



Missing from Home, Care and Education Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 28th February 2017

**Julie Heslop -Strategic Head of Early Help
Amanda Corcoran - Head of Education Strategy,
Access and Inclusion**

Overview

- To provide a update on the Missing from Home and Care Strategy 2016 – 2018
- To outline the key priorities of the Missing from Home, Care and Education Delivery Group
- To update on children missing from education
- To report on performance and activity
- To share the findings from the North pilot of a revised Missing from Home and Care Panel
- To highlight impact and learning to date

Missing from Home and Care Strategy 2016 - 2018

- Strategy co produced by a multi- agency reference group
- Strategy outlines how the partnership will reduce young people from going missing
- Consultation and engagement sessions held with young people to ensure their views and opinions informed and shaped the strategy
- Provides a link between missing and other vulnerabilities such as CSE
- Analysed data and performance to inform picture and profile of who is going missing
- Strategy approved by MSCB in October 2016

Missing from Home and Care Strategy 2016 - 2018

Strategy has 3 key aims:

- **Prevention:** how we reduce the number of children and young people who go missing and ensure that children and young people understand the risks
- **Protection:** how we will reduce the risk of harm to those children and young people who do go missing
- **Provision:** how we will provide children, young people who go missing and their families and carers with high quality, response , support and guidance

Missing Operational Delivery Group

- Multi agency delivery group responsible for developing and implementing the action plan to deliver the Missing Strategy
- Reports to MSCB Complex Safeguarding Subgroup
- Examines what works, research and key guidance
- Developing a profile on missing
- Strengthening practice by reviewing guidance, tools, risk assessments and panels

Missing Operational Delivery Group

- Focusing on key areas of practice - repeats, reducing declines of Independent Return Interviews, LAC
- Developing early intervention in relation to 10 day CME notifications via Early Help Hubs
- Addressing improvement actions from audit activity
- Promoting what works - Unity Radio Programme, mentoring, key worker relationship and case work

Performance

- Average of 350 missing from home reports received each month
- December 16 – 315 received reports received concerning 177 young people
- Includes looked after children both Manchester LAC and other authority LAC.

Independent Return Interviews

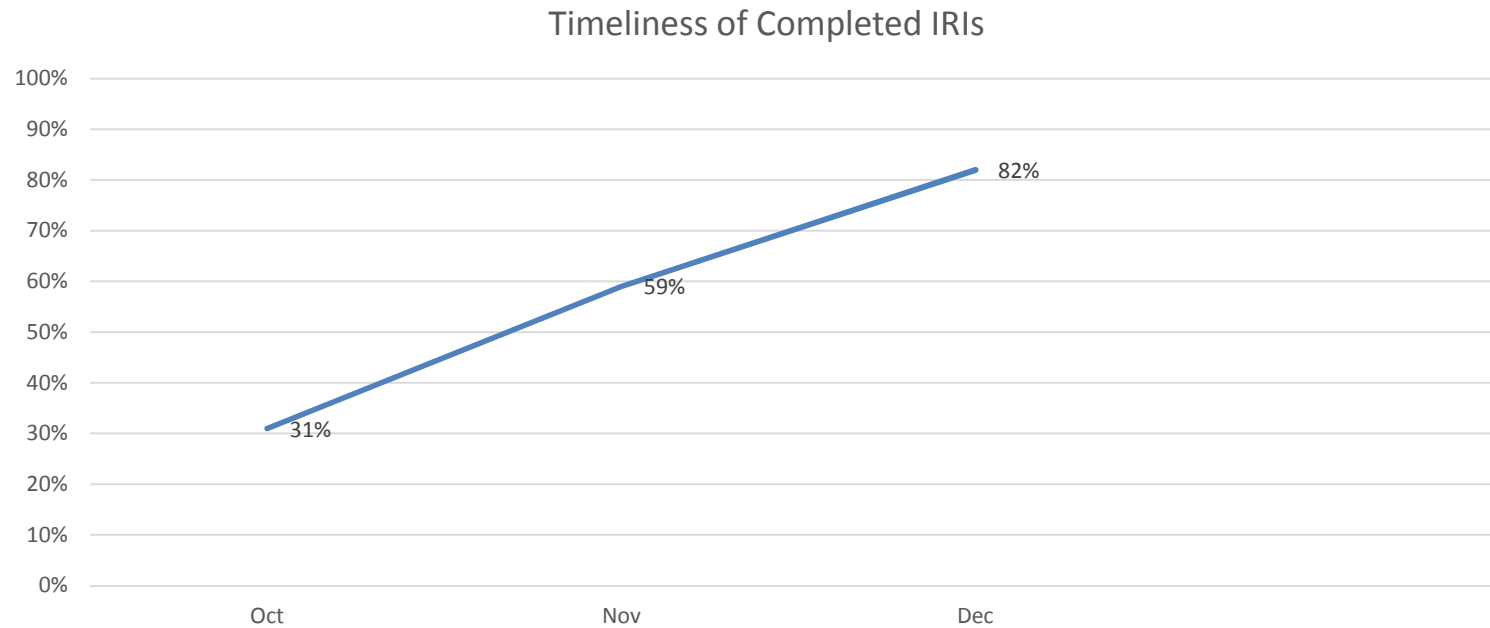
- Statutory Guidance on children who go missing from home or care issued (Jan 14) states that
 - *“when a child is found, they must be offered an independent return interview (IRI). IRIs provide an opportunity to uncover information that can help protect children from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing or from risk factors in their home”*
 - In addition
- “ The interview should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting”.*

