looked after young people aged 14-18 years and care leavers up to 25, by ensuring they have support to achieve their aspirations, meet their health, education, training and accommodation needs.

Co-location of social workers, young people’s advisors, family support workers, housing team and an education, employment and training (EET) co-ordinator facilitates excellent joint working arrangements to support young people through transition. All young people are allocated a personal adviser prior to transition, to support transition planning and the development of a needs led pathway plan. There are good transition arrangements in place for young people accessing post-18 services. Young people are aware of their entitlements. Updated information leaflets and booklets are incorporated into a post-16 transition pack, and the information is on the care leavers’ Facebook page and CYPiC website. The team are committed to increasing partnership working with young people and empowering them to develop confidence and achieve their aspirations.



The variety of EET opportunities available and take up of these are given a high priority within the service and managed via an action plan. Both internal and external partners work closely together to facilitate individual opportunities for young people. Young people have priority interviews for apprenticeships within the council and the offer of apprenticeships has now been extended up to 20 years of age. In total four 16 to 18 year olds are currently in apprenticeships. The recently introduced multi-agency EET panel enables maximisation of opportunity for young people who are not engaging. This has provided opportunities for young people to reengage in education or employment or training.

## Children and Young People in Care - Housing opportunities

Care leavers have a choice of accommodation provision including; supported lodgings, YMCA Social Inclusion pathway with a range of supported accommodation provisions dependent on needs, Children and Young People in care Transitions Housing Support Service including training flats, Staying Put (over 18), Independent Accommodation (over 18) and Private Supported Accommodation Provisions. The housing support service has 33 flats, two crash pads and two training flats. Each young person living in one of these homes has a designated housing support worker (HSW) who remains with them throughout their time in the service, support hours vary but are to a maximum 30 hours per week, as the young person progresses, the number of hours decrease. The HSW draws up an individual support plan.

Since April 2019, 5 young people have moved into independence – all 5 are maintaining their tenancy 6 months on, a further 5 young people have moved into independence within the last 3 months. Currently, the percentage of young people in suitable accommodation is 93%.

In addition, the Children and Young People's Supported Accommodation Service launched a Local House Project in October 2019, working in partnership with the National House Project; this project takes a ground-breaking approach through its commitment to young people's ownership and to enable young people leaving care to achieve successful independence. The House Project was co-designed with young people from the start, and works on cooperative principles through which adults and young people in, and leaving care, work together to refurbish properties that become their homes, developing a long-term community of support, ten young people have already expressed an interest in the opportunity.

There is also a commitment to introduce an internal Supported Lodgings Service which is currently in the development stage. This will compliment the varied range of accommodation options available to children and young people in care.

## Participation of Children in Care Council and Care leavers Forum

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) has 24 members, with 11 males and 13 females. During the year three members became care leavers and moved on to the Care Leavers Forum, the group has met monthly. The average monthly attendance is 15. The Care Leavers Forum has had 13 members, three male and 10 females.

Success for Wolverhampton's Youth Voice in 2018 includes:

- Care Leaver recognised as Young Citizen of the Year with runner up from the Youth Council
- Contributed to the Excellence Equalities Inspection work
- All members of the CiCC and CLF received an I-Award.
- Record turnout for Make Your Mark highest percentage vote in the Midlands
- Youth MP speaking at the House of Commons
- Youth Council and Children and Council recognised as one of the best in the country

Involvement in consultations locally, regionally and nationally, has included:

- Early Help Strategy
- Young Carers
- Library Transformation
- Sexual Health Curriculum with Public Health
- Waste and Recycling Services
- Work Experience and Work Box
- Mental Health green paper
- Children's Commissioner report on Neglect

•CiCC and CLF members are Total Respect Trained and have delivered training to range of agencies in 2018 including West Midlands Police (Frontline and specialist teams),Social Work Students from The City of Wolverhampton University, YMCA, Social Worker, Councillors and Foster Carers .

## Corporate Parenting

The Council believes it is important to invest in children and young people in care and demonstrate this through:

- The Corporate Parenting Strategy is owned by the whole council and is committed to helping Children and Young People in Care to reach their full potential through; education, employment and training opportunities, promoting health and wellbeing, developing social skills and supporting the transition to independence and Improving understanding of the needs of these Children and Young People. The action plan that drives this work is governed by the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board made up of senior leaders from both Council and Partner departments. The Corporate Parenting Board made of up of Local Councillors provides and extra tier of scrutiny and governance.
- The annual 'I awards' event which celebrates the achievements of Looked After Children. This year saw 28% of our Children and Young People attending the event and 64% nominated
- A range of events are arranged to support Care Leavers Week
- Annual Christmas Party
- Hero Training for all Youth Council, Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum members.
- Youth Council are involved in the Scrutiny Process and sit on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
- The Care leavers offer was launched in September 2018 and includes;
  - Care Leavers of exempt from paying Council Tax until the age of 25 if the live in the City of Wolverhampton
  - Care leavers have guaranteed interviews for apprenticeship within the Council
  - Apprenticeship's are now available up to the age of 20 to assist Care leavers in accessing them
  - <http://win.wolverhampton.gov.uk/kb5/wolverhampton/directory/advice.page?id=hQwRagSPQKE>

## Summary

The self-evaluation demonstrates that progress has been made against most of the key priorities and Ofsted recommendations outlined in the 2018-2019 self-evaluation. There is however still more to be done and key priorities are outlined below. The Children and Young People's service also has a detailed strategic plan that outlines work to be undertaken in 2019-20 that will further strengthen the quality and impact of the Councils work with Children, Young People and their families;

- Improving workforce retention in order to provide children with greater consistency and establish a skilled and knowledgeable workforce who are fully equipped to help children and families achieve positive outcomes.
- There will be a continued focus on the quality of practice delivered through a Practice improvement action plan. This includes improving assessment analysis and planning, improving the quality of direct work to strengthen the voice of the child and ensuring restorative practice is imbedded within supervision which will promote a focus on the impact of interventions on the lived experience of children and explicitly provide opportunity for critical reflection.
- Embedding 'Practice Weeks' to ensure senior managers have a clear reflection of the quality of frontline practice and continue to use dip sampling both within practice week and in addition too.
- Implementing a single child's record system through Platform for Care, this will bring together recording systems for early intervention and statutory social work and enable practitioners to record the experience and journey of the child well.
- Implementing Wolverhampton's new arrangements for the Safeguarding Partnership.
- Review of governance structures relating to Contextual Safeguarding.
- Implementation of House Project for Care Leavers.
- Improving placement stability through a number of actions including piloting of 'Fostering Families United' (a model that enables fostering families to intensively support each other).
- Embedding the Regional Adoption Agency.
- Embedding Restorative Practice across Children's Services.



**wolverhampton.gov.uk**

## Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

22 January 2020

<b>Report title</b>	The Culture of Belonging Programme
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor John Reynolds
<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services
<b>Originating service</b>	Inclusion Support Service
<b>Accountable employees</b>	Rob Hart     Head of Inclusion Support Tel            01902 555256 Email         Robert.Hart@wolverhampton.gov.uk

**Report has been  
considered by**

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### **Recommendations for action:**

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

Provide comment and challenge on the attached report detailing proposed actions to establish the Culture of Belonging Programme.



## Children and Families Together Board

5 March 2020

<b>Report title</b>	The Culture of Belonging Programme: promoting inclusion, engagement and educational outcomes for vulnerable children and young people	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor John Reynolds Children and Young People	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services	
<b>Originating service</b>	Inclusion Support Service	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Rob Hart	Head of Inclusion Support
	Tel	01902 555256
	Email	Robert.Hart@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Transforming Children's Services Board	28 November 2019
	SEND Partnership & Commissioning Board	15 January 2020
	Project Assurance Group	9 January 2020
	Children, Young People & Families Scrutiny Panel	22 January 2020
	Children and Families Together Board	5 March 2020

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### Recommendation for action:

The Children and Families Together Board is recommended to:

- Endorse the proposal to establish the Culture of Belonging Programme as a means to promote inclusion, engagement and educational outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

*“Children will do anything to be included, anything from wearing school uniform to marching with political youth groups; anything from joining an inter-house litter pick to beating up their dearest friend.”*

(Kate Clanchy, *Some Kids I Taught and What They Taught Me*, 2019)

## 1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report proposes the establishment of the Culture of Belonging programme – a co-ordinated, whole system programme of activity which aims to promote and improve educational engagement and outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

## 2.0 Overview

2.1 Too many children and young people in Wolverhampton are excluded from school. In 2017-2018 Wolverhampton had the fourth highest rate of permanent exclusions in the country. Accompanying this, the number of children being educated at home in Wolverhampton has nearly trebled over the last five years. In Wolverhampton, the West Midlands and nationally, there are increased concerns about youth violence, child exploitation and gangs. Disengagement and exclusion from education has been linked to these growing issues.

