8 October 2019	ITEM: 13
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Children's Social Care Performance	

Wards and communities affected:	**Key Decision:**
All	N/A

Report of: Mandy Moore, Business Intelligence & Data Analytics Manager, Performance Quality and Business Intelligence
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health and Interim Director of Children's Services
This report is Public

Executive Summary

This report shows that:

- The higher levels of referrals experienced during 2018/19 has continued and monthly averages year to date 2019/20 remains in line with 2018/19.
- The % of children and families assessments completed within the 45 working day timescale has improved further with 96% of assessments being completed within timescale.
- The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) has continued to reduce
- The % of children subject to a child protection plan reviewed within timescale has been consistently at 100% May to July 19.
- The % of our care leavers in education, employment and training continues to improve.

This shows that good performance has continued in areas such as assessments completed within 45 days, despite the increase in demand, and that performance has continued to improve in relation to the number of children on a child protection plan.

1. **Recommendation(s)**

1.1 **That members comment on the areas of improvement in Children's Social Care and work undertaken to manage demand for statutory social care services.**

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This report provides a summary of Children's Social Care performance. It highlights key demand indicators such as number of contacts, benchmarking data and key performance indicators.

2.2 Thurrock produces a number of data sets and performance reports to meet its internal and external reporting requirements. The data in this report is from the At a Glance monthly performance report, which reflects July 2019 performance, regional benchmarking data and national data sets.

This data has been presented and discussed with the Social Care Senior Management Team and at the Corporate Director's Performance Group.
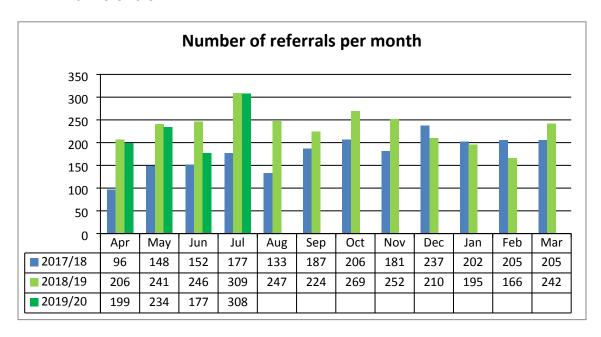
3. PERFORMANCE

3.1. Referrals & Assessments

There has been an increase of referrals received in July 2019, this is similar to last year and is contributed to by an increase in referrals from schools prior to the start of the summer holiday.
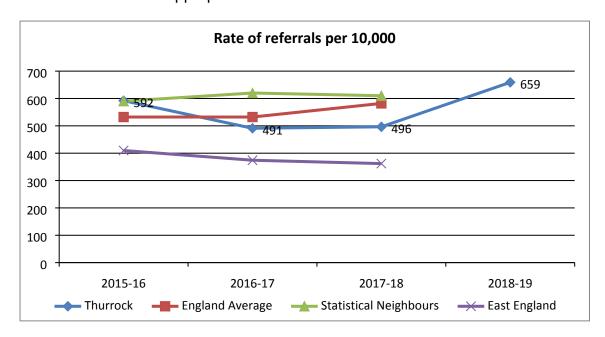Our Quarter 1 2019/20 monthly average equates to 203 referrals per month, this in line with the Quarter 4 2018/19 monthly average of 201 referrals.

Year to date 2019/20 we received a monthly average of 230 referrals – should this continue we would be in-line with the 2018/19 monthly average of 234 referrals.

Number of referrals per month

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2017/18	96	148	152	177	133	187	206	181	237	202	205	205
2018/19	206	241	246	309	247	224	269	252	210	195	166	242
2019/20	199	234	177	308								