Independent Return Interviews

- In house team and VCS provider undertake the IRIs.
- VCS provider focuses on LAC and includes case work to engage young people persistently missing
- Young people can decline the offer of an independent interview.
- Completion of IRIs and timeliness is improving
- December 16 – 70% of IRIs were completed and 82% within the 72 hour timescale

Independent Return Interviews - Timeliness

- Recent improvement in timeliness of IRIs completed within 72 hours



Performance – declined offer of IRI

- Track each month the number of IRIs declined by young people , in December 16 this was 10%
- IRIS declined for a number of reasons – reluctance, viewed as little benefit, frequency with little change
- Improvements – better matching of worker to young person, consistency of worker, persistent and engaging approach

Outcomes and Learning from IRIs

- A young person aged 14 following 10 MFH Episodes agreed to follow up work . 8 1-1 sessions were completed . Subsequently the number of MFH episodes decreased and in November only 1MFH episode was recorded and this reduced to 0 in December.

Key Learning

- Consistency of approach
- Case work model for persistent missing and declines
- Ensuring young person's views and themes link to care planning
- Ensuring missing is viewed within wider vulnerabilities

Improving Practice : Missing from Home Panel North Pilot

- Pilot ran for 4 months focusing on high risk missing and persistent missing. Linked with GM Procedures in relation to strategy and risk management meetings and managed within the locality
- **Key Learning :**
- Good multi agency attendance
- Signs of Safety methodology applied clear focus on risk and embedding within practice
- Info from IRIs was used to ensure child's views informed the risk management response
- Strong operational grip from Service Managers
- Access to live data and intelligence enabling a quicker and informed response
- Benefits for partners reducing duplication in meetings
- Robust risk management plans produced for vulnerable children

Next Steps

- The Missing From Home procedure for Manchester Children Services should be amended to allow for MFH Panels to replace the existing process of individual 'strategy' meetings and escalation through 3 tiers.
- Panels to be set up on the 3 localities plus permanence and to be chaired by Service Managers
- Greater engagement of partner