2.2 In March 2018 a proposal was agreed by Children and Families Together Board to establish a Task Force focusing on school exclusions and related issues. This work ultimately fed into the Citizen Lab project that was undertaken between January and November 2019 with West Midlands Combined Universities, to explore these issues and identify potential solutions.

## 3.0 Background

3.1 From 2013, over a period five years, Wolverhampton went from being one of the lowest excluding areas in the country, to having one of the highest rates of permanent exclusions – twice the national average.

3.2 Since 2017-2018, the number of permanent exclusions has begun to fall as table one below shows.

	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
Primary schools	29	22	15
Secondary schools	93	97	89
Total	122	119	104

- 3.3 Over the same time period, there has been a three-fold increase in the number of children who are being educated at home, from 91 in September 2013 to 293 on 1 September 2019.
- 3.4 While for some families this is a positive and informed choice, that is not the case for all. The highest rate of growth of elective home education (EHE) has been among children and young people in years 9 to 11 (age 14-16). There is concern that some of this growth represents off rolling, which OFSTED define as “the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil”.
- 3.5 Exclusion and off-rolling impact some groups of children and young people disproportionately. In Wolverhampton the following factors increase the risk of a child being excluded or leaving school to become educated at home:
- having a special educational need or disability
  - coming from a black or minority ethnic community
  - being aged 14 to 16
  - being a child in need of help or protection
- 3.6 As the numbers of exclusions and rates of EHE have increased in Wolverhampton, there has also been some changes in the types of incidence that are leading to school exclusion. For a long period the most common reason for permanent exclusion was persistent disruptive behaviour. While this has declined over the last year, there has been a marked increase in the number of permanent exclusions due to one-off serious incidents, particularly those involving drugs or physical assaults, and to a lesser extent, weapon-related incidents.
- 3.7 Exclusion from school cannot be isolated from wider social factors. According to the national Serious Violence Strategy (2018), evidence suggests that school exclusion is linked to an increase risk of victimisation, violence perpetration and also substance misuse. Children excluded from school are over-represented in young offender populations. They are also over-represented as victims of serious violence.

#### **4. What has happened in response to these challenges?**

- 4.1 *The Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Plan*  
The SEMH in Schools Plan was developed following engagement with school leaders, and was approved by Children’s Trust Board in September 2017. This identified four priorities to improve the identification and support in schools for children who experience SEMH needs:
1. Ensuring that there is a clearly understood and locally agreed graduated response to identifying SEMH needs in schools;

2. Ensuring that schools have access to appropriate, high quality training to help to develop a workforce that are highly skilled and confident at supporting pupils with SEMH needs;
3. Ensuring that schools are able to access support services, such as the special school outreach service and the Inclusion Support Service with appropriate skills and expertise to address SEMH needs.
4. Reviewing and providing guidance on the roles and functions of off-site and on-site enhanced or alternative provision for pupils with identified SEMH needs.

4.2 Much has happened in response to the SEMH Plan, specifically the development of the "Getting it Right" approach, with guidance and training for schools about identification and support for SEMH needs, and the review of outreach provision to increase capacity to support schools, and align this to the Getting it Right approach. A briefing outlining progress in relation to the SEMH plan was presented to Children and Families Together Board in December 2018.

#### 4.3 *Alternative provision review*

Linked to the SEMH Plan, as a part of the wider SEND Strategy, a review of alternative provision was undertaken in 2018, led by Tom Knott (SEND Commissioning Officer), and its recommendations were approved by Children and Families Together Board in September 2018. This identified a number of challenges and areas for improvement in relation to alternative provision in the city, notably in relation to: planning and commissioning of provision; awareness of the Alternative Provision (AP) offer and consistent pathways into it; the breadth and appropriateness of the city's AP offer; and, quality assurance. There were five overarching recommendations:

1. The City of Wolverhampton Council's commissioning of alternative provision is aligned to that of specialist educational provision and informed by both an annual needs assessment and provision gap analysis.
2. The City of Wolverhampton Council explores opportunities to develop local provision to ensure sufficiency.
3. The City of Wolverhampton Council supports effective transitions into and out of alternative provision.
4. The City of Wolverhampton Council develops a range of support for schools to improve the delivery of joint responsibilities in relation to the use of AP.
5. The City of Wolverhampton Council develops a clear graduated response and provision pathway for children who require alternative provision.

#### 4.4 *Culture of Belonging Summit*

In November 2018 a summit event was held bringing together school leaders, key strategic partners and local authority officers. Head teachers, chairs of governors, or other senior leaders, attended from around forty of our schools, alongside representatives from mental health services, Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group, voluntary sector agencies, alternative education providers, local authority children's services, youth offending, and youth services. Following this event, we have a commitment to working together to reduce school exclusions.

Some of the key actions following this summit that we will be working on over the next year include:

- establishing agreed processes that schools should implement for children who are at-risk in order to avoid exclusion and ensure that it is only used as a genuine last resort, and ensure that there is comprehensive pupil information available if children do move schools;
- establishing a head teacher-led panel to oversee access to alternative provision and commissioned support services, so that there is transparent accountability, support and challenge where children are identified as being at-risk of exclusion;
- working with Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board to develop model policies about banned items in schools;
- rolling out restorative practice training across our partnership, through the Safeguarding Board, including working with schools to find restorative alternatives to exclusions; and,
- agreeing and implementing our 2019-2022 Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy, following consultation that started on 17 December 2019.

## **5 Citizen Lab**

5.1 Between January and November 2019, City of Wolverhampton Council has worked with Birmingham City University and University of Wolverhampton on to undertake a “Citizen Lab” focusing on school exclusions and related issues.

5.2 The Citizen Lab Approach has been developed by West Midlands Combined Universities. It is a programme of work seeking to support councils to innovate; bringing council teams, their citizens and stakeholders to work collaboratively to imagine challenges from a collective perspective.

5.3 The Citizen Lab comprised three main elements: analysis of local and national data; focus groups with young people from Wolverhampton; and a Citizen Lab Workshop bringing together a range of key stakeholders on 2 and 3 October 2019 to discuss the problems, share insights and identify potential solutions in relation to school exclusions and associated issues. The findings from the Citizen Lab have been summarised in a written report (see background papers).

5.4 Analysis of exclusions data for Wolverhampton yielded some notable insights. While the national rate for permanent exclusions in England is 0.2 per cent, in 2017-2018 there were three schools in Wolverhampton which permanently excluded more than one per cent of their pupils. Features of schools with higher rates of exclusion included:

- secondary schools – 87 percent of permanent exclusions in Wolverhampton were involved pupils attending secondary schools;
- high incidence of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) – five of the nine schools with FSM greater than 20 percent had above average exclusion rates;
- high incidence of pupils eligible for pupil premium (PP) – six of the ten schools with PP levels above 33 percent had high exclusion rates;



- low attainment – five out of six schools in which fewer than 50 percent of pupils reached the floor standards at Key Stage 4 had above average exclusion rates; and,
- high incidence of special educational needs (SEN) – four out of seven schools with SEN rates above 15 per cent had above average exclusion rates.

5.5 While these features were indicators of schools with a higher exclusion rate they did not determine them entirely. There are schools in Wolverhampton which do not fit with these trends, and have lower rates of exclusion at the same time as having, for example, higher rates of pupil premium or SEN.

5.6 Although data suggest that pupils from certain ethnic groups are more likely to experience both permanent or fixed term exclusion from school, at a school level higher proportions of black and minority ethnic pupils were not associated with higher levels of exclusions.

5.7 Focus groups were held involving 40 young people. These included pupils from a pupil referral unit (PRU), who had experienced permanent exclusion, as well as young people from the Youth Council, Children in Care Council, Care Leavers' Forum, and HeadStart Ambassadors.

5.8 Young people attending the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) reported that they felt more listened to in the PRU than they had at previous schools, and that staff cared for them.

5.9 Themes from the focus groups with all the young people identified the importance of being listened to and understood at school, and the importance of having somewhere they felt that they belonged. In addition, being treated fairly was seen as very important, and young people identified the need for structures in schools to support this. Some were critical of approaches to reward systems which focused on tangible, extrinsic motivators (e.g. points, money) and were not felt to be meaningful.

5.10 The Citizen Lab workshop brought together stakeholders including parents, people with lived experience, professionals and academics. There was much discussion about the problems with trying to make all children access a "one size fits all" education system. Recommendations from this workshop included:

- a need for better training of school staff to support children who may be at risk of exclusion;
- clearer pathways for intervention;
- a clearer, more comprehensive offer of support for children with social, emotional and mental health needs; and
- the need for a more responsive "emergency" process for responding when things go wrong, including a "complex needs service", integrating mental health and social care support.