In relation to rate of referrals per 10,000 of the population Thurrock has previously been below the England average and that of our statistical
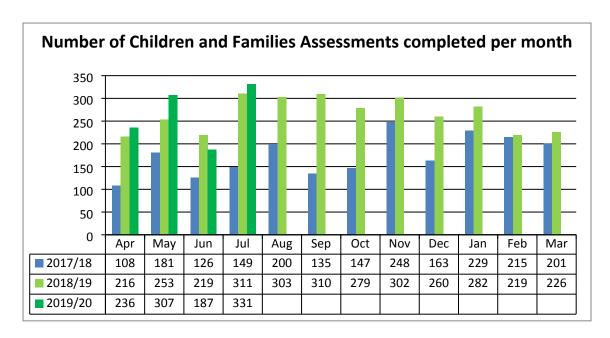
neighbours'. The rate has increased for 2018/19 and we will be able to benchmark against the England average and statistical neighbour's outturns once these are published later in the autumn. Audit indicates that threshold decisions are appropriate.
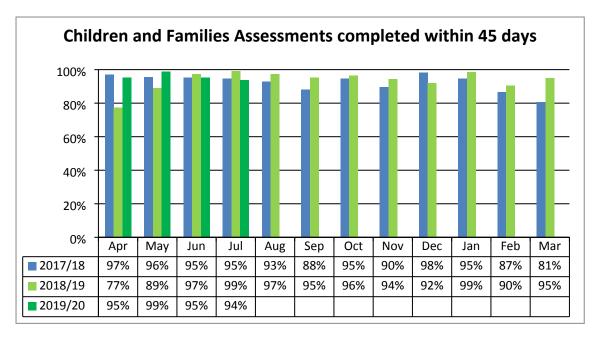
Rate of referrals per 10,000

Referrals per 10,000 have increased by 32.9% between 2017/18 and 2018/19. This is mostly due to an increase of referrals from Police and Schools and, to a less extent, Health Services. The most significant factors are Neglect and Abuse that accounts for 80.7% of all of the referrals received during this period.

Year	Thurrock	England Average	Statistical Neighbours	East England
2015-16	592	532	590	410
2016-17	491	532	620	374
2017-18	496	552	610	362
2018-19	659			

The latest position shows 331 completed assessments for July 2019, compared to 311 the same month last year. The monthly average for 2019/20 year to date (265 assessments) is in line with 2018/19 outturn, which was also 265 assessments per month.

Number of Children and Families Assessments completed per month

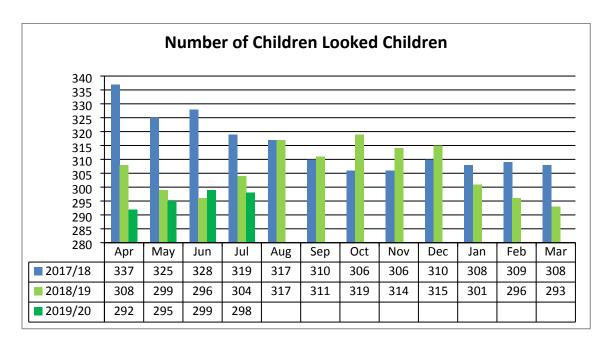|	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2017/18	108	181	126	149	200	135	147	248	163	229	215	201
2018/19	216	253	219	311	303	310	279	302	260	282	219	226
2019/20	236	307	187	331								

During 2018/19 93% of children and family assessments were completed within 45 working days. This good performance has improved further whereby 96% of assessment completed year to date (2019/20) have been completed within timescale. For 2017/18 our statistical neighbours achieved an average of 80.7% of assessments completed in time.
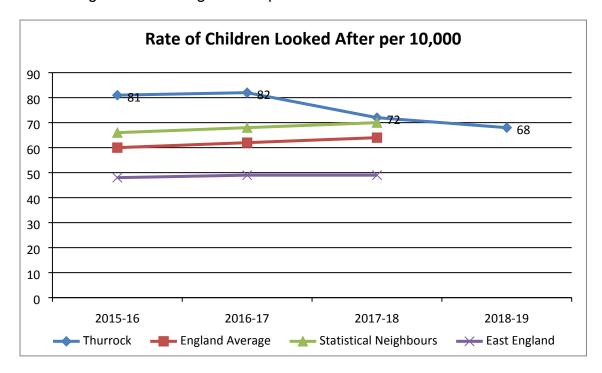
Children and Families Assessments completed within 45 days