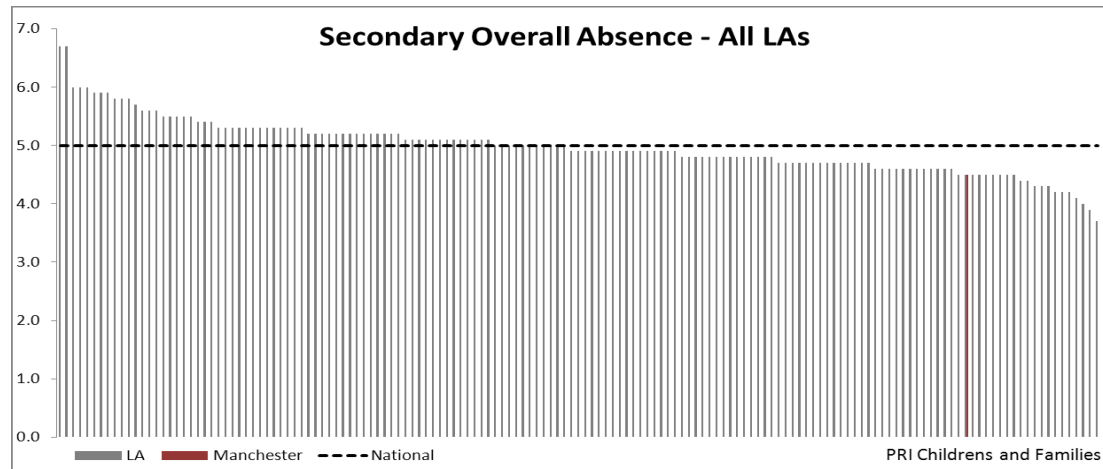
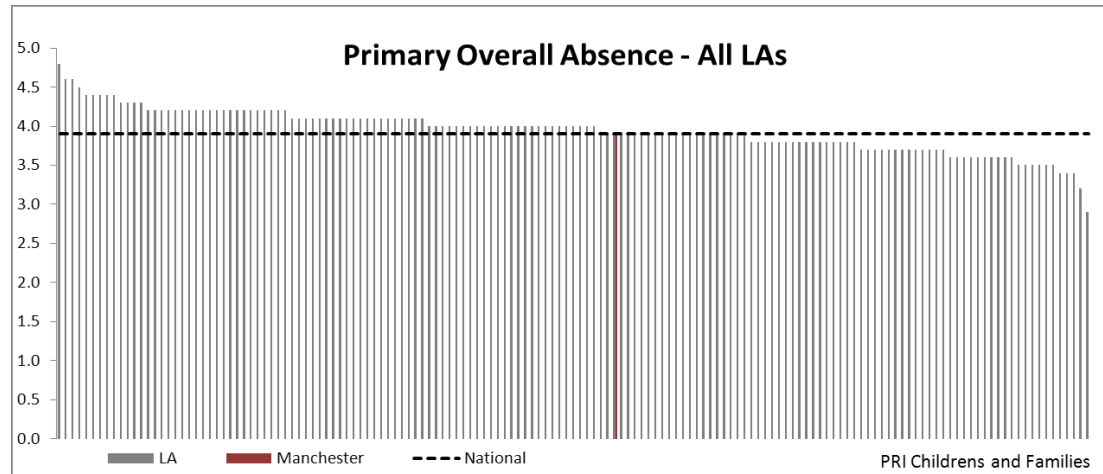
Children Missing Education

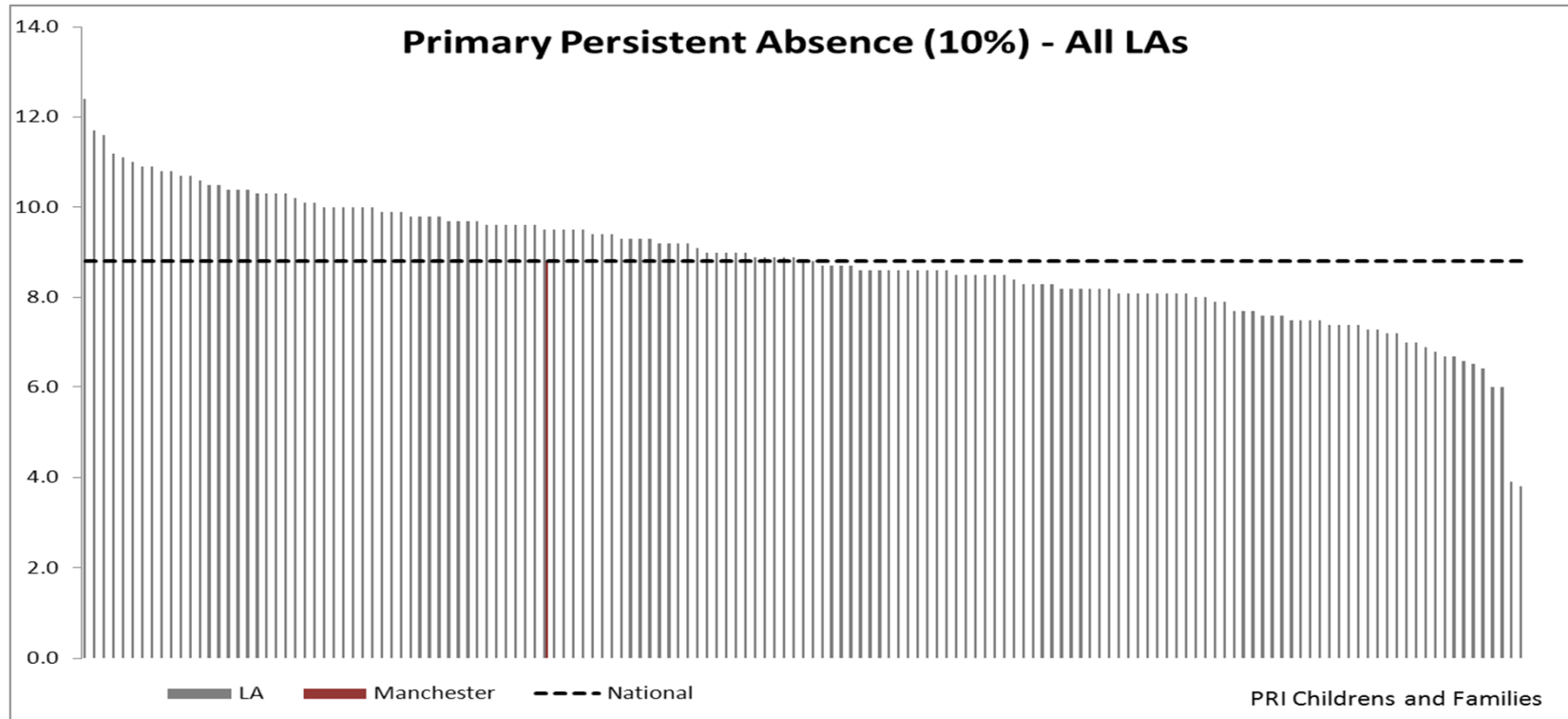
Local Authorities have a duty to make arrangements to establish the identities of children who are not registered pupils at school and not receiving suitable education. This includes:

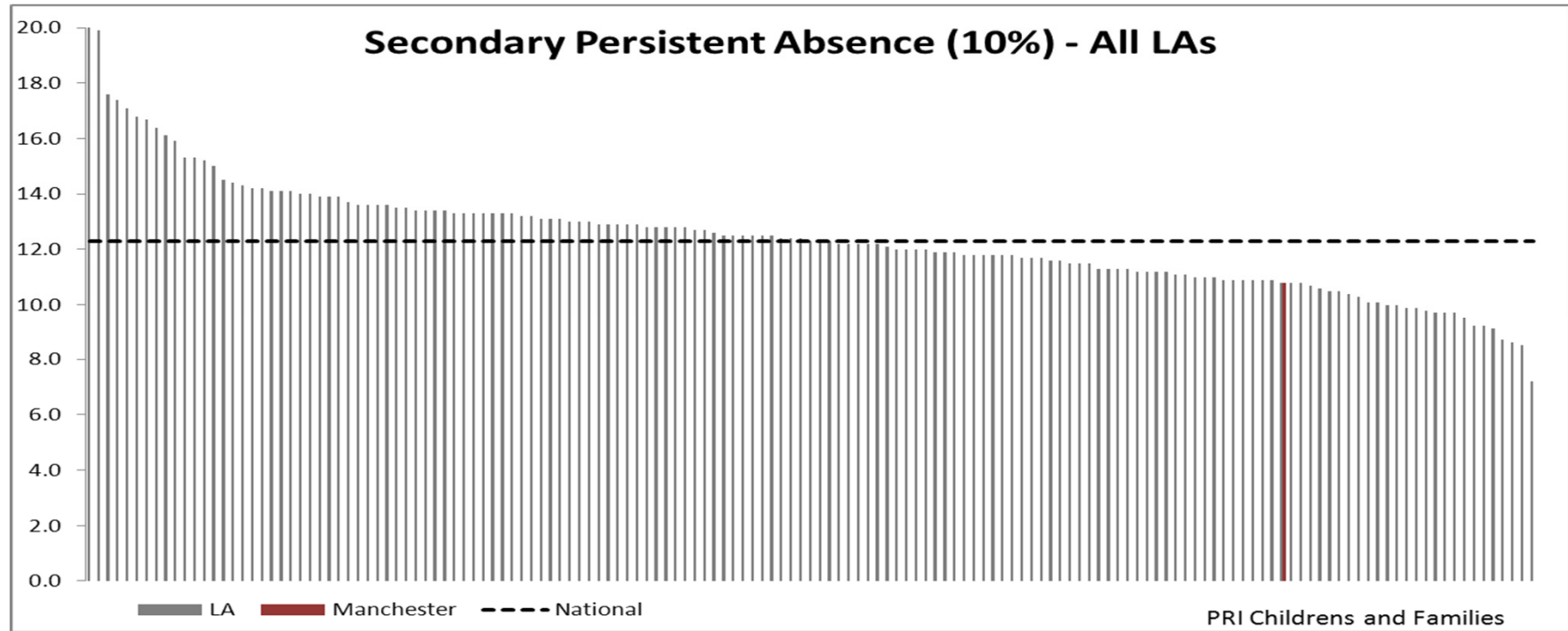
- Named contact point to whom schools/agencies can make referrals about children missing education;
- Ensuring tracking and enquiry systems are in place for children missing education;
- Arrangements with partners to ensure that children remain or return to education as quickly as possible ;
- Arranging suitable education for children permanently excluded from school from 6th day;
- Issuing School Attendance Orders to parents who fail to satisfy Local Authority that child is receiving a suitable education;
- Prosecuting parents or issuing penalty notices to parents who fail to ensure child attends school regularly.