5.11 Across the Citizen Lab three key themes were identified as central to responding to the challenges that were being discussed. These were:

- How to build trust with young people
- How to connect and supporting parents
- How to create valid alternatives to the current educational offer

5.12 The Citizen Lab report identified five recommendations:

- User journeys - undertaking “user journeys” with people navigating the system to better understand the ecosystem of support and pinpoint where there are further opportunities for change.
- Managing emotions – exploring how emotional capacity can be enhanced across the system, so the children and young people, parents/ carers and professionals are all better able to cope with difficult situations.
- Different and targeted provision – developing a different and positive educational offer for vulnerable children and young people that learns from what works within the current system and extends this to design radically new offers with other providers such as community, voluntary and arts organisations.
- Communication – undertake further research to consider how to overcome communication barriers between young people and teachers, and how to prevent language being a barrier to building trust.
- Immediate actions – a variety of possible immediate actions or quick wins were identified during the lab, which should be explored further to identify which should be pursued or developed further.

## 6. Proposal

6.1 As has been outlined above, there has been much activity in relation to exclusions and associated issues, in terms of trying to improve systems and processes, better understand the underlying issues, and build a whole system partnership and response. Given the magnitude of the issues and the level of the challenge, it is important to bring these things together so that a joined-up, co-ordinated response can be implemented. Going forwards it is proposed that the activities and recommendations outlined above be co-ordinated as one over-arching programme, called the Culture of Belonging Programme.

6.2 The vision motivating this programme is one where all children and young people grow up experiencing a positive sense of belonging that enables them to engage positively and achieve educationally. At the heart of the notion of a culture of belonging are four key elements:

- Being accepted and understood
- Having a purpose
- Feeling and being safe
- Being heard

- 6.3 The aims of the Culture of Belonging Programme are to promote inclusion, promote educational engagement and improve educational outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.
- 6.4 By inclusion, we mean more than not being excluded or not being segregated. Inclusion involves being able to participate as an equal, whether that be in learning or play or decision-making. It relies on systems and organisations taking steps to understand people’s differences and being flexible, responsive and adapting to individual needs and differences.
- 6.5 The Programme will focus on educational engagement as opposed to other related notions or measures. Engagement in education matters because it is a human right, and because it is a well-established means to improving the lives of children and young people, whether it be social inclusion, financial stability or mental and physical health. Exclusion is one way that a child’s engagement in education can be interrupted or reduced, but there are a number of others, including: frequent school moves or “fresh starts”; inappropriate elective home education; reduced timetables; internal isolation or segregation; and, persistent absence. Promoting engagement means focusing on all of these.
- 6.6 The programme will comprise a number of projects and activities as outlined below:

<b>CULTURE OF BELONGING PROGRAMME</b>		
<b>Inclusive schools</b>	<b>Pathways to support</b>	<b>Alternative provision</b>
<p><b>Inclusive schools pilot</b> – exploring, testing and learning from novel school-led approaches to promoting inclusion.</p> <p>Improving processes for <b>identifying, challenging and supporting schools</b> where there are concerns about inclusive practices.</p> <p>Implementing the right <b>continuous professional development offer</b> for staff working with vulnerable learners.</p>	<p><b>Inclusion support and alternative provision panels</b> – to identify the right support for children at risk of becoming disengaged.</p> <p><b>Developing a multiagency support offer</b> for children where needs and more complex and to respond to crises.</p> <p><b>Back on Track</b> – a pilot YOT project to support children at risk of exclusion and involvement in the criminal justice system.</p>	<p>Development of an <b>alternative provision framework</b> so that the right offer is available for all children.</p> <p>Reviewing the <b>finances</b> associated with alternative provision, so that the offer is viable and sustainable, and there is more clarity about funding.</p> <p>Undertaking an annual <b>needs assessment</b> and provision gap analysis to inform commissioning.</p>

<p><b>Sharing best practice</b> and learning from schools where there are more successful outcomes, in spite of key vulnerabilities.</p> <p><b>Engagement and participation</b> – finding ways to ensure that all children are heard and feel included.</p> <p>Work with the <b>Police and Schools Panel</b> to maximise the benefits of partnership between police, schools and the council.</p> <p><b>Review of the Council’s universal and traded support offer</b> to schools, to ensure best practice in promoting inclusion.</p>	<p><b>Inclusion Support Team</b> – development of targeted interventions to work with children and families at risk of becoming exclusion/ non-engagement.</p> <p><b>Connecting and supporting parents/ carers</b> – identifying ways to maximise use of existing networks (e.g. parent champions, early help navigators) to build capacity and support parents where educational engagement is at risk.</p>	<p>Ensuring the right frameworks are in place for <b>quality assurance</b> of alternative provision</p> <p>Ensuring robust processes are in place to <b>monitor the use of modified timetables</b> or personalised learning programmes to ensure children’s needs are met.</p>
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6.7 The programme will be set up within the Council’s Verto system, and there will be strategic oversight of the delivery of the Programme through the Transforming Children’s Services Board.

6.8 A Culture of Belonging Programme Board will be established to pull together the strands of activity and monitor implementation of projects and actions.

**7.0 Financial implications**

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any costs associated with the Culture of Belonging Programme will be contained within the overall approved budget for Children’s Services of £51.5 million.

7.2 Further financial analysis will be undertaken as part of the process of establishing this programme and will be the subject of a further report.

[NM/14012020/N]

## **8.0 Legal implications**

There are no direct legal implications relating to this report.  
[TC/14012020/W]

## **9.0 Equalities implications**

9.1 As detailed above, evidence both locally and nationally suggests that certain groups of children and young people are more likely to be affected by factors such as exclusion or becoming electively home educated. These include those with protected characteristics, such as children and young people with a disability or special educational need, and those from black and minority ethnic communities.

## **10.0 Environmental implications**

10.1 There are no specific environmental implications.

## **11.0 Human resources implications**

11.1 There are no human resources implications.

## **12.0 Corporate Landlord implications**

12.1 There are no corporate landlord implications.

## **13.0 Health and Wellbeing implications**

13.1 There is a strong association between educational engagement and a range of significant health and wellbeing factors, including community safety, mental health, experience of adverse childhood experiences, and later life outcomes.

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# Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

22 January 2020

<b>Report title</b>	<b>Wolverhampton Education Performance Data 2019 Provisional and Revised</b>	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Dr Mike Hardacre Education and Skills	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services	
<b>Originating service</b>	School Improvement	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Amanda Newbold	Head of School Improvement
	Tel	01902 555882
	Email	amanda.newbold@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	List any meetings at which the report has been or will be considered, e.g. Children's Leadership Team	
		16 January 2020

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## Recommendation for action:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Review and comment upon the performance of schools and academies up to Summer 2019.



**1.0 Purpose**

To provide an overview of provisional outcomes for Wolverhampton schools' 2019 results at the end of each Key Stage, including comparisons with National, West Midlands and Statistical Neighbours where information is available.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The School Improvement service worked across schools and academies in 2018-2019 delivery the Council's school improvement strategy through a mix of monitoring, challenge and support. 16 schools received additional intervention through the strategy's categorisation process and were subject to regular School Improvement Board meetings (SIBs), monitoring visits, training and support. Outcomes in summer 2019 demonstrate another successful year for these 16 schools and indeed all schools in the city; more children attend Good and Outstanding schools than ever before and performance at each Key Stage has seen successes. This report sets out these achievements.
- 2.2 During 2018-19, Ofsted carried out inspections or monitoring visits in 34 schools and academies in the city. The School Improvement Advisors (SIAs) supported school leaders and represented the LA during interviews with Ofsted in 23 schools and academies. Advisors participated in regional and national Ofsted consultation activities relating to changes in the schools and early years inspection framework and the school improvement team hosted five local opportunities for schools to be involved in the consultation process with the senior HMI representing Ofsted.
- 2.3 At the end of the academic year, 84% of schools in Wolverhampton were judged by Ofsted to be good or better. This indicated a 14% increase since 2014, putting Wolverhampton schools at the West Midlands average and 2% below national (86%) at the time. However, by the end of October 2019, 86% of schools in Wolverhampton were judged by Ofsted to be good or better. This is a 16% increase since 2014 and puts Wolverhampton schools 3% above the West Midlands average and in line with national. This is the best position for schools within the authority ever and shows that the majority of our pupils are receiving a good education on a daily basis.
- 2.4 A summary of Ofsted judgements of Wolverhampton schools is shown in the table below.

**Overall Ofsted Judgement as at end of November 2019**

109 schools currently with an Ofsted Judgement	30 Nov 2019
3 Schools judged to be Inadequate	3%
12 Schools judged to be Require Improvement	11%
76 Schools judged Good	70%
18 Schools judged Outstanding	17%
94 Schools Judged Good or Outstanding	86%

Out of the 12 schools deemed to Require Improvement, three were judged Good for the effectiveness of their leadership and management and one was judged good for their early years' provision.