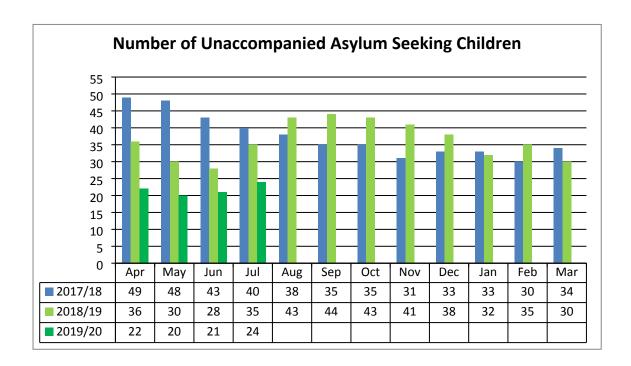|	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2017/18	97%	96%	95%	95%	93%	88%	95%	90%	98%	95%	87%	81%
2018/19	77%	89%	97%	99%	97%	95%	96%	94%	92%	99%	90%	95%
2019/20	95%	99%	95%	94%								

3.2. **Children Looked After**

There was a reduction during Quarter 4 2018/19 from 315 children looked after in December 18 to 293 children looked after at the end of March 19. Since March the number of children has consistently remained below 300. This decrease is primarily attributed to the dispersal of UASC across the Eastern Region.

Number of Children Looked Children

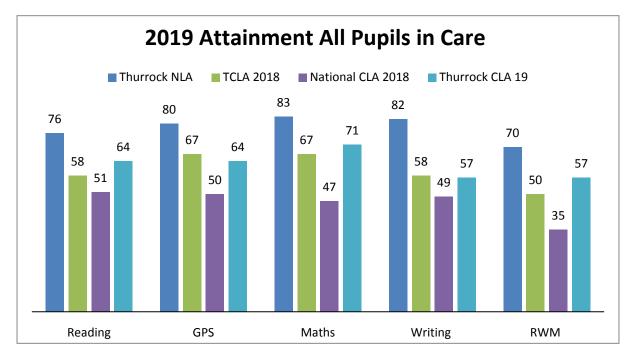|	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2017/18	337	325	328	319	317	310	306	306	310	308	309	308
2018/19	308	299	296	304	317	311	319	314	315	301	296	293
2019/20	292	295	299	298								

Our 2018/19 outturn rate of 68 per 10,000 and current year to date rate (of 69.6) is in line with our statistical neighbors at 69.5. We will be in a position to compare against 2018/19 figures for eastern region, national and statistical neighbours once figures are published later in the Autumn.

Rate of Children Looked After per 10,000

The number of Un-accompanied Asylum Seeking Children has reduced further to 24 at end of July 2019 compared to 30 at end March 2019. The number fluctuated between 30 and 44 during 2018/19; our monthly average for that period was 36. Year to date 2018/19 our monthly average is 22 this is in line with our statistical neighbours with an outturn of 22 (for 2017/18). Currently we are achieving our performance target of below 28.

Number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2017/18	49	48	43	40	38	35	35	31	33	33	30	34
2018/19	36	30	28	35	43	44	43	41	38	32	35	30
2019/20	22	20	21	24								

The remainder of this section is an excerpt from the 'CLA Performance Overview' Report produced by the Virtual School Headteacher:
For Thurrock Children Looked After the statistics for those achieving the expected standard were as follows: reading 64%, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) 64%, maths 71% and writing was 57%. The graph below illustrates the comparisons with non-CLA nationally in 2018 and all pupils in Thurrock for 2019 results.

2019 Attainment All Pupils in Care

Legend: Thurrock NLA, TCLA 2018, National CLA 2018, Thurrock CLA 19

	Thurrock NLA	TCLA 2018	National CLA 2018	Thurrock CLA 19
Reading	76	58	51	64
GPS	80	67	50	64
Maths	83	67	47	71
Writing	82	58	49	57
RWM	70	50	35	57

Graph of Indicative Results Comparison for National and Thurrock Non-CLA [2019]

The indicative results show that there have been improvements in reading and maths and reading, writing and maths (RWM) combined. There has been a slight decrease in GPS and writing. Thurrock CLA are closing the gap overall for RWM against Thurrock all children. National data for CLA and non-CLA 2019 is not yet available tor comparison at the time of this report.

