



Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday, 9 October 2018

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Manchester City Council

Everyone is welcome to attend this committee meeting.

There will be a private meeting for members of the Committee at 1:30 pm in Committee Room 6, Room 2006, Level 2 of the Town Hall Extension.

Access to the Council Chamber

Public access to the Council Chamber is on Level 2 of the Town Hall Extension, using the lift or stairs in the lobby of the Mount Street entrance to the Extension. That lobby can also be reached from the St. Peter's Square entrance and from Library Walk. **There is no public access from the Lloyd Street entrances of the Extension.**

Filming and broadcast of the meeting

Meetings of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee are 'webcast'. These meetings are filmed and broadcast live on the Internet. If you attend this meeting you should be aware that you might be filmed and included in that transmission.

Membership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Councillors –

Sameem Ali, Alijah, Collins, Hewitson, T Judge, Lovecy, McHale, Madeleine Monaghan, Sadler and Stone (Chair)

Co-opted Members -

Mr A Arogundade, Mr L Duffy, Mr R Lammas, Mrs B Kellner, Mrs J Miles and Ms Z Stepan

Agenda

1. Urgent Business

To consider any items which the Chair has agreed to have submitted as urgent.

2. Appeals

To consider any appeals from the public against refusal to allow inspection of background documents and/or the inclusion of items in the confidential part of the agenda.

3. Interests

To allow Members an opportunity to [a] declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in any items which appear on this agenda; and [b] record any items from which they are precluded from voting as a result of Council Tax/Council rent arrears; [c] the existence and nature of party whipping arrangements in respect of any item to be considered at this meeting. Members with a personal interest should declare that at the start of the item under consideration. If Members also have a prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest they must withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of the item.

4. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2018.

Pages
7 - 12

5. Manchester Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017/18

Report of the Director of Children's Services and the Independent Chair of the Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board.

Pages
13 - 54

To receive the Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board (MSCB) Annual Report for 2017/18.

6. Leaving Care Service

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

Pages
55 - 62

This report provides an update on the progress of activity to reform the delivery of Leaving Care Services for Manchester's formerly looked after children.

7. Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service

Report of the Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding

Pages
63 - 128

This report introduces the draft Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2017 - 2018. It provides an account of the activity of the Independent Reviewing Service between 1 April 2017 and the 31 March 2018. The report evaluates practice, plans and

arrangements for looked after children and the effectiveness of Independent Reviewing Officer service in ensuring the local authority as a corporate parent discharges its statutory responsibilities towards looked after children. The report also draws on evidence from the views of children and young people, carers, and professionals from the local authority and from partner agencies.

8. Manchester Curriculum for Life

Oral report of the Director of Education

To receive feedback on the Manchester Curriculum for Life pilot.

9. Attainment Headline Outcomes 2018 (provisional) - to follow

10. Overview report

Report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

Pages
129 - 144

This report provides the Committee with details of key decisions that fall within the Committee's remit and an update on actions resulting from the Committee's recommendations. The report also includes the Committee's work programme, which the Committee is asked to amend as appropriate and agree.

Information about the Committee

Scrutiny Committees represent the interests of local people about important issues that affect them. They look at how the decisions, policies and services of the Council and other key public agencies impact on the city and its residents. Scrutiny Committees do not take decisions but can make recommendations to decision-makers about how they are delivering the Our Manchester Strategy, an agreed vision for a better Manchester that is shared by public agencies across the city.

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee reviews the services provided by the Council and its partners for young people across the city including education, early years, school standards and valuing young people.

In addition to the elected members the Committee has seven co-opted member positions. These are:

- Representative of the Diocese of Manchester – Mrs Barbara Kellner
- Representative of the Diocese of Salford – Mrs Julie Miles
- Parent governor representative – Mr Ade Arogundade
- Parent governor representative – Vacant
- Parent governor representative – Ms Zaneta Stepan
- Secondary sector teacher representative – Mr Liam Duffy
- Primary sector teacher representative – Mr Russell Lammas

The co-opted members representing faith schools and parent governors are able to vote when the Committee deals with matters relating to education functions.

The Council wants to consult people as fully as possible before making decisions that affect them. Members of the public do not have a right to speak at meetings but may do so if invited by the Chair. If you have a special interest in an item on the agenda and want to speak, tell the Committee Officer, who will pass on your request to the Chair. Groups of people will usually be asked to nominate a spokesperson. The Council wants its meetings to be as open as possible but occasionally there will be some confidential business. Brief reasons for confidentiality will be shown on the agenda sheet.

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Smoking is not allowed in Council buildings.

Joanne Roney OBE
Chief Executive
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Manchester, M60 2LA.

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

Rachel McKeon
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Email: rachel.mckeon@manchester.gov.uk

This agenda was issued on **Monday, 1 October 2018** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 6, Town Hall Extension (Mount Street Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

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Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2018

Present:

Councillor Stone – in the Chair
 Councillors Sameem Ali [CYP/18/43 - CYP/18/46], Hewitson, T Judge, Lovecy, McHale, Madeleine Monaghan and Sadler

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mrs B Kellner, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester
 Ms M Neall, Parent Governor Representative
 Ms Z Stepan, Parent Governor Representative

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr L Duffy, Secondary sector teacher representative
 Mr R Lammas, Primary sector teacher representative

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children's Services
 Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
 Councillor Midgley, Mental Health Champion
 Professor Craig Harris, Executive Director of Nursing and Safeguarding, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning
 Darren Parsonage, Deputy Head of Commissioning, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning
 Dr Walid Omara, Parent Governor

Apologies:

Councillor Alijah
 Mrs J Miles, Representative of the Diocese of Salford

CYP/18/41 Councillor Collins and Ms M Neall, Parent Governor Representative

The Chair informed the Committee that this would be that last meeting attended by Councillor Collins and Ms Neall, Parent Governor Representative. The Chair thanked them both for their valued contribution to the Committee over the previous years.

CYP/18/42 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018.

CYP/18/43 Children and Young People's Health Including Mental Health Programme

The Committee received a report of the Professor Craig Harris, Executive Director of Nursing and Safeguarding, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning which provided detailed information on the actions taken to deliver the children and young people's transformation programme, to ensure the system provided the best support for all children and young people and the right support at the right time for those who were most vulnerable.

Professor Harris referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Providing a description and ambition of the Children and Young People's (CYP) plan;
- An update on the Children and Young People's summit and how this had informed the development of the CYP transformation programme and work streams;
- A description of the CYP integrated commissioning strategy;
- A description of the CYP transformation steering group and programme work streams;
- Information on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and transforming care;
- Measures to prevent avoidable hospital admissions and reduce the length of stay in hospital;
- The protocols, procedures and quality assurance for children with complex needs;
- Children and young people's mental health and care that focused on prevention, early identification, early intervention and self-care;
- Vulnerable groups (including safeguarding and Our Children);
- Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership CYP health and wellbeing framework;
- What was known about CYP mental health in Manchester;
- CYP mental health outcomes; and
- The Greater Manchester Review of Children's Services.

Councillor Midgley, Mental Health Champion, had been invited to address the Committee. She said that she welcomed the report and the holistic approach to children and young people's health. She reported that, in her experience, staff working in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) were dedicated and caring professionals; however, she had concerns regarding the caseloads of staff. She commented that additional funding and research into this important area of care was required. She asked for clarification regarding waiting times for young people accessing services. She further commented that more needed to be done to offer community-based prevention services, stating that investment in these models of care would be more cost effective than crisis services and ultimately better for young people and their families. She enquired about the important role of the Voluntary and Community Sector and how this work was being coordinated.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Welcoming the voice of young people being present throughout the work described;
- Did Our Children (children looked after by the local authority) have the same access to CAHMS and what provision was made for any children who were placed out of area;
- Further information was sought regarding the Kooth service;
- An explanation was sought regarding the reported 64% increase in requests for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs);
- To request that a specific report on CAMHS be submitted to the Committee that included case studies, information on the delivery and future planning of services in the context of financial cuts and an analysis of outcomes; and
- To request a future update report on Children and Young People's Health including information on young people's dental health, obesity, malnutrition and school nurses.

Professor Harris acknowledged the request from the Committee for a specific report on CAHMS and confirmed that this would be provided. He said that there was dedicated funding for CAHMS but that the demand on services had increased. He said it was acknowledged that services need to be transformed and redesigned to deliver a holistic model of care for children and young people with an emphasis on prevention and improving the early help offer. He confirmed that Our Children did have access to CAHMS and for those children placed out of area, services would be commissioned in the host area. In regard to the issue of out of area placements for children and young people he said that the ambition was to reduce the number of these to zero by 2021. He commented that work was underway to coordinate the Voluntary and Community Sector offer and further information on this work stream would be provided in the CAHMS report. He advised that information on caseloads and waiting times would also be included in the report.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing recommended that the report on CAHMS should include information on the transition from children's to adult services and that any relevant reports that were to be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board would be shared with the Committee.

Darren Parsonage, the Deputy Head of Commissioning, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning, reported that the Kooth service was a free, 24/7 online counselling service for 11-18 year olds. He said that users could access this anonymously, access 1-2-1 counselling and participate in monitored chat room group discussions. He informed Members that workers from this service had engaged and delivered sessions with pupils in schools that had received positive feedback from both staff and young people. He reported that this service was also promoted in GP practices across the city.

The Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services explained that the reported increase in requests for EHCPs was as a result of the growing school age population in the city.

Decisions

1. To request that a report on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services be submitted to the Committee.
2. To request that an update report on Children and Young People's Health be considered at the May 2019 meeting and that this report include information on dental health, obesity, malnutrition and school nurses.
3. To request that the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, write to the relevant Government Minister to lobby for additional funding for children and young people's mental health services.
4. To note that any relevant reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board would also be circulated to Committee Members.