Overall Ofsted Judgements by school type	30 Nov 2019
Nursery Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	100%
PRUs Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	100%
Special Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	75%
Primary, Infant & Junior Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	90%
Secondary Schools judged either Good or Outstanding	70%
<b>All types judged either Good or Outstanding</b>	<b>86%</b>

- 2.5 Advisors delivered a series of five leadership workshops for headteachers and a series for middle leaders during the year. Regular topics include safeguarding in schools, effective use of performance data, best practice for use of the Pupil Premium (PP) grant, reading, assessment, preparation for the change to the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and curriculum leadership. LA schools and an increasing number of academies also had LA school improvement reviews carried out in their schools, these are monitoring visits in which the focus is agreed between school leaders and the SIA. SIAs represented the LA by supporting six school and academy governing boards with advertising, recruitment and selection of headteachers during the year.
- 2.6 The Citizenship, Language and Learning team carried out central training, school reviews and bespoke activities in schools and academies across the city, this included a wide variety of support and guidance such as: the design and reviews of provision for learners new to the UK and those with no spoken English, strategies to support the competent and confident use of vocabulary by all learners, quality of provision for the most able pupils, the refinement of school systems for supporting the teaching of reading and mathematics and accelerating progress in writing. Schools also opted for interventions for new and experienced teachers, alongside training and data analysis, to identify gaps in pupil understanding. The team continued to lead on a project which involved the recruitment and training of Parent Ambassador – these colleagues play a key role in developing strong links between schools and particular community groups. Other key work saw the development of school systems so that they meet the need of learners new to the UK and match the criteria of 'Schools of Sanctuary', language acquisition course for parents and the development of pupils as 'Young Interpreters'.
- 2.7 Bespoke support was provided for 33 schools across the Early Years Foundation Stage; from this group over 60% saw improvements in outcomes at the end of the year. Training and development activities included learning environment audits in 12 schools, Early Language project in eight schools, Helicopter Stories project in ten schools and the Language First project in five schools. Ofsted inspections during the year demonstrated the work of the team:

*The local authority's support for the early years also ensures that assessments are moderated carefully to ensure that they accurately reflect children's attainment. (Ofsted, June 2019)*

*All aspects of early years provision have improved. The new early years leader has developed an effective team, which has a clear understanding of the children's needs and what each child needs to do next to make progress (Ofsted, May 2019)*

*Leaders have worked successfully with the local authority throughout the merger process to strengthen provision, especially in the early years and key stage 1. (Ofsted, May 2019)*

- 2.8 Over the last two years, the service has used its School Improvement Grant to fund an advisory teacher post with a primary function to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils - children eligible for pupil premium grant (PPG). Compliance checks have been undertaken for all providers eligible for the PPG, and the advisor contacted all schools that were non-compliant to offer feedback in the form of a desktop review and support for schools to develop strategies in relation to the use of the grant. Many schools requested bespoke support for provision mapping, staff training, data analysis, monitoring, governing training, peer reviews, system design, and outreach support for pupils. A series of networking sessions, led by the advisory teacher and supported by SIAs, have been established to provide schools with a toolkit for self-evaluation of their provision. In addition, the network sessions have included training and workshops from different departments and organisations for example, the Black Country Children's University.
- 2.9 During 2018-19, 75 schools and academies purchased the Safeguarding Officer for Education SLA. This comprised of a minimum of 3 visits but varied depending on each school's need. The schools in the SLA received a safeguarding self-evaluation tool - which was completed in conjunction with the LA officer during the visits. They also received an example safeguarding policy (updated annually), a code of conduct (updated when non-statutory guidance is updated) and an annual refresher training presentation. Schools in the SLA benefit from a visit from the officer upon notification of inspection and safeguarding advice and support via e-mail and telephone as and when required. Some schools also request bespoke training as part of the 3-visit package. General safeguarding awareness training and safer recruitment training was delivered several times during the academic year to school leaders and governors. During a four-year period from September 2015 to the end of 2019 all schools that have purchased the safeguarding SLA have been judged by Ofsted to have effective safeguarding policies, procedures and practices in place.
- 2.10 The service acted as Appropriate Body for 45 Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in the city last year. Training, registration, monitoring and support was provided for new teachers and their mentors in schools and academies across primary, secondary and special schools. 44 NQTs were successful in completing their programme, one left before completion.

### 3.0 School Performance

3.1 Systems for assessment in primary schools are more effective than previous years. The service is confident that rigorous and robust systems exist for standardisation and moderation of end of phase assessments.

- LA moderation of Early Years Foundation Stage teacher assessments was undertaken in 29 schools and settings by LA colleagues and 14 moderators recruited from schools.
- Ten visits were made to schools on behalf of the Standards and Testing Authority to monitor the administration of the phonics screening check, 100% of visits were judged to be delivering the check effectively.
- In total, 47 schools were moderated for teacher assessment at Key Stage 1 – this involved 18 moderators looking at the samples of work for 215 children in each of reading, writing and mathematics. Of the 645 samples, only 12 pieces were moved down and 24 were increased.
- For Key Stage 2 moderation, 33 schools were visited, 271 samples of work were reviewed, fewer than 5% were moved down and 7% were increased. Seven officers monitored the administration of the Key Stage 2 Statutory Assessments (SATs) across 23 schools before, during and after the test week in May.

A summary of effective practice for assessment and moderation was shared with schools following the process.

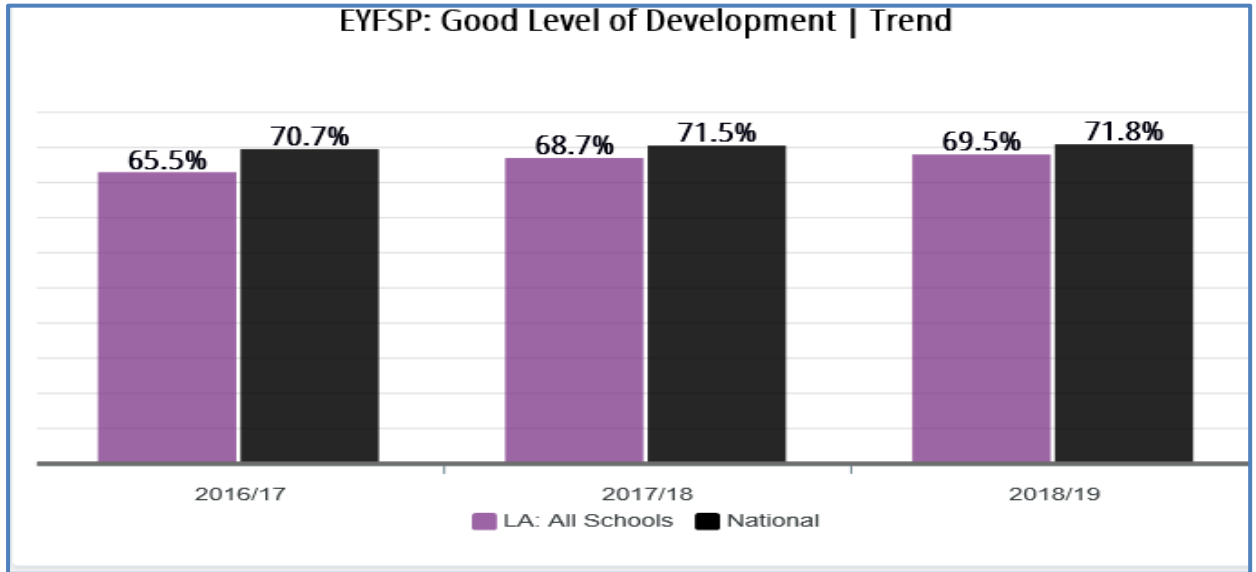
3.2 Highlights of performance at each Key Stage is provided below.