2019 GCSE results relating to Children Looked After. Please note the GCSE information used for this report is currently Non-Validated data.

Key Headline Data [Cohort of 36]:

- There were a total of 36 pupils in the year 11 cohort and 29 pupils [80%] were eligible to take GCSEs in English and maths. This has been the highest proportion of the cohort eligible to take GCSEs over a five year period.
- 11 pupils [30%] achieved English and maths combined for the equivalent of grace C [point 4] or above
- 15 pupils [42%] achieved English at grade 4 or above
- In Maths, 15 pupils [42%] achieved the expected standard or above.

More pupils have achieved Grade 4+ than in the previous 3 years indicating an upward trend.

Grade 4+ has made good improvements. More improvement is needed for pupils to achieve grade 5+ as this has remained the same in English but slightly declined in maths and combined from the 2018 validated data.

3.3 **Fostering**

The focus has continued on increasing the use of in-house foster placements as opposed to independent fostering agencies through our recruitment programme. Performance for Quarter 1 2019/20 for in-house fostering provision is as follows:

Area	April 19	May 19	Jun 19
Number of enquiries	22	24	10
Number of new applications received	1	3	4
Number of new applications in progress	10	9	10
Number of new applications withdrawn	1	2	0
New carers (household) approved	0	2	2

We have increased capacity in the recruitment team. As a result the rate of enquiries and resulting foster carers has increased. It is likely we will meet our target of a net gain of 15 carers this year.
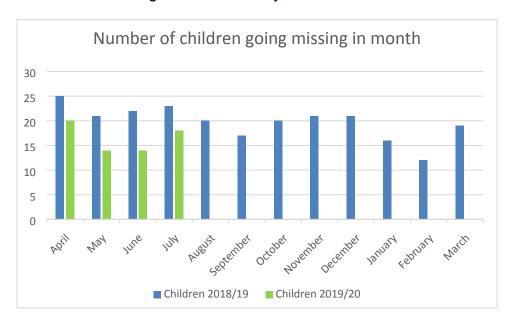
3.4 Children Looked After (CLA) Missing

During 2018/19 we had a total of 589 incidents of children going missing, this was attributable to 237 children, this equated to a rate of 2.48 incidents per child.
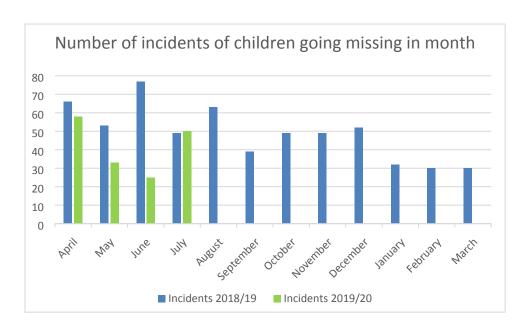Year to date 2019/20 (April to July 19) our rate is 2.51 incidents per child, which is in line with last year's outturn.

2018/19	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19
Incidents	66	53	77	49	63	39	49	49	52	32	30	30
Children	25	21	22	23	20	17	20	21	21	16	12	19

2019/20	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19
Incidents	58	33	25	50
Children	20	14	14	18

It is important to note that year to date 2019/20 for both incidents and children in comparison to the same months (April to July 2018) our numbers are lower for all barring incidents for July; as indicated in the charts below:

Number of children going missing in month

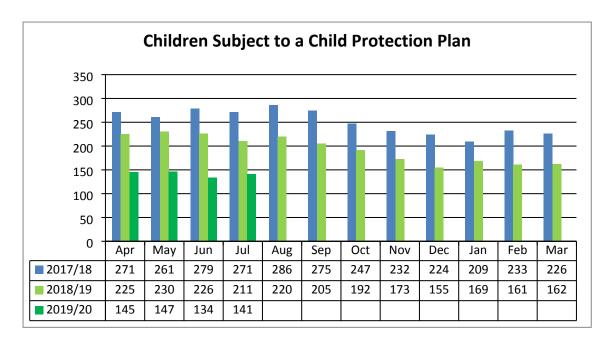Number of incidents of children going missing in month