CYP/18/44 Early Help Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services which provided a further update on the progress and impact of the Early Help Strategy and the delivery of the offer of Early Help. The report covered the refresh of the Early Help Strategy in 2018, highlighted the activity and impact from the Early Help Hubs, and outlined future priorities.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Governance and Accountability Arrangements;
- Early Help Strategy;
- Early Help Hubs and Partnerships;
- Work undertaken with schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs);
- Performance and Impact;
- Early Help Assessments;
- Impact of the Early Help Hubs;
- Quality Assurance; and
- Future Priorities.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Request to see the analysis of the Troubled Families outcomes for 2017;
- Members' positive experiences of visiting the Early Help Hub in south Manchester;
- How the relationship with schools could be improved;
- Request for a breakdown of the statistics at ward or district level;
- Concern about the number of referrals related to homelessness due to rent arrears; and
- What was "Liquid Logic".

The Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services informed Members that Liquid Logic was the provider of the new IT system for recording cases and generating data which would go live in May 2019. He reported that he and the Director of Education were having conversations with school leadership teams on how they could work more effectively together to make limited resources go further. The Strategic Lead for Early Help and Interventions informed Members that her service was doing a lot of work with schools. She outlined work taking place with the PRUs and the learning which had come from that. She reported that there was a school attendance officer based in every Early Help Hub and that staff in the Hubs worked closely with Education Caseworkers and with schools and families around attendance issues and in-school behaviour. She informed Members that Bridging the Gap sessions were now taking place to provide advice and guidance in relation to specific cases and to share general information. She reported that since 2015 90% of schools had completed an Early Help Assessment and that training had been provided to schools staff which had resulted in an increase in Early Help Assessments. She reported that her service was speaking to schools about any barriers which stopped them from engaging with this work and looking at how these could be addressed; however, she advised that there could still be positive early intervention work going on in these schools, which they were not recording through the Early Help Assessment process.

The Executive Member for Children's Services acknowledged that the Council needed to respond better on the issue of homelessness, due to cuts in government support, and reported he would be meeting with officers and Executive Members with responsibility for housing, homelessness and adult social care to identify ways to improve the Council's response.

Decisions

1. To request to that the analysis of the Troubled Families outcomes for 2017 be provided to Members of the Committee.
2. To request a breakdown of the Early Help statistics at ward or district level.
3. To receive an update report in a year's time.

[Councillor Stone declared a personal interest as a member of the governing body of the Secondary Pupil Referral Unit.]

CYP/18/45 Children's Services Score Care (Proxy Indicators)

The Committee received a presentation of the Deputy Director of Children's Services which provided proxy indicators on progress to improve children's services.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the presentation which included:

- Registrations for Early Help Assessments (EHAs);
- Referral rates to children's social care;

- The percentage of children subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time; and
- Children Missing from Home.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- That Members were satisfied with the format in which this information was presented, noting that this information would be provided to the Committee on a quarterly basis;
- The different targets for primary and secondary schools on the scorecard and whether Ofsted judgements provided a useful measure of schools' performance; and
- Whether it was appropriate to have targets for factors over which the Council did not have control.

The Chair reported that Committee Members would receive a training session on the Ofsted Frameworks and on school attainment measures, including Progress 8, arranged by the Scrutiny Team Leader, and requested an update on when this would be delivered. The Strategic Director of Children's and Education Services advised that some of the figures in the presentation were for benchmarking purposes rather than being targets and were used to compare Manchester with other cities. He reported that the figures were intended to provoke a conversation and that the most important thing was how the Council responded to this information.

Decisions

1. To continue to receive this information on a quarterly basis.
2. To request an update on progress to arrange a training session for Members, to include the Ofsted Frameworks and school attainment measures.

CYP/18/46 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

The Chair commented that he would review the Work Programme and agree an appropriate meeting date for the report on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to be submitted for consideration.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme, noting the comments from the Chair.

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 9 October 2018
Subject:	Annual Report of Manchester Safeguarding Children Board April 2017 – March 2018
Report of:	Paul Marshall Strategic Director of Children’s Services Julia Stephens-Row, Independent Chair of Manchester Safeguarding Children Board

Summary

This is a covering report providing an overview of Manchester Safeguarding Children’s Board Annual Report which is for the period from April 2017 - March 2018. This document reports on the work of the partnership.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

1. Note the publication of the Manchester Safeguarding Children’s Board (MSCB) Annual report 2017– 2018
2. To promote the importance of safeguarding of children and young people across MCC and in the services that are commissioned ensuring that safeguarding is at the heart of all that is delivered.

Wards Affected: All

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by	

unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The vision of the Manchester Safeguarding Children’s Board is that “every child and young person in Manchester should be able to grow up safe; free from abuse, neglect or crime; so allowing them to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood and fulfil their potential” which supports this outcome.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

<https://www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/resource/mscb/>

1 Introduction

The Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board (MSCB) annual report covers the period from April 2017- March 2018. This report demonstrates the significant amount of work undertaken across a range of organisations and in partnership to safeguard children and young people in Manchester.

This report contains a variety of information detailing the work of the partners and some of key pieces of work undertaken by the MSCB. It also provides information on the work of the various sub groups which report to the Board, four of which are integrated with the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board (MSAB)

2.0 Background

Safeguarding Children's Boards are in place across the country and have a legal duty "to co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area and to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such persons or body for those purposes".

Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is undertaken by the Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve is an important function of the Safeguarding Board. In addition to the various assurance activities carried out throughout the year, such as Section 11 and multi-agency case audits, each Board partner has submitted an assurance statement setting out main developments around safeguarding and work that is ongoing in their agency.

2.1 Business Priorities

Towards the end of the 2016/2017 period, MSCB began the process of planning its vision and priorities for the 2017/2018 year. As part of this preparation, the Board felt very strongly that the views of children and young people should be sought and a short questionnaire was set up on the Safeguarding Boards website and promoted through both the Board and through individual agencies. Some focus groups were also held by partners with young people to gather views.

In early April, a Visioning and Priority Setting Event was held and partners came together to review what progress had been made during the year and identify what challenges remain on our improvement journey. There was also an opportunity to consider the factors, legislative, financial and others - that will have an impact in the forthcoming year.

The responses from the survey of young people were shared at that event and partners were able to analyse the findings and use them to help inform a picture of what the next year should bring for MSCB in terms of priorities. The priorities identified for 2017/18 were:-

- Engagement and Involvement – listening and learning; hearing the voice of children

- Complex Safeguarding – Domestic Violence and Abuse; Female Genital Mutilation; Sexual Exploitation; Radicalisation; Missing; Organised
- Crime; Trafficking & Modern Slavery; So-called Honour Based Violence
- Transitions – Moving from child to adulthood in a safe and positive way
- Neglect – Ensuring the basic needs of every child are met.

These themes whilst shared with the MSAB have ‘child’ specific pieces of work which are being delivered. Details of the work undertaken to work towards achieving these priorities is contained within the annual report supported by some case studies.

We have asked each partner to complete a self-assessment on how they are taking into account the “Voice of the Child” and added this aspect to each of our multi agency audits

We have regular updates on the Domestic Violence and Abuse strategy and implementation and delivered multi agency raising awareness events regarding modern slavery

We have contributed to the multi-agency transitions workshop and will maintain this focus going forward.

We have launched the Neglect Strategy with multi agency events and introduced a new assessment tool which will continue to be rolled out in 2018/19. It has been agreed that these priority areas have been carried forward into 2018/19.

2.2 Challenges and Improvement

In addition to the areas identified as priorities in the 2017/2018 Business Plan which are summarised above, other areas of challenge and concern have been identified and addressed by the Board. Some of these are highlighted as follows:

Reducing the number of missing from home episodes and improving the number of Safe and Well checks undertaken by Greater Manchester Police.

Published 3 Safeguarding Children Reviews and provided learning events for practitioners and managers supported by seven minute briefings with a focus on improving practice

Ensured that child deaths are appropriately reviewed and lessons learnt shared. For example 65% of cases (41 of 62) were of babies under one year old a factor which has informed the Population Health infant mortality strategy.

The Board held a Professional Curiosity Confidence and Challenge Conference which gave the opportunity for practitioners to reflect on how they may improve their practice when working with parents and carers and families.

Relaunched the website and training website, introduced a monthly newsletter and developed a successful Trust your instincts campaign.

2.3 Future arrangements for Safeguarding

A new Working Together to Safeguard Children was published in July 2018 and Local Safeguarding Boards are to be replaced with new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements which have to be established by September 2019 at the latest. The three statutory partners of the Local Authority, Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group have until June 2019 to publish their plan. Until these new arrangements are in place the statutory requirements for the MSCB remain and it will be vital to ensure that the transition arrangements are robust to ensure that the safeguarding of children and young people remain at the heart of what is developed in the future. Early discussions are taking place in which the MSCB is actively engaged

3.0 Conclusion

The work and reach of the MSCB, as evidenced in this report is considerable, however there is much more to do if as a partnership we are to achieve the vision of the MSCB that Every child and young person in Manchester should be able to grow up safe; free from abuse, neglect or crime; so allowing them to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood and fulfil their potential.

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MANCHESTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD



2017/2018 Annual Report

“Every child and young person in Manchester should be able to grow up safe, free from abuse, neglect or crime; so allowing them to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood and fulfil their potential”

This Annual Report was endorsed by the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board on 6th September 2018.

The report is produced by Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB). It reports on matters relating to 2017/18.

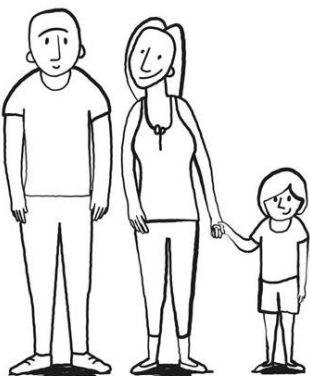
The purpose of the Annual Report, as stated in Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2015, is to provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements for children. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action.

The report includes lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period.

In addition to being made available to the public, this report will be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

If you have any comments about the Boards work or wish to find out more you can contact MSCB: - Manchester Safeguarding Children Board on 0161 234 3330 or email: manchestersafeguardingboards@manchester.gov.uk

Large print, interpretations, text only and audio formats of this publication can be produced on request. Please call on 0161 234 3330



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1. Chair Foreword

Welcome to the Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board (MSCB) Annual Report for 2017/18. This annual report provides local people with an account of the MSCB's work over the past year to improve the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people across the city of Manchester.