#### 3.2.1 Early Years Foundation Stage Profile validated data

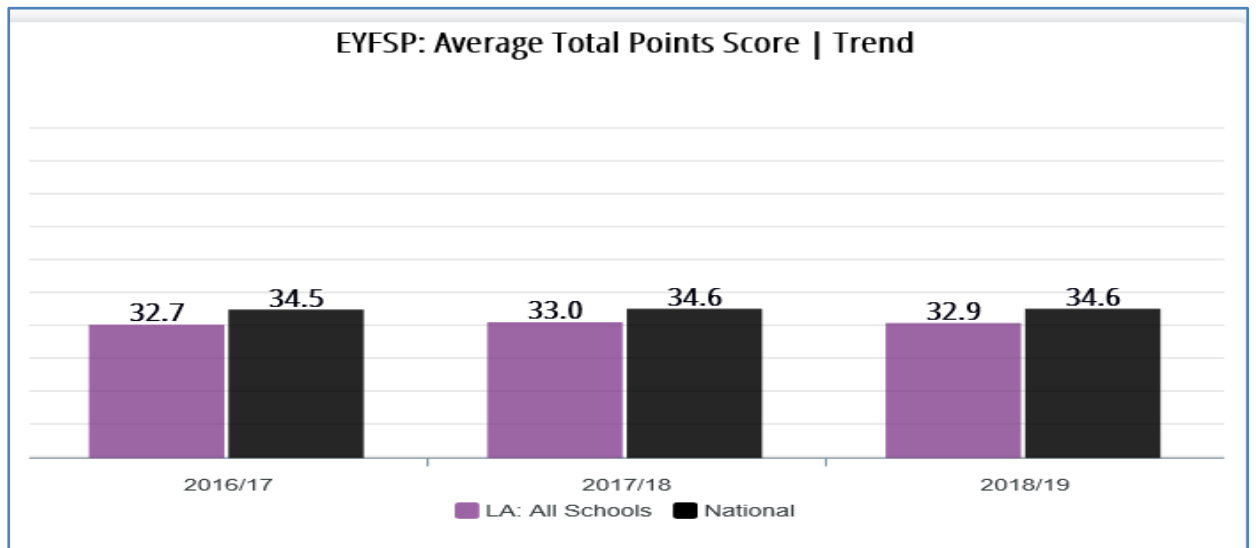
- From a cohort of 3,487 pupils assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, 70% achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD), a total of 2,422 pupils. This is an increase of 1% on 2018 outcomes. National outcomes indicate that 72% of pupils achieved GLD.
  - The gap between Wolverhampton and National Good Level of Development has decreased from 7% in 2016 to 2% in 2019.
  - In 2019 Wolverhampton is ranked 118<sup>th</sup> (of 151 Local Authorities), this indicates improvement from 125<sup>th</sup> in 2018.
  - When compared to Statistical Neighbours, Wolverhampton (70%) is above average, joint 2<sup>nd</sup> in the group, behind Southampton and Derby (both 71%).
  - 3.8% of the children achieved an exceeding outcome in all 12 of the GLD areas of the early learning goals.
  - Fewer boys attained GLD than girls (64% compared to 75%), this was lower than their counterparts nationally resulting in a greater gender gap.

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[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

- Of the 70 schools with EYFS outcomes in 2019, 30 schools achieved above the national figure.



- West Midlands regional comparisons place Wolverhampton as 8<sup>th</sup> out of 14, with GLD in line with the regional average of 70%.
- From a cohort of 3,487 pupils the average total points score across all early learning goals is 32.9. Furthermore 67% of pupils achieved an expected or exceeding in all early learning goals, a total of 2,325 pupils

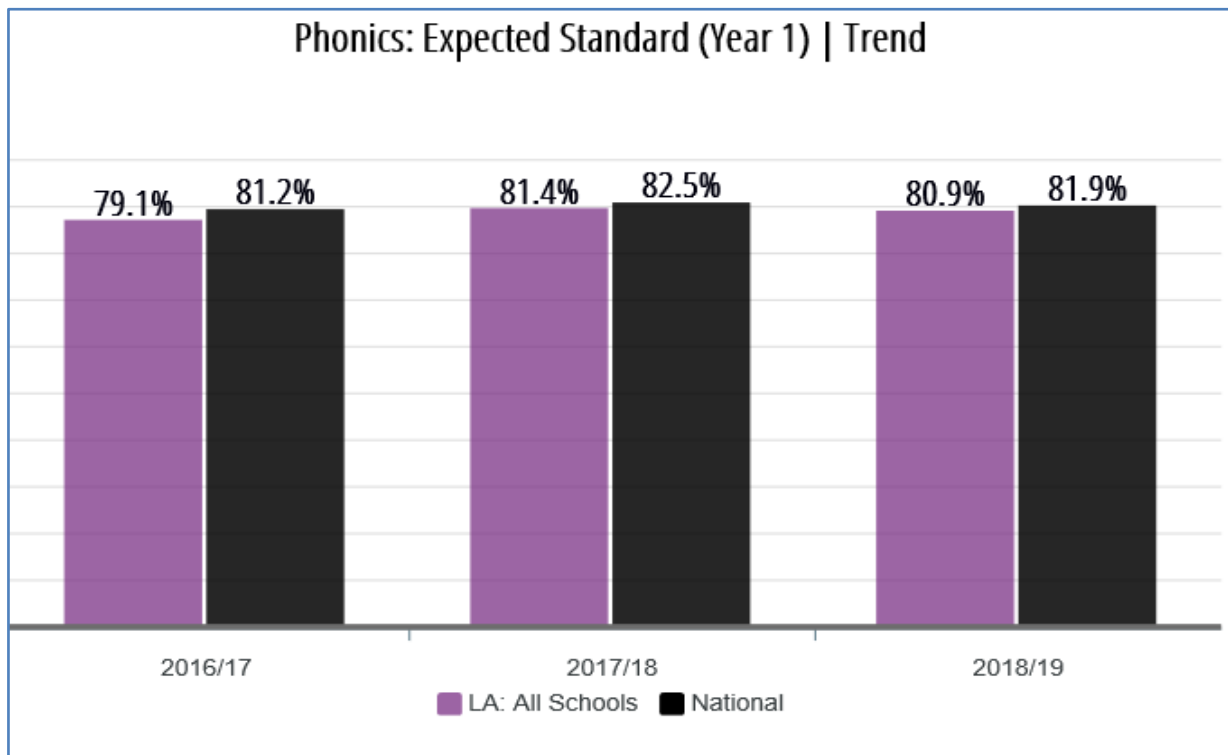


- In the city, 60% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieved a GLD, this is a noticeable increase compared to 54% in 2017 and considerably higher than the national of 57%. This places Wolverhampton 40th Nationally with a Quartile banding of B, joint 1st place in comparison to our Statistical Neighbours and 2nd in the West Midlands.

- 65% of pupils with English as an additional language achieved GLD, the same as 2018 and 2% below the national of 67% This places Wolverhampton joint 3rd in comparison to our Statistical Neighbours and joint 4<sup>th</sup> in the West Midlands, this is a 1% above the West Midlands average.
- 23% of pupils receiving SEN Support achieved a GLD which places the city joint 5th in comparison to our Statistical Neighbours and 11<sup>th</sup> regionally. This reflects an increase of 7% since 2016.

### 3.2.2 Phonics Screening Test validated data

- In 2019, 81% of pupils achieved the standard of the phonics screening check, this was similar to 2018 and this ranks Wolverhampton 92<sup>nd</sup> place nationally.
- There remains a gap of approximately 6% between boys and girls in this measure.
- 44% of pupils receiving SEN Support reached the standard of the phonics screening, this is below the NCER national of 48%.
- 78% of pupils reached the expected level in the phonics screening for children who have English as an additional language.
- Pupils eligible for FSM performed particularly well with 75% achieving the expected standard in Phonics, 5% higher than their counterparts nationally. This places Wolverhampton 1<sup>st</sup> in comparison to our Statistical Neighbours and 1<sup>st</sup> in the West Midlands and gives Wolverhampton a national ranking of 21 and a quartile banding of A.