School Attendance

- Overall absence in Manchester primary schools has decreased slightly, at the same rate as the national average. Absence in Manchester continues to be the same as the national average (3.9%).
- Overall absence has improved in Manchester secondary schools so they are now performing better than the national average (4.5%).
- Percentage of 10% persistent absentees has increased in Manchester primary schools by 0.2 percentage points to 9.50% but has closed gap with national to 0.7%
- Percentage of 10% persistent absentees has decreased in Manchester secondary schools by 3% to 10.80% and is now better than national average.







Penalty Notices

- **Isle of Wight case due to be heard under appeal on 31st January 2017 in the Supreme Court.**
- **Schools continue to send requests for children reaching threshold for statutory action until further information is received from DFE.**
- **Our current position in Manchester is, we are continuing to issue penalty notices where a pupil's attendance falls below 95% (national average).**
- **Cases where a Penalty Notice is not issued will receive a warning letter**
- **Penalty notices issued between September – December 2016 = 870**

Direct Prosecutions

- Schools continue to follow their own attendance monitoring procedures to address patterns of attendance
- Following a school request to prosecute for poor attendance, the Council will conduct a PACE interview
- Outcomes of the PACE will be returned to school with recommendations
- Where an Early Help Assessment has been agreed with parent/carer as an alternative to prosecution, the attendance officer in the early help hubs will be notified to support the school
- Where a Direct Prosecution has been authorised the case is submitted
- Where a parent has failed to engage or comply with the agreed actions of the PACE interview, school will need to inform the Council who will authorise the submission of a Direct Prosecution.

Current Update from PACE Notifications: September – December 2016

- 124 PACE interviews conducted
- 67 prosecutions (previously all cases would have been prosecuted)
- 17 withdrawn requiring further information or mitigation
- 9 Early Help Assessment referrals
- 7 penalty notice issued after PACE
- 8 cautions offered and accepted
- 16 warning letters due to improved attendance

10 Day Notification

- All schools must notify the CME team when a pupil has had 10 days of consecutive unauthorised absence following reasonable enquiries. This must be sent on the 11 day.
- All notifications will checked and screened by CME team. Where appropriate cases will be allocated to the attendance officers in Early Help hubs who will undertake investigation.
- Notifications where there is an allocated social worker or safeguarding concerns are referred to social care or MASH.

Truancy Sweeps

- 10 truancy sweeps were conducted between September to December 2016, resulting in 114 school age children being identified.
- Following a meeting with the Chief Superintendant who has responsibility for vulnerable adults and children, further city wide truancy sweeps are to be planned for the remainder of the academic year. Future truancy sweeps may include home visits for school in the community where children have not arrived at school on that day.

Admissions: on rolling and off rolling

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Total in year application for a school place – all pupils	3744	6506	8883	12,879
Pupils new to the city	2301	2788	2119	3836
Pupils leaving the city taken off roll	991	931	835	1009
Net flow – new pupils	1310	1857	1284	2827

School offers in year

- Children are offered a place in a school by week 4 of the application being received by the Local Authority (in line with DFE guidelines).
- Schools required provide information on vacancies in the school in all year groups every week. These vacancies are used to make offer to in year applicants.
- Complex admissions and all year 6/11s go to monthly In Year Fair Access meetings.
- Where an offer of a school place has been made to a parent they will receive 2 letters and if no a response a home visit with 3rd letter..
- If the offer is not accepted this is enforced in most cases through the issuing of an attendance order.
- 311 referrals for attendance orders received between September to December 2016 – resulting in 21 attendance orders

CME – new statutory guidance for Local Authorities issued Sept 2016

- ALL schools must notify local authority when about to remove a pupil's name from register under any of 15 grounds
- Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish whereabouts of the child before deleting from register.
- ALL school must notify local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to admission register.
- CME@manchester.gov.uk

Whereabouts unknown

These are children recorded as missing education but their whereabouts is unknown. Local Authority and schools are required to make *reasonable* enquiries to locate child.

This includes CME team:

- Check local data bases including revenue and benefits/social care
- Check with UK visa and Immigration and /or Border Force
- Check with other agencies
- Check with other local authorities
- Check social media e.g. Facebook etc
- 49% success rate of finding children

Elective Home Education

- New policy in place
- Request to see child and place where education takes place
- Other checks and if concerns will refer to social care
- Currently 250 children on register
- 15/16 – 251 new notifications
- 120 assessed as not suitable