The report reflects the activity of the MSCB and its sub groups against the agreed priorities for 2017/18. It is important to note that four of the subgroups are shared with the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board which demonstrates the Think Family approach we take and the overlapping agendas of the two Boards. For the first time we were able to have a shared strategic plan across the two Boards with separate business plans ensuring that the focus on Children's Safeguarding or Adult Safeguarding is not diluted.

This report contains information on the Serious Case Reviews undertaken, strategies developed, training delivered and findings from audits. This year we had a particular emphasis on challenge and considering the impact of our activity and The Voice of the Child was a particular priority of the annual self-assessment carried out by each agency.

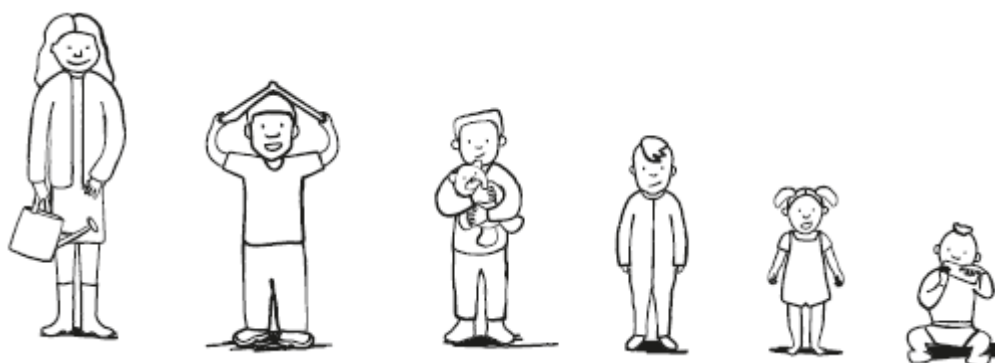
The vision of the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board was reviewed as part of the Annual planning process and was changed to 'Every Child in Manchester is Safe, Happy, Healthy and Successful. To achieve this, we will: Be child-centred, listen to and respond to children and young people, focus on strengths and resilience and take early action', to reflect the Our Manchester Strategy and is now consistent with the vision for the Children's Board. A focus for the Board has been to work more closely with the other key partnerships and the work of the MSCB contributed to the improvement journey for Children's services. It was pleasing to see the work of all the partnerships being recognised when Ofsted reported in December 2017.

Looking forward, legislation came into effect in July 2018 and Local Safeguarding Boards are to be replaced with new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements which have to be established by September 2019 at the latest. Until these new arrangements are in place the statutory requirements for the MSCB remain and it will be vital to ensure that the transition arrangements are robust to ensure that the safeguarding of children and young people remain at the heart of what is developed in the future. Early discussions are taking place in which the MSCB is actively engaged.

Finally, I would like to thank the many partner agencies for their hard work and dedication during a time of huge demand and whose commitment and motivation helps deliver our shared priorities.

J. B. Stephens-Row

Julia Stephens-Row
Independent Chair of Manchester Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards
August 2018



2. Executive Summary

The Board focuses on specific areas where children and young people are in need of help and protection.

This report details the progress we have made against our safeguarding priorities set early in 2017 in the 2017/18 Business Plan, along with the areas identified as future challenges relating to individual and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and is put together along with contribution from partners and subgroups and includes information regarding the progress of the Board over the last year.

An important function of the Board is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by all Board safeguarding partners both individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including advising them on ways to improve.

The Board meets regularly and is supported by a number of subgroups, detailed later within this report.

The 2017/18 priorities were set at a joint Board event (with the MSAB) in April 2017.

We chose four main priorities:

1. Engagement and Involvement
2. Complex Safeguarding
3. Transitions
4. Neglect

During the 2017/18 period, a number of statutory reports were received, including the annual report of the Child Death Overview panel, the annual Private Fostering report, which highlighted the Manchester Private Fostering Week, which took place in July 2017 ensuring that the Local Authority complied with the duty of care placed upon them to promote and raise awareness of children and young people who are privately fostered and an imminent targeted communications campaign aimed to do this. The report from the Local Authority Designated Officer (on the management of allegations against adults who work with children) was also considered, providing assurance of the safeguarding work ongoing. The report highlighted that during the reporting year there had been significant activity aimed at raising awareness about the management of allegations and increasing demands on the Designated Officer, with an increase in allegation referrals from 204 to 319. In addition the Designated Officer responded to advice and guidance contacts and providing information about adults who have worked in Manchester in the past as part of historic abuse enquiries.

The Board screened 12 Serious Case Reviews (SCR) during 2017/18, eight were found to meet SCR criteria and reviews are underway; one was found not to meet SCR criteria and a Learning Review was conducted and three were found not to meet SCR criteria and required no further action. These are summarised in Section 8.

The “*Trust Your Instinct*” Campaign was launched. This campaign is aimed at all members of society, from members of the public to safeguarding practitioners. Further details about the campaign can be found on our website at: www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/trust-your-instinct

Manchester Safeguarding Children Board partners worked together to develop a Neglect Strategy 2017/19 which was launched and introduced the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) Neglect assessment tool. The primary purpose of this Strategy is to set out the strategic direction and priorities which outline how partners will work together to offer a coherent, effective and well-co-ordinated multi-agency response to cases where neglect is an issue.

The Voice of the Child was a specific focus of the 2017 Section 11 Safeguarding Self-Assessment, which incorporated an additional voice of the child section, requiring all partner agencies to assess how well their own agency takes account of the views and wishes of children and young people.

The Interboard Protocol was launched in July 2017. This protocol outlines the co-operative relationship between the Manchester Children’s Board, (MCB), the Manchester Community Safety Partnership (MCSP), the Manchester

Health and Wellbeing Board (MHWB), the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board (MSAB) and the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) in their joint determination to safeguard and promote the health and wellbeing of children, young people and adults in Manchester. The aim of this protocol is to ensure that there are core principles which underpin how the five Boards and other partnership forums operate.

3. About Manchester

Population statistics in Manchester were last collected in 2016 and showed a population of 541,000, with 22.2% of those being children and young people aged between 0-18 years and 28.5% being from an ethnic minority group. The estimated population for Manchester in 2020 is 563,000.

The percentage of school pupils from minority ethnic groups in Manchester in 2017 was 62.6% compared to the England average of 31% and the percentage of school children with social, emotional and mental health needs was 2.7% compared to the England average of 2.3%.

Child poverty is a concern in Manchester - the most commonly used definition of child poverty is a household with children under 16 where income is less than 60% of the UK median.

The latest figures show that, between 2007 and 2014, the overall proportion of children living in poverty in Manchester fell from 44.6% to 35.6%. However, Manchester still has one of the highest rates of child poverty by local authority area. Of those living in poverty, the vast majority (69.4%) are living in out-of-work poverty, whereas 13.6% are living in in-work poverty and 16.2% are classed as other poor. The 35.6% figure equates to 36,255 children under 16 living in poverty out of a total number of 101,845. It is predicted that the number of children living in poverty will rise sharply by 2020.

Manchester's State of the City report provides further data and statistics for Manchester: www.manchester.gov.uk/state_of_the_city_report_2017

There are more specific areas of concern where children and young people are in need of safeguarding support and protection and these are the areas where the MSCB focuses much of its work.

Population Health

The Manchester Population Health Plan is the City's overarching plan for reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes for our residents which will reduce safeguarding risks in the population. Much of 2017/18 was spent developing the plan and consulting with a wide range of stakeholders. The plan can be found here: www.manchester.gov.uk/health_and_wellbeing/public_health

The Plan, with five priority areas for action, has been developed in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders and is an integral component of the refreshed Locality Plan, "Our Healthier Manchester".

At Population Health we recognise that in addressing the safeguarding needs of children we need to address a complex range of factors throughout an individuals' lifetime such as parenting capacity, development/educational issues, housing, employment and income, social integration and support, drug and alcohol misuse, and issues related to service provision or uptake.

The decision to introduce compulsory relationships education in primary schools and relationships and sex education (RSE) in all secondary schools is a welcome move that we support locally. Comprehensive, high quality, age appropriate RSE is known to be a protective factor for children and young people, supporting them to keep themselves safe. 'Growing and Changing Together' and the 'I Matter' curricula developed by the Healthy Schools Team are already in use in many of the city's schools and extended delivery by schools to all their students will be a positive contribution both to preventative work and to improving public health outcomes. Population Health

will be working with a range of partners to ensure that schools, parents and children and young people are aware that this is now compulsory.

4. Statutory Framework and how we deliver

The Children's Act 2004 requires all Local Authority areas to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). LSCBs are inter agency partnerships with statutory responsibility to coordinate local safeguarding arrangements which promote the welfare of children and make sure they are working effectively. Manchester Safeguarding Children Board includes representation from the Local Authority, Greater Manchester Police, Health Services, Housing, Probation and the Voluntary sector.

The functions of the LSCB are set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (now revised to Working Together 2018) www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/working-together

Our statutory functions and objectives are to:

- coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area;
- ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes
- develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority
- raise awareness within communities of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, how this can best be done, and encourage them to do so;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve
- participate in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority
- undertake Serious Case Reviews and advise the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

Manchester Safeguarding Children Board meets every two months and focuses on a range of activity including how we are implementing our Business Plan, the priorities within it and the impact our action is making towards safeguarding outcomes for children. Board members are required to commit to 80% attendance at meetings over the year. Those members who do not meet this attendance rate are contacted by the Independent Chair. A full list of membership as of March 2018 can be found at [Appendix 1](#).

The Board has statutory responsibility for completing Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) by overseeing the screening, conduct and publication of SCRs and other learning reviews. This work is supported by the Serious Case Review Subgroup, Learning from Reviews Subgroup, Learning and Development Subgroup and Safeguarding Practice Development and Fora Subgroup.