### 3.2.3 Key Stage 1 validated data

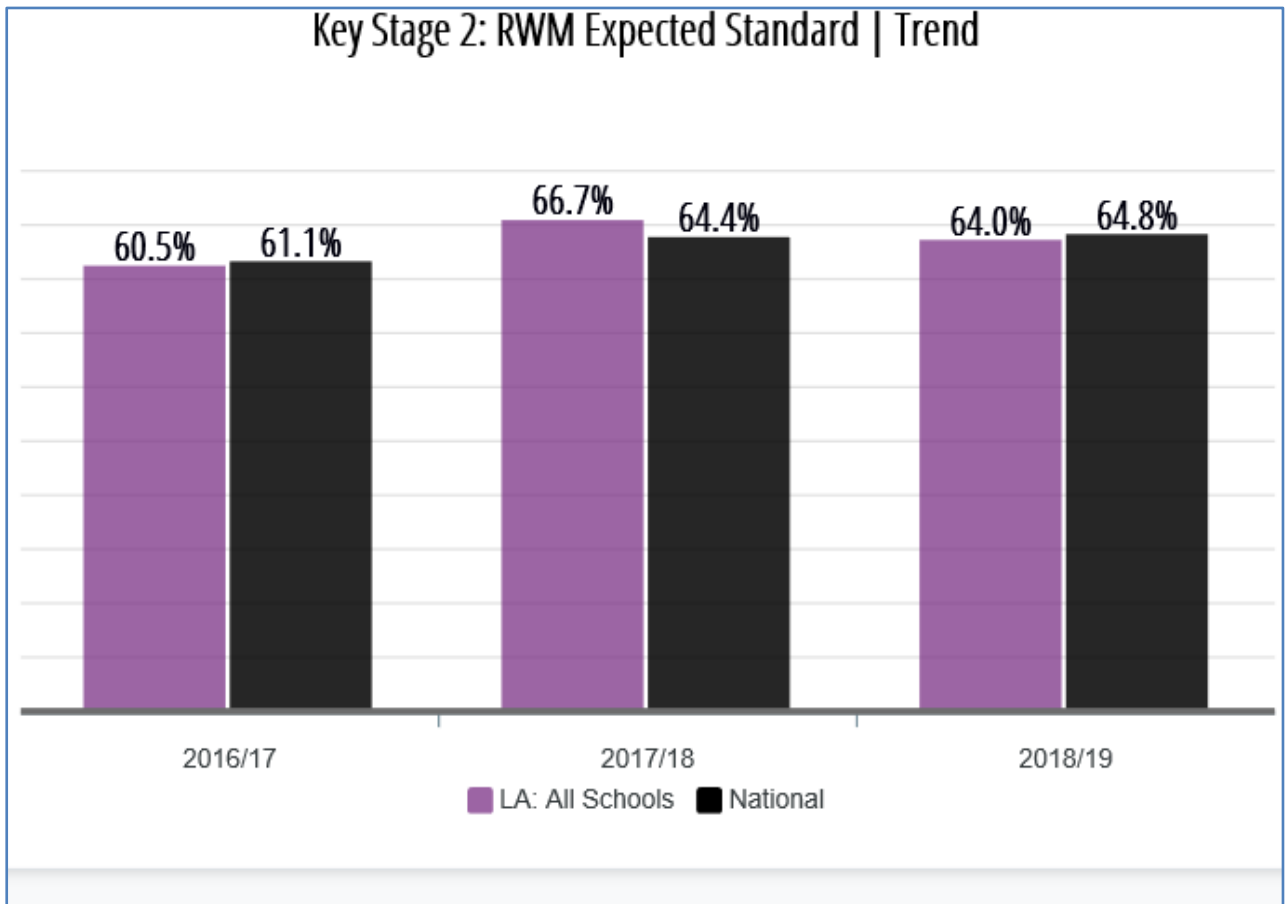
- From a cohort of 3662 pupils, 66% of Wolverhampton pupils reached the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths combined (RWM). This figure was 65% in 2018. NCER National outcomes indicate that 65% of pupils attained this level, the same as 2018. Overall 11% of pupils in the city were working at greater depth in all three subjects, this is in line with the NCER national figure.
- Reading: 74% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above in reading, the same as 2018, compared to 75% nationally. This gives Wolverhampton a ranking of 88, compared to 96 in 2018. This places Wolverhampton joint 1<sup>st</sup> in comparison to our Statistical Neighbours and in line with the West Midlands average. Only 22% of pupils were working at greater depth, compared to 25% nationally.
- Writing: 69% of pupils were assessed to be working at the expected standard or above in writing, this remains the same as 2018 and compares to 69% nationally. As a result, Wolverhampton is ranked 77, compared to 82 in 2018. This places Wolverhampton 1<sup>st</sup> when compared to our Statistical Neighbours and 1% higher than the West Midlands average. 14% of pupils are working at greater depth compared to 15% nationally.
- Mathematics: 75% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above, the same as 2018 outcomes. This compares to 76% nationally, Wolverhampton is ranked 79 compared to 89 in 2018. This places Wolverhampton joint 1<sup>st</sup> when compared to Statistical Neighbours and in line with the West Midlands average. 19% of pupils are working at greater depth compared to 22% nationally.
  - In all Key Stage 1 subjects more girls reached the expected standard than boys. The biggest gap in attainment by gender was in writing where it was 13% between girls (76%) and boys (63%), this reflects the national picture.
  - In reading the gender gap was 7% with 78% of girls and 71% of boys reaching the standard. The gap was narrowest in Maths at 2%, where 76% of girls reached the expected standard compared to 74% of boys. This gap reflects the national picture.
  - 57% of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in all three subjects of Reading, Writing and Maths in 2019, this is significantly higher than the NCER national of 49% and the regional of 51%.
  - 16% of pupils with SEN support (non EHCP children) reached the expected standard in all three subjects of Reading, Writing and Maths. This is below the NCER national.
  - 64% of pupils with English as an additional language reached the expected standard in RWM compared to 66% of those with English as a first language. This is above the NCER national average for EAL pupils.



### 3.2.4 Key Stage 2 validated data

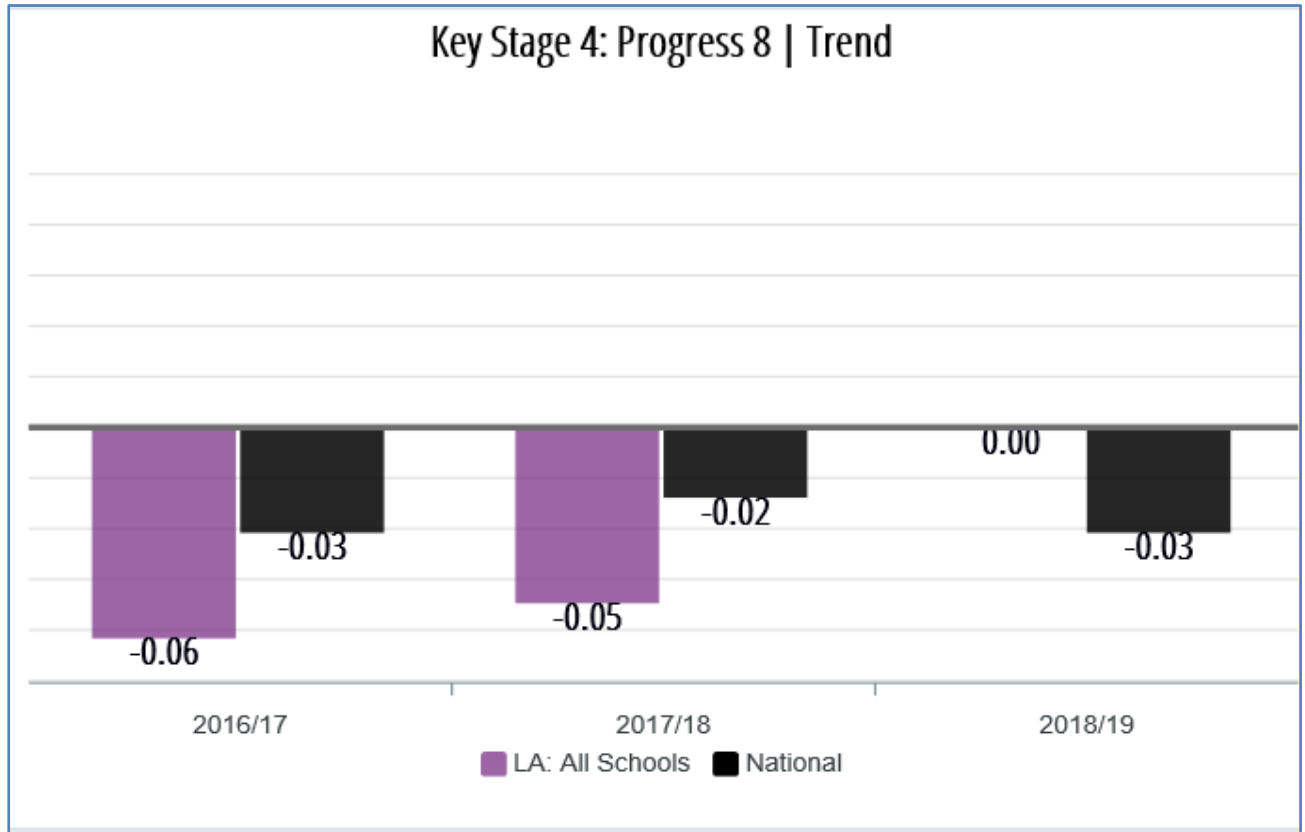
- From a cohort of 3,364 pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, 64% achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing & Maths combined (RWM), a total of 2,154 pupils. This compares to 65% nationally, ranking Wolverhampton 95 nationally with a quartile banding of C. When compared to our Statistical Neighbours Wolverhampton is joint 1<sup>st</sup> and above the West Midlands average.
- In Reading, 72% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above compared to 73% nationally, ranking Wolverhampton 101 nationally.
- In Writing, 79% of pupils were assessed at the expected standard or above, this is above the national average, ranking Wolverhampton 71 nationally with a quartile banding of C.
- In Maths, 76% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above, compared to 79% nationally, ranking Wolverhampton 130 nationally.
- In Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling, 79% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above, this is above the national average, giving Wolverhampton a ranking of 58<sup>th</sup> nationally with a quartile banding of C.
- There is an increase in the proportion of Wolverhampton children working at the higher standard, or greater depth (GDS). In 2019 this was 24% in Reading, 20% in Writing, 23% in Maths and 37% in GPS, compared to 27%, 20%, 27% and 36% nationally. Overall 10% of pupils in the city attained GDS in reading, writing and mathematics combined compared to 11% nationally.
  - The gap between attainment for boys and girls for RWM combined was 11%, with 59% of boys at the expected standard in all three subjects compared to 60% for boys nationally. Whereas 70% of girls achieved RWM combined, in line with girls nationally.
  - In Reading, Writing and Maths combined, 56% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected level (56% in 2018) compared to 51% nationally (51% in 2018). This is strength and demonstrates the impact of the work schools are doing to support the most disadvantaged pupils. It ranks Wolverhampton 32<sup>nd</sup> nationally with a quartile banding of B.
  - 52% of pupils eligible for FSM achieved the expected level in RWM combined, compared to 47% of FSM pupils nationally and regionally. This places Wolverhampton in 1<sup>st</sup> place when comparing with Statistical Neighbours and West Midlands local authorities, with a national ranking of 32 and a quartile banding of A.

