

Wolverhampton Children and Young People's Self-Evaluation 2023-24 end of Q2 update

Lisa Preston

Presenter:

Children's Social Care

Continuing good performance

- The referral rate increased in the 2022-23 year to 635.4, this was comparable to the reported rate for our statistical neighbours (649.1). At the end of September, this has reduced to **595.8** per 10,000.
- Since September 2022, the number of children open on a CP plan for longer than 15 months has been reporting a downward trend. At the end of March 23 this has reduced to 38, with a further reduction to 32 in June 2023. During Q2 2023/24, numbers have stabilised, with an end of quarter figure of 31; 19 fewer than at the same time in 2022.
- At the end of September 2023, 223 children were open on a CP plan, a reduction of 12 when compared to the end of Q1 and a reduction of 32 when compared to the same time in 2022.
- PEPs in timescale have consistently been above 92% during the last 12-month period. The rate in September 2023 increased to 93.1%.
- The percentage of children and young people in care with a visit in timescale is consistently above 91%, with an average of 95%. At the end of September 2023, it was at 94.5%.
- 84% of EHCPs have been completed within 20 weeks or less (27 out of 32). The rate of EHC plans excluding exceptions issued within 20 weeks since January 2023 currently sits at 73%; this is above the last published national average of 50.7% (LAIT tool) and improving month on month since March 2023.

Areas of performance for further monitoring

- The percentage of children becoming subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time has increased significantly in recent months from 19.2% reported in March 23 to 25.6% at the end of September 23, bringing it more in line with statistical neighbours.
- The percentage of assessments completed within 45 working days had reduced slightly to 86.1% in 2022-23. In the 12 months leading to the end of September, 79.5% of CIN assessments and 90.9% of CP assessments were completed within 45 working days.
- Wolverhampton has consistently reported a rate of 94% of CAYPIC with no more than three placements throughout the year since 2021, performing better than all comparators. Throughout 2023 this figure has slightly reduced to 92.7%, in September 2023.
- Throughout 2022/2023, 86% of children received a dental check in timescale, a reduction on the 90% during the previous year with performance continuing to be stronger than comparators. At the end of September 2023 performance was at 85.9%, recording month on month reductions since April. During the same period in 2022 dental check performance was at 91.3%, 5.4% higher than September 2023.
- 519 children and young people are registered as EHE within the City. In the last 12 months over 90% of EHE families have been in contact and shared information around their EHE.
- 109 referrals to the Primary and Secondary Inclusion Support and Alternative Provision Panel (ISAPP) from September 2022 to end of April 2023, to access additional support for children and young people rather than opting for suspension or exclusion. Of 55 pre-exclusion meetings, only 6 young people went on to be permanently excluded.

Key Headline data-end of Quarter 2

Children receiving support as at end of Quarter 2, September 2023: (difference from 22/23 year-end)

- 509 (+8) Children and young people in care
- 226 (-1) Children who have a Child Protection Plan
- 729 (+6) Children who have a Child in Need Plan
- 211 (+76) Children in Assessment
- 1405 (+25) Children receiving Early Help

Aiming for Excellence Plan 2023-2024 - CYP



Progress on our Aiming for Excellence plan

The 2023-2024 Aiming for Excellence Plan was relaunched in February 2023 and over 74% of children's social workers reported in the 2023 Health Check survey that they were aware of the plan and the six practice improvement areas

Practice weeks take place three times a year, the progress made so far is illustrated below:

Overall Ratings	Oct 2022	Feb 2023	2022-2023	June 2023
Outstanding	3	2	6	2
Good	12	18	45	13
Requires Improvement	1	1	4	2
Inadequate	0	1	1	0
Total	16	22	56	17
Total G/O	15 (94%)	20 (91%)	51 (91%)	15 (88%)

Some of our key areas of strength as identified through audit in practice weeks June 2023

- Practitioners know the children and families they work with well
- Direct work through the establishment of relationships is linked to sustained changes.
- Evidence of strengths-based approaches and collaborative working
- All children and young people were safe, and the intervention was making a positive difference
- Social workers feel they are receiving good, reflective supervision and direction
- Children benefit from regular and timely reviews and/or meetings which progress their plan

Areas for further development:

- Although direct work and evidence of the voice of the child is consistently strong, the use of life journey work remains an area for further improvement, as well as ensuring assessment tools are integral to analysis, chronologies in particular
- Supporting children to safely, and with the right help, remain within their family network by exploring and engaging with wider family and support systems and making best use of family meetings
- Children and young people will understand and feel able to talk about their background, wider family, heritage, identity, sexuality, experiences etc and practitioners will feel confident in having conversations about this
- Timeliness of recording

Key Actions completed or in progress as part of our Aiming for Excellence Plan include:

- Commissioned external training for social workers on working with men and fathers
- A working group is exploring barriers in using family meetings and engaging wider family networks – this will be superseded by the FFCP workstream on FGDM
- Sessions on Social GRACES being delivered in teams from October 2023 and is being used with ASYEs
- The existing AP assessment workshop is being updated to focus more on analysis and decision making and will include findings of scoping work on barriers to using assessment tools including chronologies. Specific session on risk assessment to be developed by January 2024
- Exploring the functionality of Eclipse to review what changes could be made to the assessment tool to better support social workers to use and record chronologies more effectively and efficiently
- Developing a series of one-off sessions for teams to improve use of Eclipse and improve timeliness - bringing together use of voice notes / dictation, photos, genopro, chronologies etc. These will then be embedded into relevant AP workshops as business as usual.
- Increased the CYP and families feedback from for triangulation purposes in June 2023 Practice week

Children's Social Care Priorities for 2023/24:

1. As a strong stable experienced leadership team we know ourselves well. We will continue to be confident in our approach, open to challenge and ongoing learning and development of ourselves and the services we deliver to children and young people and their families in the city.
2. We will continue our journey of aiming for excellence; continuing to use our restorative approach to practice, including our focus on language, to underpin our delivery of consistently high-quality services to build family strength and resilience and improve opportunity for our children and young people in the city.
3. We will continue our journey of transformation enabling opportunities for creativity and innovation in practice, including; opening two small family homes for children in care, a multi-agency team aimed at preventing future family breakdown to reduce the number of children repeatedly moved from the care of their parents, a staying close offer for care leavers, and a Family Hub model of delivery across the city to support the Start for Life Offer.

4. We will adapt our service delivery to ensure our children, young people and families can access the services they need at the earliest opportunity to strengthen and enrich all children's experience of childhood and family life, to enable them to grow into happy, strong, resilient young adults. To support this, we will:

- Ensure improved accessibility of help and support through a Family front door and family hubs
- Work with families to offer a range of options for family help as a DfE pathfinder authority
- Utilise and expand our prevention programmes in our youth justice service to continue to divert young people away from the criminal justice system
- Ensure our children and young people can be educated and supported in the school environment that is most suited to them and receive appropriate support to achieve their potential as they move into adulthood
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people, to include ongoing robust safeguarding, to include those at risk of extra familial harm
- Ensure the sufficiency of foster homes and suitable family options where children are not able to live with their birth parents. Where a young person is not able to live within a family, we will provide good quality alternative provision through appropriately registered internal and external children's homes and supported accommodation
- Develop the knowledge and skills of the workforce to support young people with SEND and care leavers to successfully transition into young independent adults
- Ensure we have a care leaver offer that continues to respond to need, supported by care experience being recognised as a protective characteristic

Some examples of our key achievements from April to September 2023

- In Easter 2023 the HAF team supported 2433 children and in Summer 2023 4050 children. The #YES provision support an additional 10% of children who are deemed to be in need by our providers and the ½ term holidays to all children who live in the city. This provision saw 2832 children in May 2023.
- We have developed improved ease of access to a range of services for children and families through the development of the Family Hubs, publishing our Start for Life Offer and establishing our Parent Carer Panels
- We have strengthened opportunities for co-production with children in the city particularly for those open to the Strengthening Family service to ensure children's voices shape our service planning.
- We have developed social care support to our SEND children through the strategic lead of our Designated Social Care officer (DCSO), now a dedicated post, our SEND champions across Childrens Services and our specialist case worker in IASS ensuring children's need are met
- For our children in care, GCSE attainment was strong, none were permanently excluded, suspensions have decreased, and school attendance has improved. A high number of care leavers attend higher education.
- We have secured significant funding from DfE to become a Pathfinder authority for Stable Homes: Built on Love
- Care Leavers now have 'protected characteristic' status