Other subgroups that support the Board are the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Subgroup (QAPI), Communications and Engagement Subgroup and the Complex Safeguarding Subgroup.

The MSCB Leadership Group manages the Board's business, co-ordinating the work programme and overseeing key business functions on behalf of the Board. This includes overseeing the risk register and the budget, and performance. The Group also, where necessary, commissions groups to look at specific pieces of work in greater depth.

The Governance Structure for Manchester Safeguarding Board can be found at [Appendix 2](#).

The Board is supported by the Manchester Safeguarding Boards Business Unit (MSB BU)

The Board support for the MSCB has been through significant change in the last year. There was one member of staff who was dedicated to supporting the MSCB and also leading on Serious Case Reviews. This has now been changed to having one member of staff supporting both Boards and one member of staff leading on Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews. The changes were brought about as each of the previous roles had a number of overlaps and the changes seem to be working well. It will be important to monitor the workload requirements of both roles. In addition, there is now a permanent MSB integrated Board Manager which has ensured greater continuity and consistency across the work of the board support team

Future challenges: -

The team are focusing on mapping the current systems in Manchester to ensure that they are appropriate. Moving forward, part of this system review will link in to the wider GM strategy and build a more collaborative working arrangements including the system of selecting and nominating reviewers for SCRs

It is also intended to recruit to a temporary project officer role who will support the implementation of the Neglect Strategy which is one of the board priorities and assist with the development of the web based services for practitioners thus supporting the embedding of learning in to practice.

It should be noted that as a result of the legislative changes introduced through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Government sent out consultation in October 2017 detailing revisions to the current Working Together Statutory Guidance. Following this, the Government proposes to update and replace the current statutory guidance as 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.'

This signifies an interesting year ahead as the changes include replacing Safeguarding Children Boards with new safeguarding partnership arrangements.

5. Our Priorities for 2017/18

The 2017/18 MSB Business and Strategic Plan was set out by the Board in April 2017, detailing priorities and actions for the forthcoming year. The 2017/18 strategic plan can be found at [Appendix 3](#). We chose four main priority areas:

Engagement and Involvement - Listening & learning; hearing the voice of children

We will:

- listen to the views of children
- make sure their voices are heard and are at the centre of what we do
- put children in control of decisions about their care and support
- be proactive in making children aware of emerging issues and how we'll deal with them

We have:

- Undertaken Voice of the Child self-assessments within Section 11 audit
- Embedded the Voice of the Child in our multi-agency audits
- Developed our website to have an area for children
- Engaged children in the development of our board priorities

What will change?

- we will know what children think and take account of it when we make plans
- we will know those views are taken account of when agencies set up and make changes to services.

Complex Safeguarding - Domestic Violence & Abuse, FGM, Sexual Exploitation, Radicalisation, Missing, Organised Crime, Trafficking & Modern Slavery, So-called Honour Based Violence

We will:

- Ensure that the complex safeguarding issues listed are tackled effectively and that children at risk are protected
- Seek assurance from Community Safety partners that safeguarding issues are considered throughout the response to domestic violence and abuse
- Work with housing providers, the voluntary sector & communities to raise awareness of complex safeguarding issues and how to tackle them.

We have:

- Supported the Integration of Protect and Integrated Gang Management Unit (IGMU) services in preparation for Complex Safeguarding Hub
- delivered a series of awareness multi-agency awareness raising events regarding modern slavery and trafficking and developed a Manchester Modern Slavery and Trafficking Strategy
- Heard from Community Safety Partners who provide the Complex Subgroup with thematic updates re Domestic Violence & Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation etc, raising any concerns to the Board.

What will change?

- We will be assured that children at risk are effectively and consistently protected from harm, or supported if it does occur.

Transitions - moving from child to adulthood in a safe and positive way

We will:

- agree a clear, commonly understood definition of transitions, as it relates to our member agencies and services
- map and understand all the points where individuals transitioning from child to adulthood may need and engage with care, support and safeguarding provision
- facilitate the development of a Transitions Strategy that ensures individuals' engagement with services as they transition is consistent, seamless and safe; no-one 'slips through the net'.

We have:

- held a multi-agency transitions workshop with further actions to continue into 2018/19, seeking to highlight challenges faced by children in transition arrangements and consider what needs to happen to develop and improve multi-agency practice.

What will change?

- we will be assured that individuals who need care & support benefit from a simple, effective and safe response as they make the change from child to adulthood.

Neglect - ensuring the basic needs of every child are met

We will:

- ensure that practitioners are equipped with the tools to recognise, assess and prevent neglect of children
- communicate and embed the neglect strategy across partner organisations
- seek assurance that early help is sought where there is a risk of abuse.

We have:

- Launched the Neglect Strategy and held neglect briefings across the City
- Contributed to work on a Greater Manchester Campaign aimed at raising awareness of neglect
- Launched Graded Care Profile2 – an evidence based neglect assessment toolkit that will assist professionals to identify the root cause of neglect and target those areas that will have the greatest impact.
- Started to develop a multi-agency dataset aimed at measuring impact.

What will change?

- we will be assured that children at risk of neglect will be safeguarded and protected.

6. What have we done?

Neglect Strategy

Manchester Safeguarding Children Board partners worked together to develop a Neglect Strategy 2017/19 that was accepted by the board in March 2017. Later in May 2017 the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) was accepted as our chosen Neglect assessment tool.

The primary purpose of the Neglect Strategy is to set out the strategic direction and priorities and outlines how partners will work together to offer a coherent, effective and well-co-ordinated multi-agency response to cases where neglect is an issue.

This Neglect Strategy seeks to ensure our children and families workforce is able to identify and recognise neglect in families across universal and specialist services in order to ensure an effective multi-agency response is provided at the earliest opportunity to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families and reduce the impact of neglect and the risk of an escalation of concerns at the earliest opportunity. An integral part of the strategy is the importance of early identification and engagement of families including effective early help assessment and the development and delivery of a clear action plan.

GCP2 is an assessment tool that helps professionals to measure the quality of care being given to a child and helps them to spot anything that is putting that child at risk of harm. It is important we find children who are at risk of harm as early as possible so we can get them the right help and support at the right time and reduce the risk of escalation. The NSPCC have been engaged in supporting our implementation of GCP2 - we recognise this is at least a three year implementation programme.

The percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan under the category of neglect is the lowest it has been in three years. This year it has reduced from 54.8% in Quarter 1 to 45.7% in Quarter 4. It is below the national average of 47.8% which is positive, but still higher than core cities and statistical neighbours. The Graded Care Profile 2 is now being rolled out across Manchester and it is expected that there will be increase in referrals as this assessment tool is rolled out practitioners over the next 12 months.

The Neglect Strategy has not been fully embedded by all agencies and as a result, the Board intends to fund a temporary project officer to drive the project forward. This task will then be undertaken by resources within the Business Unit once the temporary officer position concludes. The embedding and implementation of this strategy and toolkit remains a priority for the Board as we move into 2018/19.

Voice of the Child

We are committed to listening to the voice of the child and improving engagement with children and young people in all aspects of our work. Considering the voice of the child was an integral part of our work during 2017/18.

All reports coming to the Board and subgroups continue to detail information as to how the work described will impact the lives of children and young people. The Board also has three lay members who attend at Board and other subgroups to provide a grass roots perspective to our work. Their attendance and contribution is highly valued.

The Section 11 Safeguarding Self-Assessment in 2017 incorporated an additional voice of the child section which required all partner agencies to assess how well their own agency takes account of the views and wishes of children and young people.

In the separate Voice of the Child self-assessment section, agencies were asked to give themselves a "RAG" (Red / Amber / Green) rating for the following five questions:

1. Developing a culture of listening supported by a strategy of participation
2. Providing inclusive structures for a range of children's voices to be heard
3. Participation by young people is acknowledged and rewarded
4. Develop staff skills in listening and responding to children
5. Measure & record the impact of participation

There were 21 self-assessments submitted in total. None of the agencies rated themselves as Red for Question 1. Two agencies rated themselves as Red for Question 2 and one agency rated themselves as Red for Questions 3, 4 and 5. The question where the most number of agencies (9) rated themselves as Green was Question 3. This was closely followed by Questions 1, 4 and 5 (8 agencies). However there were noticeably less Green scores overall in the separate Voice of the Child section than there were in the main Section 11 self-Assessment survey - for example the number of agencies rating themselves as Green in the first two sections of the Section 11 self-assessment which relate to 1) A Culture of Safeguarding and 2) A Safe Organisation was between 16 and 21. The highest score (21), which represents the total number of agencies that submitted a Section 11 self-assessment, was for the question that relates to safe recruitment procedures.

This shows that the MSCB as a whole is far more confident in matters that relate to policy and procedure than they are in matters that relate to taking account of the views and wishes of children and young people. The Voice of the Child audit in 2017 gave individual agencies the chance to benchmark how well they were performing and an opportunity to identify areas that can be improved on.

What are we doing about Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Manchester Phoenix Protect Service is a co-located multi agency team consisting of social workers, police officers, early help, health and voluntary sector staff. The team work to safeguard young people who have been identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and to disrupt and prosecute offenders of CSE. They work collectively and hold daily risk briefings as this facilitates information sharing, triage, joint working and decision making in respect of referrals, and new intelligence.

There were 174 referrals received for CSE in 2017/18; this is lower than in 2016/17 when referrals were 218. The lower figure reflects the screening and conversations undertaken by the team to identify the most vulnerable children and thus ensuring a key focus on those children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm through sexual exploitation. There was a peak in referrals in June 2017 reflecting a heightened focus following the commencement of Operation Diamond, a complex child sexual exploitation investigation which resulted in a number of referrals to both children and adult social care services.

A number of convictions were secured in 2017/18 including a female convicted of grooming and trafficking a 14 year old boy who was sentenced to 3.5 years in custody; two males were convicted of grooming and two offenders were convicted of fraud offences following complex safeguarding investigations. A male was convicted for breach of a sexual harm prevention order; this was imposed in relation to previous CSE offences.