- 23% of pupils with SEN support (non EHCP children) achieved this standard in RWM combined compared to 25% nationally. This is above both the West Midlands and Statistical Neighbours average. This ranks Wolverhampton 93 nationally with a quartile banding of C.
- 65% of pupils with English as an additional language achieved the expected standard in RWM combined. This is above the national average. The positive impact of the work of the Local Authority's Citizenship, Language and Learning Team is visible in this data.
- Progress across Key Stage 2 remains significantly above national averages. In Reading this is +0.6, in Writing +0.9, in Maths +0.1 This is the fourth successive year that Wolverhampton has been above average progress in all Key Stage 2 progress measures.
  - In Writing Wolverhampton is ranked 23 nationally with a quartile banding of A.

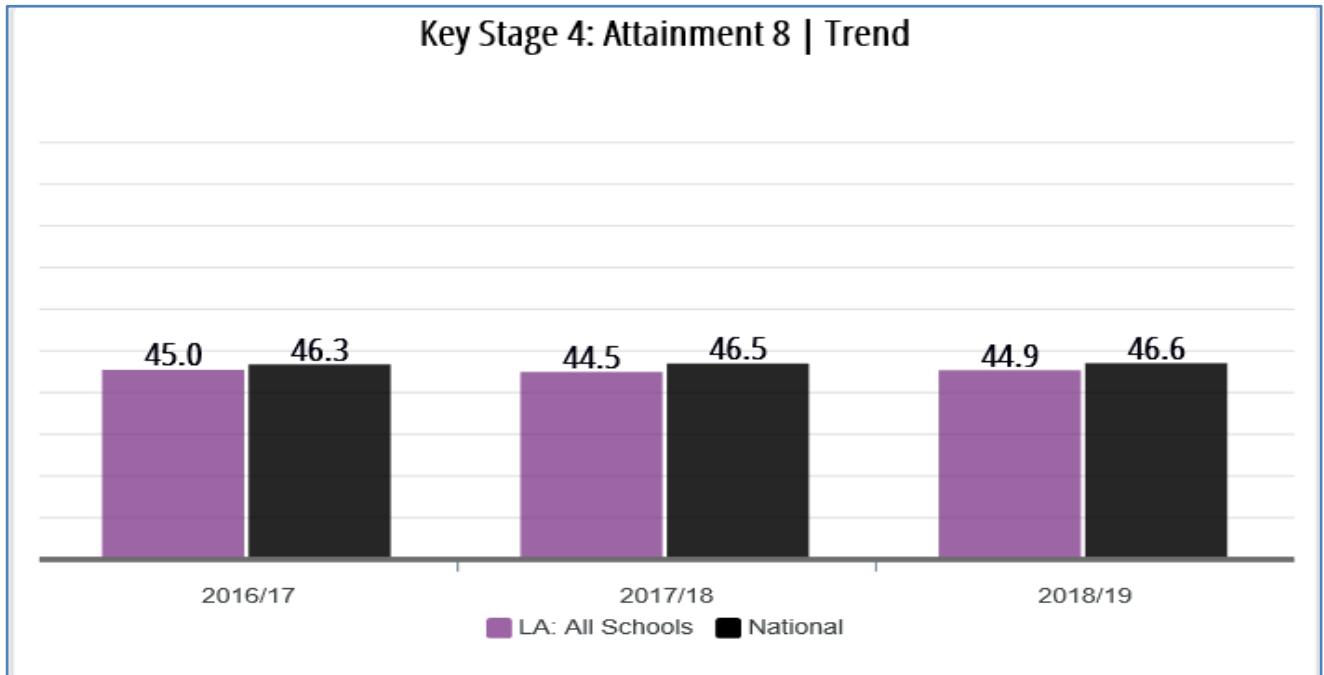


### 3.2.5 Key Stage 4 – unvalidated data

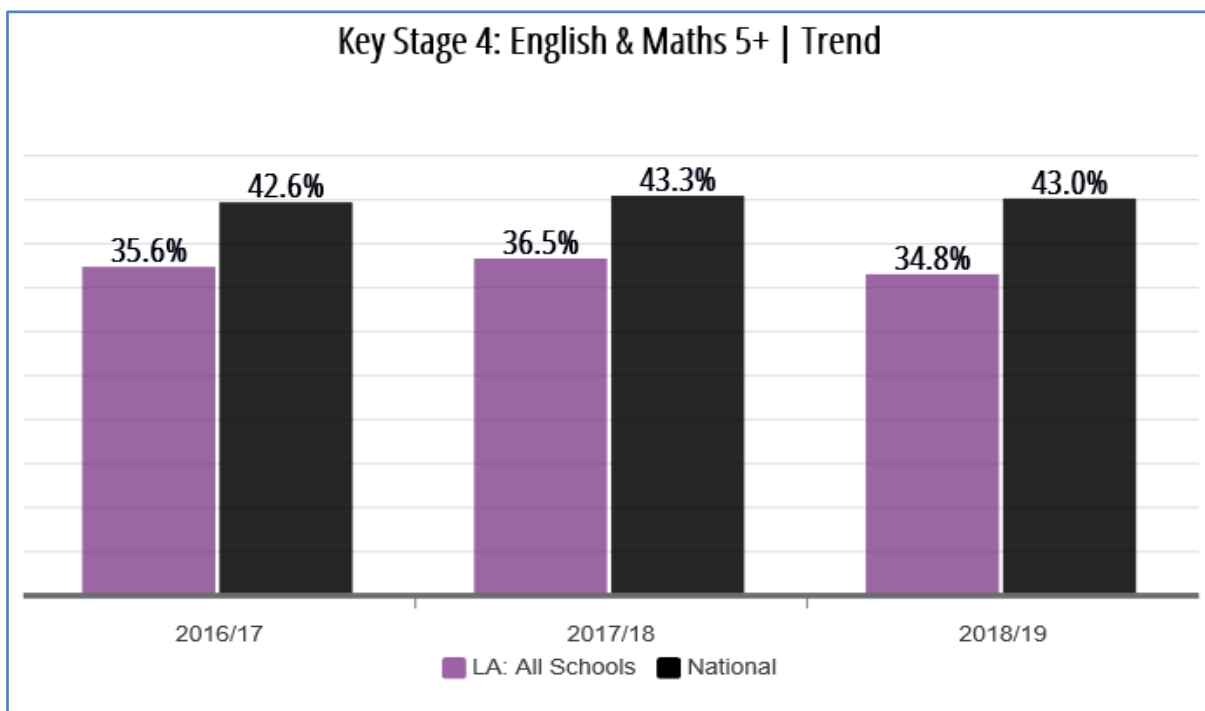
- Provisional outcomes for 2019 indicate that the Progress 8 measure has improved from 2018 at 0.00. This improvement is reflected in the national ranking for Wolverhampton which is currently 60 with a quartile banding of B.



The provisional average Attainment 8 score per pupil is 44.9 compared to 44.5 in 2017 which is marginally above the National and Statistical Neighbour average and ranks the city 97 nationally with a quartile banding of C.