Our in-year reporting has been updated to ensure that incidents reflect only those that started in the reporting period. The above figures for 2018/19 represent what was submitted as part of our statutory returns (due to be published in the Autumn).
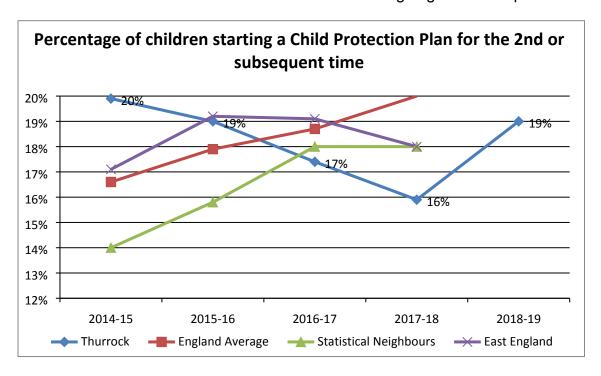
3.5 **Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan**

The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan has continued to reduce this year to 141 at end of July 2019. There has been a steady decrease from 271 in April 2018 to 225 at the end of 2017/18 and further reduction throughout 2018/19. The introduction and embedding of the Signs of Safety practice model and the development of a more strengths based approach to working with families and a focus on timely decision making for children has helped to reduce the number of children with a plan. Given the previous high rate of Child Protection Plans this is good performance and now more in line with statistical neighbours.

Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2017/18	271	261	279	271	286	275	247	232	224	209	233	226
2018/19	225	230	226	211	220	205	192	173	155	169	161	162
2019/20	145	147	134	141								

During July 2019 100% of our children on a child protection plan were reviewed on time, this good performance has been consistent since May 19; this is above our statistical neighbours' outturn for 2017/18 (achieving 91%).

Thurrock's percentage of children subject to a second or subsequent time on a Child Protection Plan has increased slightly to 19% for 2018/19. This is marginally lower than national average but slightly higher than our comparator group (18%) for 2017/18. The service will continue to monitor the number of children going back on a plan.

Percentage of children starting a Child Protection Plan for the 2nd or subsequent time

3.6 Care leavers

As at the end of August 19 the After Care Team report that 150 of 224 care leavers are in education, employment or training (EET). This is 2% higher than the 2018/19 outturn of 65% and performing above our comparator group at 62% (2017/18).
Similarly 206 of 224 care leavers are reported to be in suitable accommodation, this equates to 92%, which again exceeds our comparator group 2017/18 outturn of 84.75%.

3.7 Adoption

Year	Number of children adopted
2014/15	11
2015/16	19
2016/17	11
2017/18	7
2018/19	13
2019/20 (Quarter 1 only)	4

Further to the improved performance in 2018/19 (13 children adopted), this performance has continued with a further 4 children being adopted during Quarter 1 of 2019/20.

Currently there are 25 children with a decision for adoption, 18 of these children have Placement Orders and 8 of these children have been matched and placed as at 31/08/2019.

We are performing well in relation to the average time for a child to be adopted. Our 2018/19 outturn was an average of 343 days from entering care to being placed with an adoptive family (this is over a 3 year period). We have significantly improved our performance in this area and exceeded the target set for 2018/19 of 500 days.

Indicator Definition	2016/17 Outturn (2014/17)	2017/18 Outturn (2015/18)	2018/19 Outturn (2016/19)	2018/19 Target
Average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (time in days - 3 year average)	565 days	527 days	343 days	500 days

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to comment on the current performance position.

5. Consultation

N/A

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

N/A

7. Implications

7.1. **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**

Management Accountant

No financial implications

7.2. **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**

Deputy Head of Legal (Social Care and Education)

No legal implications

7.3. **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**

Strategic Lead of Community Development & Equalities

Whilst there are no direct E&D implications arising from this report, the service collects and utilises data to consider issues of equality and to ensure that performance considers the impact on children with protected characteristics.

7.4. **Other implications**
N/A

7.5. **Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)**

N/A

8. **Appendices to report:**

None

Report Author:

Mandy Moore

Business Intelligence & Data Analytics Manager

Performance Quality and Business Intelligence