Links between sexual exploitation and young people going missing as a key risk factor are well recognised. In 2017/18 it was agreed that the Protect social workers would complete the Independent Return Interviews (IRIs) where a young person had gone missing and is already receiving an intervention from Protect. This has been successful in increasing the completion of IRIs but more importantly ensuring that learning and the views of children and young people have informed care planning and trigger plans.

A Senior Specialist CSE Nurse has been co-located with the Protect multi-agency team for four years and the team are supported by a range of services and have a co-located Young People's worker from Barnardo's whose focus is therapeutic interventions. Other support is provided from key partners such as the Children's Society, Factory Youth Zone and Manchester Young Lives.

The dedicated Early Help Interventions Team co-located within Protect now work across all areas of exploitation, but have retained a specialism of working in a whole family way and focus on support and parenting interventions as well as direct work with children and young people. The team have supported 34 families and 68 children and young people and the average length of intervention is eight and a half months. The team have a strong retention rate; only seven families did not complete their intervention.

Complex Safeguarding

We know there are strong links between criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation and links between young people who go missing and being exploited. To improve our safeguarding response, it makes sense to reconfigure our partnership response in a more coherent and coordinated way and bring together a range of services including Voluntary and Community Services (VCS) partners who are responding to complex safeguarding and exploitation.

Throughout 2017/18 we have been developing our plans to implement a complex safeguarding hub, which is expected to be fully functioning by September 2018.

In preparation, the work of the Integrated Gang Management Unit (IGMU) was absorbed within the wider work of the Phoenix Protect team in October 2017. This has proved to be a successful approach, with workers having a mixed caseload of CSE and exploitation cases and has enabled the service to test out this approach as they work towards fully implementing the complex safeguarding hub. A team manager retains a thematic lead for organised crime and exploitation and has been instrumental in undertaking mapping with youth justice, social care and voluntary sector partners, to identify young people and their associates involved in both organised crime and the victims of criminal exploitation. From April 2017 to March 2018 a total of 49 referrals were made in relation to gangs and the emerging area of criminal exploitation.

Children missing from home and care

During 2017/18 there were 1515 children missing from home and 3505 missing from home incidents. There were 1173 missing from care incidents and 229 children missing from care. This number has reduced from the last period 2016/17 and it is noted that two individuals (4%) were missing on more than 12 occasions account for 39 (17%) incidents.

Due to a successful Missing From Home Panel, the number of Missing From Home episodes have significantly reduced for children in Local Authority Care.

The safe and well check process is now being delivered successfully across Manchester by Missing teams. Young people are engaging and able to share their views more easily.

7. Serious Case Reviews and Lessons Learned

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 includes the requirement for LSCBs to undertake reviews of serious cases in specified circumstances. Regulation 5(1)(e) and (2) set out an LSCB's function in relation to serious case reviews, namely: 5(1)(e) undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned. (2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (e) a serious case is one where: (a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and (b) either — (i) the child has died; or (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

Cases meeting SCR criteria		
SCRs conducted and concluded; reviews published in 2017/18	3 cases	SCR H1, SCR I1, SCR K1
SCRs screened in 2017/18 and found to meet SCR criteria; reviews are underway	8 cases	SCR N1, SCR O1, SCR P1, SCR Q1, SCR R1, SCR S1, SCR T1, SCR U1
SCRs concluded during 2017/18 which will not be published	2 cases	SCR E1, SCR J1
Out of Area SCR where MSCB has participated or contributed information	2 cases	Manchester has contributed to two SCR being conducted in other areas: Trafford and Blackpool

Cases not meeting SCR criteria		
Learning Review undertaken	1 case	N/A
No review action required (case does not meet SCR criteria and no further action required)	3 cases	N/A

Published Reviews: Key Findings and Learning

SCR H1 (published December 2017) www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/serious-case-reviews**Key Themes: Physical Abuse, Neglect**

SCR H1 concerns a 14 year old who was the eldest of five siblings.

During the time covered by this SCR, there were ongoing concerns about the emotional and physical wellbeing of the eldest child, neglect of all the children and worries about the involvement of an unknown male in family life. In July 2015, mother was admitted to hospital suffering from acute psychosis and was detained in hospital under Section 2 of the Mental Health Act. The children were left in the care of the presumed father (of the three youngest children). After a few days, the eldest child alleged to police that their stepfather had raped them and he was arrested.

Key Findings and Learning

Overall the review has highlighted the complexity of working long-term with a mother and her five children, who had been voluntarily accommodated by the local authority and subject to child protection plans for neglect, stepped down, and then the cycle repeating itself. The review identified the need to improve the multi-agency response to working with children and families, in particular; with families who are perceived as 'difficult to engage' and where there is a long history of poor parenting and neglect.

- safeguarding systems are too focused on the efficiency with which cases are progressed; this impacts particularly upon neglect cases which have over-prioritised practical support at the expense of gaining an understanding of root cause
- a combination of pressure to process cases through the system and limited available resource means that child protection plans in Manchester are being created with insufficient consideration of how well a service might meet individual needs
- when services are configured separately for adults and children there is a danger that the impact of risk within the family is not fully understood, which can potentially leave children and adults vulnerable
- beyond the superficial labels used for demographic data collection, when professionals feel uncomfortable asking about and further do not recognise the importance of a person's background, culture and belief system; children and families' needs may remain unmet
- local authority management systems are insufficiently challenging of the custom and practice of social workers not to seek or systematically record informed parental consent for s20 accommodation, potentially leaving the support needs of parent's unseen and making case-drift more likely
- over-concern about the risks rather than benefits of information sharing is resulting in professionals being unsighted as to safeguarding risks to children.

Learning Activities

A learning event for practitioners and professionals was held on **15.9.2017** to disseminate the findings and learning from this review.

Learning Packs for practitioners include a Learning Report, 7 Minute Briefing and Power Point Presentation and are available on the MSB website.

All of the identified actions associated with the Child H1 SCR recommendations are complete. A well-attended multi-agency Professional Curiosity conference has been held where techniques for holding difficult conversations were discussed. The MSCB agreed to commission Graded Care Profile 2 as the assessment tool for Neglect. An implementation programme has been developed and a multi-agency / multi threshold Board established. Neglect Strategy and Levels of Need briefings have been held across the city.

SCR I1 (published December 2017) www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/serious-case-reviews	
<p>Key Theme: Neglect</p> <p>Child I1 was the youngest of a sibling group of three. The children had specific health needs and were removed from poor living conditions after a deterioration in the home environment following Child in Need (CIN) and Child Protection Plan (CPP) interventions.</p> <p>Child I1 and siblings experienced significant harm through neglect over a long period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the involvement of agencies during the period of time under review was in response to concerns about poor home conditions ● there was concern about parents not meeting the significant health needs of the children. 	<p>Key Findings and Learning</p> <p>Key findings from this review identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● poor communication between agencies ● poor recording ● loss of focus on the voice of the child and their daily lived experience ● focus on task-completion rather than on on-going assessment of impact of the work being done ● lack of recognition of the importance of chronologies to show the context of previous history ● lack of challenge; and ● a lack of healthy scepticism amongst the professionals working on the case. <p>The voice of the child – professionals must focus on the daily lived experience of the child; consider specific disabilities and complex needs; and avoid emphasis on parents’ perspective.</p> <p>Assessments - interventions in neglect cases must be informed by multi-agency assessment based on clear understanding of history, with a combined multi-agency chronology as an essential tool.</p> <p>Multi-agency working – agencies must work closely together to share information, especially where there is concern about disguised compliance. Multi-agency groups need to provide appropriate challenge.</p>
<p>Learning Activities</p> <p>A Learning Event for practitioners and professionals was held on 28.11.2017 to disseminate the findings and learning from this review.</p> <p>Learning Packs for practitioners include a Learning Report, 7 Minute Briefing and Power Point Presentation and are available on the MSB website.</p>	<p>With regard to the recommendations from this report, the MSCB has agreed to commission Graded Care Profile 2 as the assessment tool for Neglect. Implementation programme has been developed. Neglect Strategy and Levels of Need briefings have been held across the city. Multi-agency Neglect audits are now part of the annual audit programmes. All multi-agency neglect audits consider how well chronologies are being used and the impact they are having on assessment and planning.</p>

SCR K1 (published December 2017) www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/serious-case-reviews	
<p>Key Theme: Neglect</p> <p>Child K1 was three years old when they died following an asthma attack in June 2016. At the time, Child K1 had been diagnosed with brittle asthma and was on a Child Protection plan for neglect. Various services raised concerns & provided support in relation to Child K1's presentation & home environment - professionals had provided care in line with guidance but did not adequately take into account the safeguarding concerns (i.e. the impact of smoking and poor home environment) and the need to further escalate the case.</p>	<p>Key Findings and Learning</p> <p>The findings listed below deal with the impact on the management of Child K1's care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> professionals provided care in line with nationally agreed guidance, however this did not adequately take into account the safeguarding concerns (i.e. the impact of smoking and poor home environment) and the need to further escalate the case. health professionals have a lead role to play in ensuring that professionals working with a specific family have a better understanding around the concept of when care is/is not good enough for a child who has a chronic illness or disability and how this should inform case planning neglect is a recognised category of abuse, however in this case the professional understanding was not sufficiently sophisticated as to the kind of behaviours that constitute neglect and their impact on children with chronic health conditions. <p>Further, the review concluded that:</p> <p>the incidence of childhood asthma in Manchester is the highest in the country, an unsurprising statistic when one considers the social and economic deprivation and the high incidence of smoking. It is therefore important to consider the impact of this on both families and the services providing support when caring for children with asthma and concerns in relation to possible neglect.</p>
<p>Learning Activities</p> <p>A Learning Event for practitioners and professionals was held on 16.3.2018 to disseminate the findings and learning from this review.</p> <p>Learning Packs for practitioners include a Learning Report, 7 Minute Briefing and Power Point Presentation and are available on the MSB website.</p>	<p>The learning from this review regarding the impact of environmental tobacco smoke and the link to safeguarding has been passed to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to be incorporated in future revisions of their Asthma Guidance. Work is currently underway to improve communication links between GP surgeries and the Safeguarding Improvement Unit in respect of Child Protection Conferences.</p>

Learning Reviews

In addition to the statutory reviews that have been published or are underway, the MSCB also conducted a multi-agency learning review as outlined in the North West Learning and Improvement Framework, greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/nw_learn_imp_framework.html and conducted by the MCC Lead for Children's Safeguarding. The review concentrated on 'Fabricated and Induced Illness' which the NHS defines as: 'Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.'