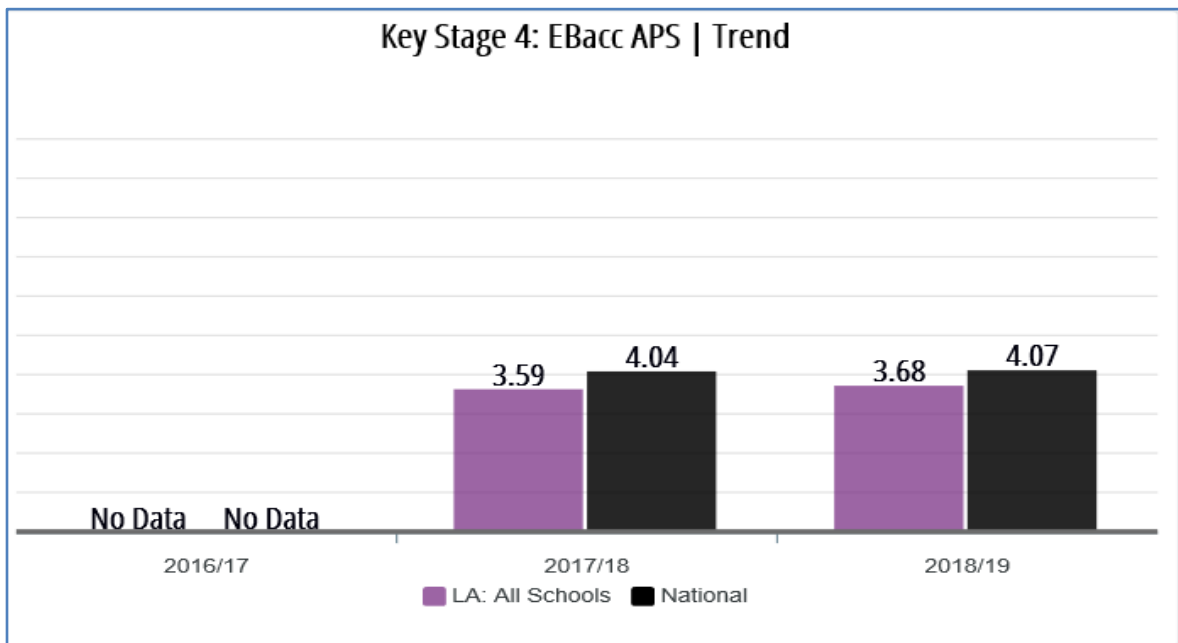


- The proportion of pupils in the city achieving a strong (Grades 9-5) pass in English and Maths is 35%, compared to 43% nationally. This ranks Wolverhampton 136<sup>th</sup> nationally, below the West Midlands average, but in line with our Statistical Neighbour average.

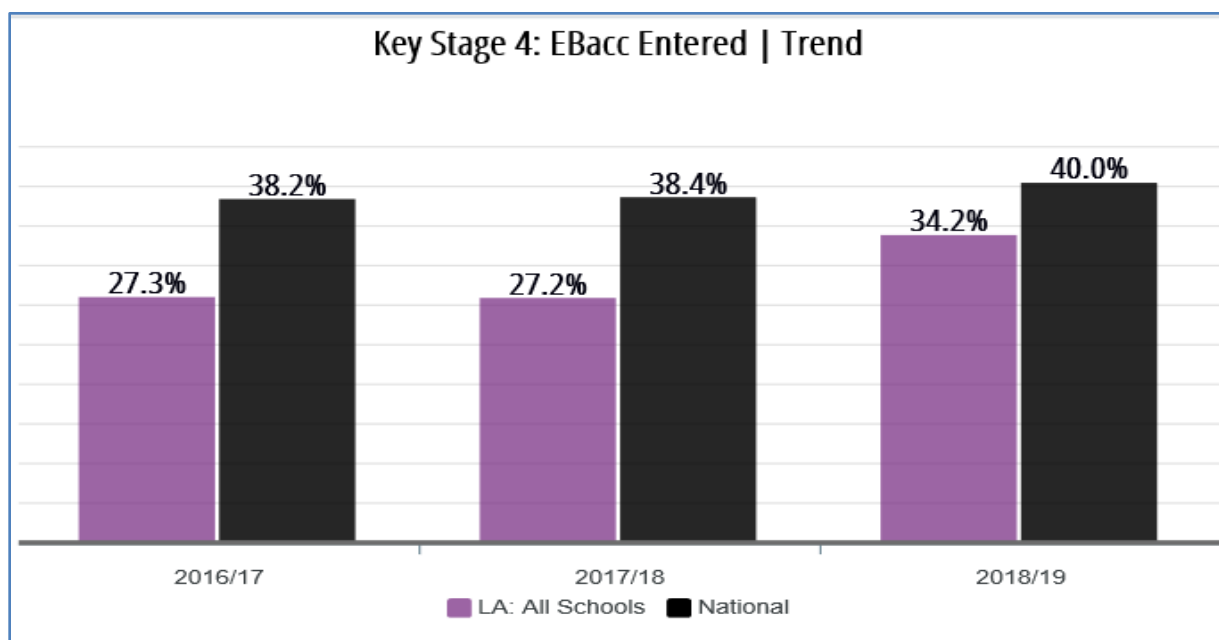


- The attainment gap between the performance of boys and girls at this measure is significant with 13 percentage points gap for achieving a strong pass at 9-5. Both figures are wider than the national, regional and Statistical Neighbour averages.

- Disadvantaged pupils Attainment 8 score was 38.9 (37.2 in 2018). This is higher than the national of 36.7 and regional of 37.1. Disadvantaged pupils performed well at Progress 8 with a score of -0.20. Furthermore 23% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a strong pass in English and Maths (9-5) compared to 25% nationally.
- For pupils with SEN support, the Attainment 8 score is 32.2 (31.8 in 2018) This is in line with national and above the West Midlands score. 10% of pupils with SEN support achieved a strong pass in English and Maths at 9-5. The Attainment 8 score for pupils with an EHCP is 7.3 (7.7 in 2018) compared to 13.6 nationally.
- Pupils with English as an additional language had an Attainment 8 score of 46.6 (47.8 in 2018), this is below the national figure of 48.2 and in line with the regional score. 39% of pupils who have English as an additional language achieved a strong pass in English and Maths at 9-5, this is below the national figure and in line with the regional average.
- From 2018, the headline EBacc attainment measure is the EBacc average point score (EBacc APS). Wolverhampton has an EBacc APS of 3.68 (3.59 in 2018) ranking 128 nationally and 7th compared to our Statistical Neighbours.



- The percentage of pupils who entered English Baccalaureate has increased by 7.0% from 27.2% in 2018 to 34.2% in 2019. This upward trend is greater than the national increase of 2%.
- In 2018-19, 92% of Wolverhampton pupils were in sustained education, employment or training in the year after Key Stage 4, compared to 94% nationally, this figure was in line with our Statistical Neighbours.



### 3.2.6 Key Stage 5 - unvalidated data

- At Key Stage 5, 8% of Wolverhampton pupils attained 3+ A grades at SCSE/Applied A Level and double awards. This is below the 12% nationally and is in line with the West Midlands and Statistical Neighbours averages.
- The proportion of pupils achieving AAB or higher at A level in at least 2 facilitating subjects is 11% compared to 16% nationally. This is higher than our Statistical Neighbours and in line with the West Midlands figure.
- The average point score per entry for A levels was 28.37 compared to 33.77 nationally. This ranks Wolverhampton 141.
- The average point score per entry for “Technical” qualifications is 27.39 which indicates an upward trend and is above the West Midlands average, but below the national figure of 28.43. This ranks Wolverhampton 86 with a quartile banding of C.

## 4.0 Priorities 2019-2020

The service will continue to work with schools to address remaining gaps in performance in:

- Ofsted outcomes for early years settings (childcare in domestic and non-domestic premises)
- Improvements in academic outcomes for pupils who have Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Improvements in academic outcomes for boys
- Curriculum development, implementation and leadership, with an emphasis on maths
- Attainment at Key Stage 4 and 5.

## **5.0 Questions for Scrutiny to consider**

Panel members asked to seek assurance on the performance of schools and academies in the city and to make comment as appropriate.

## **6.0 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications of this report.  
[HM/17012020/W]

## **7.0 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications.  
[AS/17012020/A]

## **8.0 Equalities implications**

Details regarding the performance of specific groups are provided in the report. Any underperformance between groups is challenged at a school level and informs the school improvement priorities for the academic year 2019 - 2020

## **9.0 Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications.

## **10.0 Human resources implications**

There are no financial implications.

## **11.0 Corporate landlord implications**

There are no corporate landlord implications.

## **12.0 Schedule of background papers**

The previous report was presented at Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel on 21 March 2019.

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**Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel – Draft Work Programme 2019-20**

The Panel will have responsibility for scrutiny functions as they relate to: -

Children in need/child protection, Looked after children, Early help 0-5, Early help 5-18, Youth offending, Children's commissioning, School planning and resources and Standards and vulnerable pupils.

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Lead Report Author</b>	<b>Notes</b>
22 January 2020	Children's Social Care Self-Evaluation Refresh 2019/20  Culture of Belonging Programme  School Improvement Annual Report  Draft Work Programme	Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker,  Robert Hart, Head of Service Inclusion Support and Adrian Leach, Head of SEND  Amanda Newbold, Head of School Improvement  Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer	
3 February 2020	Towers Outdoor Education Centre - Options Appraisal (pre-decision scrutiny) – exempt item	Richard Welch, Head of Partnerships and Commercial Services (Education)	Pre-decision scrutiny
18 March 2020	Review of Early Intervention and Prevention  Progress report on Area SEND Evaluation	Alison Montgomery, Head of Strengthening Families People  Adrian Leach, Head of SEND	

**Potential Future Items: -**

1. Apprenticeship and youth unemployment –
2. Supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children briefing paper – Alison Hind
3. Proposed All Age Travel Assistance Policy consultation (pre-decision scrutiny) – Cllr Hardacre (possible March 2020)