

Children in Care Performance Scorecard Summary and Analysis February 2018

The overall number of looked after children in Croydon has remained steady over the course of the performance year. However, within the overall figure there has been a significant change in the composition of the CIC population, with an additional 79 local children in care and 84 fewer unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). In spite of this increase, Croydon remains below the national average for percentage volume of children in care.

Missing episodes for looked after children and return home interviews (RHIs) are now being tracked and reported on. There is a general upward trend in RHI completion, but problems remain with those young people placed out of borough. Going forwards, as new placements are made we will be negotiating with in situ services in the locality of the placement to undertake RHIs.

Regularity of social worker visits to looked after children is holding steady at 91% and the decline in reviews held within timescale seems to have been addressed. With the latter we will also be differentiating between whether the review itself has not been held or if non-completion of paperwork is the underlying problem. Participation in reviews has dropped over the course of the year.

The completion of personal education plans (PEPs) and medicals remain areas of concern. The virtual school has gone over to a system of electronic PEPs which are not held on the main recording system which has made tracking and reporting difficult. Medicals, particularly initial checks upon entry into care, are not being completed to a satisfactory level. The clinical commissioning group (CCG) has agreed funding to increase resources from April onwards, but this is an area where there needs to be improvement.

The figures for up to date care plans are healthy at 95%, but conversely pathway plans for 16- and 17-year olds are poor at 48%. Much of this is due to continued confusion about the documentation that is to be used and accompanying process, for which updated guidance will be issued.

Placement stability and consistency of social worker support is currently satisfactory, and for the key indicator of 3 or more placements in a year (LAC21) Croydon is below the national average. We are in line with national comparator figures for children placed within 20 miles of home. The suite of education figures for the academic year 2016/17 will be available in May. There has been a small decline in the number of Croydon fostering households, but steady improvement in compliance for annual reviews and supervisory visits.

The volume of adoption activity has dropped over the course of the year, but we are starting to see an upturn in placement orders which will hopefully translate into

increased activity in 2018/19. Whilst numbers have dropped, the timeliness of adoption placements is improving, with children being placed more quickly with their adoptive family.

Care leaver performance is satisfactory, with a considerable improvement in pathway plans being up to date and NEET and accommodation outcomes either in line with or above national comparators. Croydon's figures for care leavers in employment, education or training are continuing to improve and are well above the national benchmark.