The review considered a range of key practice episodes with the involvement of a range of agencies and was able to identify what had worked well and what were areas of improvement. The review recommended a range of actions including:

- a review of multi-agency training regarding fabricated and induced illness
- access to a central contact point for professionals to discuss concerns about FII
- easier access to full health chronologies when there is a concern

- a review of school nursing to ensure safeguarding needs are met
- improvement to Early Help meetings, minuting and action plans
- dissemination of learning around FII to school safeguarding leads.

8. Progress against our Business Priorities

We asked our subgroups to provide updates as to how they have contributed to these priorities, what has worked well and any future challenges. The subgroups discussed these and responded accordingly.

Extracts from the Subgroups responses are detailed below and full responses are can be found on the MSB website here: www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/mscb

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Purpose of the group - To review the deaths of all children aged 0 – 17 years (excluding stillbirths and legal terminations of pregnancy) normally resident in the City of Manchester to identify lessons learnt or issues of concern and make recommendations on effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This multidisciplinary panel conducts a comprehensive review, with the aim to better understand how and why children in Manchester die and use the findings to recommend actions to prevent deaths and improve the health and safety of our children.

There was a total of 60 child deaths notifications reported to CDOP in 2017/2018, the CDOP discussed and closed a total of 62 cases. 25 (40%) infants were neonatal deaths (babies who died under 28 days of life). A further 16 (25%) died before their first birthday (28 - 364 days), highlighting infants under the age of 1 as the most vulnerable age group, accounting for 66% of the cases closed. The CDOP identified a number of modifiable factors which may have contributed to vulnerability, ill-health or death of the child in 21 (34%) cases. The largest number of deaths were categorised as a 'perinatal/neonatal event' (20, 32%) and 'chromosomal, genetic and congenital anomalies' (19, 30%). A further 6 (10%) deaths were categorised as 'sudden unexpected, unexplained death' where the pathological cause of death remains unascertained. An overview of the emerging themes, trends and modifiable factors are documented in the 2017/2018 CDOP Annual Report which is published each Autumn on the MSB website - www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/child-death-overview-panel-information-practitioners

Areas of future development: the CDOP aims to raise awareness of the emerging themes in child deaths and contributing risk factors as part of an MSB training event for frontline practitioners. The purpose of the event will be to disseminate learning and raise awareness of organisations that practitioners can signpost families to for additional support. The aim will be to provide frontline practitioners with information and advice to build professional knowledge and confidence when having difficult conversations regarding subjects such as bereavement, safe sleeping arrangements, smoking or obesity.

Practice Example - Neglect:

The CDOP requests information from partner agencies regarding the child, family and other household members to identify any issues in parenting capacity, such as poor parenting/supervision and child abuse/neglect. The panel analyses relevant family and environment factors which may have contributed to vulnerability, ill-health or death of the child. A number of these cases are also subject to Coronial investigations, criminal proceedings and Serious Case Reviews which the panel consider to assess how neglect contributed to the death and document recommendations to prevent future death.

Serious Case Review (SCR) Subgroup

The primary purpose of the SCR subgroup is to screen incoming referrals to assess whether they meet SCR criteria or not, and to recommend to the Independent Chair whether a SCR should be conducted. If SCR criteria is not met, the SCR subgroup can also recommend another type of learning review or activity, including single agency reviews. The SCR subgroup also monitors the progress of SCRs and considers first drafts of completed reviews, providing feedback to the independent reviewer prior to the review being considered by Board.

Once reviews are completed and signed off by the Board, Learning & Development subgroup are charged with conducting case specific learning events and publication of learning materials, and Learning from Reviews subgroup are charged with monitoring any actions agreed as a result of the review findings.

Areas of Future Development - the SCR subgroup recognise that Board members need to nominate appropriate representatives to review panels who can provide strategic analysis of historic and current policies and procedures and enact change in their agencies where required. Panel members need to identify appropriate SMART actions for their agencies in response to learning coming out of reviews for the Board to consider when the Review is concluded; and be able to cascade learning within agencies as it emerges through the review process. It is intended that some work around role profiles for review panel members will help to address this, and there has also been some trial work on identifying a partner representative on the panel as acting in a Lead Professional role.

- the volume of referrals and SCRs/other type reviews (where referrals do not meet criteria) remains high which is a challenge for the subgroup, for agencies and for the Business Unit
- the subgroup would like to have a greater understanding of Coroner's timescales for cause of death, and in particular, toxicology results.

Practice Example - Engagement and Involvement:

In screening and monitoring the conducting of SCRs, the voice of the child has been identified as a key learning theme emerging from a number of reviews and this has been reflected and highlighted in completed reviews. Specific areas where this has been noted includes: help seeking behaviour in children – where a child has taken action to seek help, such as making and attending a GP appointment, and this has not been adequately recognised as a need for greater intervention or has not been adequately responded to; the need for training to support staff to manage 'difficult conversations' with family members, sometimes compounded by reluctance to talk to a parent who is seen as 'challenging'; the importance of hearing the voice of the child – not only hearing but listening and responding; the need for development of awareness of non-verbal communication and ensuring there is confirmed parent/carer consent around Section 20 voluntary care orders, and that the parent/carer giving consent has full capability to give consent, and the importance of recording such consent.

Safeguarding Practice Development Group (SPDG and Fora)

The purpose of this group is to support the strategic priorities of the Board by gathering practice evidence, information and articulating practice challenges.

Areas of future development:

- Children with Disabilities team (CWD) to be invited to join Fora and share information ensure
- new arrangements for Leaving Care Service to be shared as they unfold
- adult safeguarding members recruited to shape transitions services
- continue to grow membership generally
- consider how communication in between meetings can be improved

Practice Example - What has worked well?

- good multi-agency learning arena which includes information and experience sharing
- opportunities to share learning from reviews
- having three Fora Chairs for each area who manage the discussions
- having an action plan and core agenda has benefited the arrangements.

Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Subgroup (QAPI)

This subgroup has responsibility for the quality assurance of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements via the multi-agency case file audit programme, the multi-agency performance dataset; the annual Section 11 Safeguarding Self-Assessment and single agency audit reports.

Four themed multi-agency safeguarding case file audits have been undertaken in this period - Domestic Violence & Abuse, Looked After Children, Neglect and Pre Birth Assessments - which has resulted in the close scrutiny of approximately 100 agency records in total and the findings together with recommendations for improved multi-agency working have been reported back to the Board.

A Section 11 Peer Challenge Event based on the Section 11 Self Assessments that had been submitted by Board members was held in September 2017. This event was well-attended by partners and provided a forum for challenge between partners as well as sharing good practice and identifying opportunities for working better together to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Areas of future development: continue to strengthen and evidence the impact for children of the work of the QAPI subgroup and get more direct involvement from children & young people. Review the content of the quarterly multi-agency dataset to focus more clearly on Board objectives. Implementation of a practitioner survey to give us a view as to how well the frontline staff understand the requirements of Section 11, the Board priorities and how well learning from audit and reviews is being implemented.

Practice Example - Neglect: the QAPI subgroup has undertaken a multi-agency case file audit on the theme of neglect and the findings have been reported to the Board. One of the key themes arising from this audit was the importance of all agencies maintaining an up to date chronology on the child's record which can evidence the impact of living with neglect over a period of time.

The QAPI subgroup is developing a multi-agency dataset to support the implementation of the Neglect Strategy. This has proved to be more challenging than anticipated in terms of sourcing relevant useful data from across all agencies that is not linked to statutory safeguarding procedures.

Learning from Reviews Subgroup (LrR)

This subgroup has the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and actions arising from completed Serious Case Reviews (SCR), Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR), other Learning Reviews and also specific recommendations for MSCB or MSAB arising from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR).

Areas of future development: this is a new subgroup that was formed in September 2017 and it has taken several months to set the parameters of how the group will operate. For example: as the group evolved it became clear that membership needed to be extended to include Adult Social Care, Probation and a representative for Domestic Violence & Abuse. The Terms of Reference had to be amended and agreed and a permanent Chair and Deputy needed to be secured. There have been issues with the quality of action plans arising from reviews which makes it difficult to monitor the implementation of actions, this has been fed back to the Board and plans are in place to address the problem of actions not being SMART. The subgroup is still in development in terms of being

able to evidence changes in practice arising from learning from Serious Case Reviews (SCR). As the subgroup becomes embedded there will be an opportunity for future development in terms of thematic analysis of learning that will inform the Boards' Business Plan.

Communication and Engagement Subgroup

This subgroup has the responsibility for facilitating the development and dissemination of accessible information in a variety of formats to raise awareness about safeguarding children and adults; targeting a range of stakeholders including citizens, professionals, service users and carers.

This subgroup was formed to:

- maximise communication and engagement opportunities between MSB partners and external stakeholders
- provide a forum to share communication and engagement expertise.

The subgroup will:

- act in a consultative capacity for the MSCB on communication and engagement activities
- allocate or respond to the work of other MSB subgroups
- offer support and advice to the planning and development of communication and engagement activities
- develop the MSB Communications and Engagement Strategy on behalf of the Boards

Areas of future development:

- development of 7 minute briefings has been ongoing
- campaign outputs to be developed
- planning for future campaigns
- measuring impact of communications work

In keeping with revised MSB Business Plan the long term priorities will be:

1. (Child) Neglect Strategy – MSCB
2. Modern Slavery Strategy – MSAB & MSCB

Practice example – what has worked well?

- the MSCB website was replaced by a new MSB website www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk in January 2017; the website was then remodelled and all content refreshed in June / July 2017. Website analytics for 1.4.17 to 31.3.18 show the website had 31,602 users.
- marketing and communications activity for 2017/18 focused on MSB materials such as Trust Your Instinct and the national campaigns such as the DfE Child Abuse campaign.
- in June 2017 the MSB Twitter feed @McrSafeguarding was launched to support the integrated MSB website.

Learning and Development Subgroup (L&D)

This subgroup has the responsibility for supporting, analysing and assessing the delivery and impact on practice of a targeted multi-agency training programme that incorporates learning from SCRs and other reviews.

MSB Training website - the updated training website was launched in Summer 2017 and is proving popular and easier to access (mobile device friendly). The Impact Evaluation Questionnaire has been embedded into the training website alongside an improved reporting tool and automated back office features.

Impact Evaluation (IE) Reports (Face to Face Training) – two IE reports for 2016/17 (Neglect and Parental Mental Health and Safeguarding Children) are completed, report and recommendations are pending L&D Subgroup approval. Two IE reports for 2017/18 have been completed, pending L&D Subgroup approval (Awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse); one using data collected via a telephone survey and one using the online Impact Evaluation Questionnaire. These reports will be compared and considered by the L&D Subgroup for future reporting purposes.

Impact Evaluation of Online Training – a total of 434 module feedback was provided which represents 8.7% of completed course modules; this is a slight decrease from last year when 10% provided feedback. When asked if participation in the e-learning supported them to make measurable improvements to their work practice 78% agreed. Over 86% assessed their confidence in applying the learning to their practice had improved since completing the training.

Engagement and Involvement: the MSB L&D subgroup arranged and facilitated a half day conference titled Professional Curiosity - Confidence and Challenge – this event focused on the children’s workforce and included a keynote presentation from Professor Harry Ferguson (social work academic), group workshops and question and answer session. The event was well received and 165 professionals attended from across partner agencies.

A revised and improved learning from reviews procedure was agreed during 2017/18, in total six SCR events were delivered with 192 professionals attending. In 2015/16 there were no SCR learning events. These events were delivered by members of the relevant panels, with the presentations being developed by the independent chairs of the reviews. This ensured that the key themes from each event were identified and learning shared with those in attendance.

Complex Safeguarding: the learning and development programme delivered by the MSB includes a classroom based training programme incorporating courses on Awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse, Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence, Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing From Home or Care.

In addition to the classroom based sessions, online training is available through our contract with Virtual College and include courses on Understanding Pathways to Extremism and the Prevent Programme, Introduction to Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Spirit Possession and Honour Based Violence, Basic Awareness of Child and Adult Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking, Exploitation and Modern Slavery. The MSB facilitated a CSE Champions training course in August 2017.

Neglect: during 2017/18, the Learning and Development subgroup have supported the implementation of the MSB Children’s Neglect Strategy by arranging and facilitating three Neglect Strategy and Multi-Agency Levels of Need and Response Framework events. The events were well received and in total 174 professionals from across the partnership attended.

The Graded Care Profile 2 (Neglect Tool) training commenced with the initial focus being on the staff that support children and families within the pilot area of North Manchester. The Learning and Development Co-ordinators arranged and supported the facilitation of two NSPCC train the trainer sessions which were attended by 35 professionals.

Areas of Future Development:

Training delivery - the training pool that has delivered many different training sessions has reduced in number during the year due to professionals changing job roles. This will be a focus for development during 2018/19.

Training programme development – the following are areas that have been identified that require further training course development:

- safeguarding children with a disability
- children and young persons development
- young people transitioning into adulthood themed courses
- Neglect training (children and family focus).

Complex Safeguarding Subgroup

The purpose of this Subgroup is to receive thematic strategies/plans, research/policy developments (statutory/practice) and provide a challenge and support role within the context of strategic and operational delivery in the seven strands of complex safeguarding: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); Missing from home, care & education; Radicalisation & extremism; Vulnerability and Organised Crime; Modern Slavery and Violence; and Domestic Violence and Abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour based abuse and Forced Marriage. A work plan focussing on actions for all 7 strands of Complex Safeguarding was set for 17/18 - through this, actions and activities were tracked and supported. The work plan evolved constantly as work was completed and actions achieved. Thematic priorities were discussed at every meeting, on a rolling basis.

What has worked well?

Sexual Exploitation – there has been increased joined up working, with the ‘Think Family’ approach being better utilised, with better agency involvement and intelligence sharing from all areas.

Protect (Manchester CSE Team) has developed into a multi-agency HUB with a future challenge for this as it becomes part of the Complex Safeguarding Hub, there is also better recognition that ‘CSE’ doesn’t stop at 17 and recognition of the connection with Adult Sexual Exploitation – vulnerability surrounds both.

Training is commissioned by independent providers and there has been improved work at schools, although there is still more to do to help young people recognise their own vulnerabilities.

Missing from Home – there has been a successful Missing From Home Panel and the number of Missing From Home episodes have significantly reduced for children in Local Authority Care. Frequency of missing episodes is reducing and Independent Return Interviews (IRI) quality is improving. The timeliness of IRIs is improving, with approximately 80% being completed within 72hours. Links are now being made between Missing From Home and Criminal Exploitation. There is good youth engagement via Unity Radio Project.

Radicalisation and Extremism – A Prevent self-assessment of compliance against the statutory duty was undertaken during this year and action plan for areas of development established e.g. Prevent training and our Channel Panel arrangements. The Home Office will now deliver it's national Prevent Peer Review process in Manchester between 11-13 September 2018 to:

- assess compliance against the statutory Prevent duty through an evidence based approach to delivery (not an inspection)
- identify practical actions to improve outcomes and productivity of Prevent across the partnership
- enable good practice and learning to be shared across all areas in the country

Radicalisation and Extremism - Manchester's Channel Cases Peer Review was delivered in March 2017 and from this an action plan for improvement developed. The action plan set out a number of actions to strengthen the process for making referrals and the multi-agency support offered to vulnerable people. The action plan has been

delivered but will now need to be reviewed in light of the changes proposed through the Home Office's GM Dovetail pilot, which aims to go live in Oct 2018 and will see the transfer of Channel functions from the police to local authorities.

Vulnerability and Organised Crime – with regards to Criminal Exploitation, we have finalised a Manchester definition, policy statement, formulated a multi-agency response and commissioned a piece of analytical work.

There are crossovers between Organised Crime and Vulnerability and will certainly be a future challenge in terms of risk and demand.

Modern Slavery and Violence – A Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking subgroup has been setup to work towards a Manchester Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking Strategy, utilising workshops and frontline practitioners. Three awareness days were held by Stop The Traffik and the Strategy was launched in April 2018 alongside workshops and a train the trainer training schedule.

The Independent Child Trafficking Advocate (ICTA) scheme was launched, with Manchester having some of the highest referral figures to the service.

Domestic Violence and Abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation and 'so called Honour Based Violence'

FGM – during this period we commissioned voluntary sector groups to develop health and peer mentors in the community and deliver a Zero tolerance event and held a GM event for faith leaders to sign anti FGM pledge.

HBV - 7 minute briefing developed to raise awareness across the partnership. We extended opening hours to the community language domestic abuse helpline and commissioned Independent Choices to deliver community events and drop in sessions for awareness and support

DVA - MSB DVA policy reviewed. There has been a successful implementation of Safe and Together and a commitment for DVA specialist to be involved in all SAR/SCR's as part of the panels. Continued funding has been secured for 18/19 for Midwifery support service and IRIS funding secured to expand the programme. Funding for an LGBT IDVA post was also secured on a GM level for 2 years.

There has also been good partnership working and commitment across the DVA sector and other partner agencies.

Areas of Future Development:

Sexual Exploitation – there needs to be ongoing awareness raising in communities. We need to ensure the implementation of Making Safeguarding Personal for children. More work needs to go into having difficult conversations, identifying the risks of social media, understanding perpetrators and interventions and recognising the transition impact of CSE on adults.

Missing From Care – there is more to do in exploring the correlation between Missing From Education (MFE) and Missing From Home (MFH) – Children MFH and Care are not always seen within 72 hours and this could improve. We need a better focus on hot spot areas and outreach and intervention. A further challenge is transitions for young people going into independent living and we need to review our response to our out of area Local Authority children in care and those placed in the city from outside.

Domestic Violence & Abuse – The roll out of Safe & Together across Children's Social Care will be a priority moving forward, this will also include partner agencies. We also plan to develop an MSB FGM training offer and implement learning from DHR's.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking – A future challenge will be the launch and implementation of Manchester Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking Strategy by agencies across Manchester. We also need to ensure that Duty to notify and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals are maintained. Any potential changes to the Independent Child Trafficking Advocate (ICTA) scheme may present challenges as it may move to focussing only on children trafficked into UK rather than within the UK also. We will continue to work with AFRUCA to support

Community Champions work raising awareness of Modern Day Slavery and Exploitation, including referral pathways and how to get help. This is expected to run between July 18 – July 19.

Radicalisation and Extremism - Social media and the internet – fake news and propaganda, radicalisation, effective and credible counter narratives continues to be a challenge. Some areas / agencies have lower Channel referrals and we need to understand why. We need to continue work to remove the stigma and fear of making referrals and develop confidence in people to make Channel referrals, some of this is through the refreshed training and local case studies. We will continue to support people to hold difficult conversations to develop critical thinking and resilience and improve information sharing between agencies to better understand risk as well as vulnerabilities. The roll out of GM Dovetail pilot will present challenges, along with the proposed pilot Multi Agency Centres.

9. What our partners say:

We also asked our partner agencies what they have done to support our priorities and asked them what has worked well and what their future challenges are. Extracts regarding the priorities are detailed here. Full responses are can be found here on the MSB website: www.manchestersafeguardingboards.co.uk/mscb

Engagement and Involvement – Practice Examples

Manchester City Council Children’s Services - The service has hosted bi-monthly staff engagement sessions and bi monthly management sessions. These fora provide an opportunity for the service to come together to discuss key aspects of development of services to protect children. Sessions always contain a briefing on service development. This is an opportunity to connect staff with the work of the Board and of the service. The Children’s and Education services Directorate has seven priorities one of which is to use the voice of children more systematically in influencing service. Our audits suggest we are improving in relation to capturing the voice of the child and listening to their wishes and feelings, but work here is inconsistent, in the coming year we will improve our consistency. Building on our Signs of Safety model we aim to improve our understanding and commitment to the wishes and feelings of children whilst balancing our role in protecting children and promoting their development. We have some examples of Our children influencing service design particularly in the leaving care service. Our children frequently manage the agenda of the Corporate Parenting panel, providing an opportunity for influence with senior officers and elected members of the Council. We are committed to doing more of this work. We have re commissioned our children’s rights service and now have an opt out advocacy service for children attending child protection conferences. We continue to support the change group which is made up of a number of our children (care leavers) who aim to influence the work of the Council in supporting our children.

Youth Justice Service - A key priority for the Youth Justice Service is to strengthen levels of engagement with those young people referred by the police and courts. Research into the effectiveness of Manchester Youth Justice Service shows that when we do engage a young person successfully and they complete their court ordered supervision, they are 7 times less likely to come back again. All children and young people are asked to complete self-assessments at the outset and to give their views on the service throughout their contact with us. There are ‘Participation Champions’ in each team who have been trained by Manchester Metropolitan University and they are leading the development of interactive sessions with groups of young people who will advise on changes and improvements needed within the Service and design new information leaflets for those coming into the service.

Manchester Health Care and Commissioning (MHCC) - MHCC have continued to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding in 2017/2018. The Designated Doctor, Nurse and Head of Safeguarding are active members of all Manchester SCRs and learning reviews. The Designated Team strive to ensure the voice of the child and “think family” approach are considered in all reviews and learning’s. The recommendations about the Voice of the Child and Think Family have been noted as strong themes in many of the SCRs findings. The CCG Safeguarding Team promotes and delivers the learning from SCRs in various formats across the health economy. This forms part of the CCG assurance process and ensures that lessons learnt are embedded within training.

Throughout 2017/2018 the Designated Team have continued to provide highly specialised clinical advice and expert knowledge to peers, other professionals; advanced level practitioners and agencies within the geographical area on all safeguarding concerns. The team operate a robust supervision model for all Named professionals across the Manchester health economy and ensure that the child is always central in all practice and ensure their daily lived practice and voice is paramount.

Pennine Acute Hospital Trust (PAHT) - Through involvement into care planning and risk assessments ‘Voice of the Child’ and evidencing this in the child’s notes. This process is on the safeguarding team’s audit to plan to ensure Divisions are compliant and are engaging and involving children in their care.

CASE STUDY – Youth Justice Service - When ‘David’ first came to the Youth Justice Service he had many difficulties in different areas of his life - his difficulty in forming and maintaining positive relationships, his lack of educational progress, one year out of education. He was described as ‘highly oppositional’ and at times ‘controlling’. When angry, he was unable to express what was wrong and would remain in this state for several hours or go missing from home. His parents were not available to care for him so David had been placed in care over 10 years previously. His carers described how ‘persistent lying’ made it difficult for others to relate to him and he rarely smiled and had periods of self-harming. David was convicted of a serious, imprisonable offence and was placed by the court on a Youth Referral Order. Shortly after this, both his care and school placements broke down. He refused to engage with CAMHs and the Clinical Psychologist stated “knowing this child’s history, it is hard to expect an alternative trajectory other than forensic services”(Prison).

David was viewed by his school as high risk and the Youth Justice Service assessed him as low risk. His Youth Justice Officer recognised the challenge of engaging in any meaningful way with him so discussed his details with the Drama Therapist that has been commissioned to work in Youth Justice with those children who are the most disengaged.

The Drama Therapists use high quality interventions including art, music, dance and drama with a focus on providing a safe environment for the child to relax and build a trusting relationship. For those young people who have faced trauma in their early lives, this has proved to be a more effective way to get to know them rather than conventional approaches.

In David’s case, there was a direct correlation between his increased emotional well-being through the therapy and his ability to engage in positive relationships with others, and eventually, in learning activities in the classroom. His academic achievements exceeded all expectations and included 100% Attendance over two terms, good engagement in school lessons, identified creative skills helped him to engage in school curriculum, with his music teacher, is currently making a rap album with a social skills focus, in English and Maths, completed levels 1 and 2 in two terms and his aspirations have changed and he is now seeking a college placement.

Complex Safeguarding – Practice Examples

Greater Manchester Police - The City of Manchester Division is committed to establishing a new integrated partnership operating model to reduce the risk of harm and to improve the protection and safeguarding of children, young people and adults with complex safeguarding needs at risk of exploitation. This will be achieved through effective information sharing, joint working, integrated interventions and support and protective practices. The Complex Safeguarding Hub will be based at Greenheys Police Station and will focus on the following strands of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery, Criminal Exploitation, Organised Crime Groups / Serious Youth Violence

Education - Implementation of the Prevent Duty and Counter Extremism continues to be a major focus. Schools have strongly supported the approach to Prevent in Manchester which sits very firmly within mainstream safeguarding arrangements, with a range of programmes for staff, children and for parents. This is reflected by the MCC Model Safeguarding Policy for schools (annually updated) and the section 175 Safeguarding Self Evaluation Framework. The Prevent Duty is part of, and embedded within, the policy and the SEF. Tracking of schools' responses from the Prevent SEF (Sept 15) and the Safeguarding SEF (March 16 and 17) shows impact in a rise in confidence in the delivery of the Prevent Duty particularly in relation to building resilience of young people.

Education is represented on the Domestic Abuse Forum and has worked to raise awareness of partners of training and resources that are available including 'Safe and Together' and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). A number of schools are involved in the pilot project for the latter. Others have volunteered to take a lead on 'Safe and Together'.

A key development over the past year has been to improve information sharing between the police and schools/Early Years settings, through school representation on the district MARACs and the roll out Operation Encompass from September 2017. This has supported awareness of schools and Early Years settings of children who have suffered from domestic abuse and improved the offer of Early Help and appropriate interventions.

Manchester Foundation Trust - Key messages regarding priority areas have been shared across all divisions which includes Complex Safeguarding. Key priority areas established in 2017/18 are CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), DV&A (Domestic Violence and Abuse), FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), Early Help.

Domestic Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Sexual Exploitation sub-groups are well established within MFT which link with Manchester and Greater Manchester and national policy and strategy.

Priority for 18/19 is to embed the Complex Safeguarding agenda across MFT.

Safeguarding workplans for all hospitals/MCS/MLCO include the child wishes and views in all safeguarding decisions.

Safeguarding Children champions are in place across all frontline areas.

Greater Manchester Mental Health - GMMH continues to improve awareness and understanding of complex safeguarding issues that are impacting on children: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Serious and Organised Crimes and Gangs, Modern Slavery, sham marriages, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Radicalisation and Extremism by providing staff with a whole range of resources.

We are committed to having arrangements in place to ensure effective training of its entire staff, which includes complex safeguarding themes within its Safeguarding Training packages.

A key focus for GGMH is to continue to promote an awareness and understanding of the safeguards in relation to Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and we recognise the important role of training in working towards the elimination of domestic abuse. Both can improve service provision to women and children experiencing domestic

abuse and impact on the prevention of abuse through conveying strong and unequivocal messages about its unacceptability.

Transitions – Practice Examples

The Christie - Teenage and Young adult cancer services, key workers continue to support during the transition from children to adult services providing continuity and consistency , empowering young people to take control of their care.

Strategic Housing - Strategic Housing work in partnership with Barnardos Leaving Care Service and Manchester Move in managing a Band 1 for social housing panel. 15 young people have been housed into social tenancies via this panel since last June. Registered Providers are aware of, and use, the Escalation Policy where they feel other agencies are not responding appropriately.

National Probation Service (NPS) - The NPS second two probation officers to Manchester Youth Justice Service (YJS), who have dedicated responsibilities in coordinating transitions of young offenders supervised by Manchester YJS to the NPS and the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC). The NPS has developed a 18-24 hub for offenders released on licences and increased the use of Intensive Community Orders for this cohort of offenders to ensure services and interventions are tailored to meet young offenders needs and designed to improve compliance and reduce re-offending. The NPS has focused on improving practitioners understanding of their responsibilities with regard to care leavers in response to recent changes to government guidelines. At a local level, a care leaver protocols are being developed to ensure that care leavers are appropriately identified when they come into contact with the Criminal Justice System or transitioning to the NPS and are offered the appropriate support as a care leaver.

PAT - Policy on management of 17 to 18 year olds is in place and the children and young people are given a choice in regards to where they want to be admitted e.g. children’s or adult ward. There is a flow chart on adult and children’s wards in regards to managing transitions. However, with Safeguarding Boards support more work needs to be done in regards to managing transitions from child to adult around CSE/Trafficking/County Lines/Modern Slavery/Prevent (Complex Safeguarding) and the organisation support this through safeguarding level 3 i.e. raise awareness of complex safeguarding.

CASE STUDY – Manchester Health Care and Commissioning (MHCC) - the Designated Team provides strategic support and advice for staff working across the health economy when management of individual cases is causing concern. One example of this is the case of a young person aged 17 who has autism, severe learning difficulties and is non-verbal. The work around this young person is multi-faceted and has required oversight at a strategic level to ensure the right engagement and services are in place. The benefit of the MHCC safeguarding team is the “think family” approach which has facilitated a whole age approach to care. The team is supporting staff to escalate concerns to ensure that the young person’s wishes and feelings are represented and that there is a safe and smooth transition to adult services.

Neglect – Practice Examples

Education - Schools play a major part in the identification of children who may be suffering from Neglect and are the main initiators of Early Help Assessments. The MSCB multi-agency audits evidence a positive contribution and highlight good practice from an Education perspective in terms of picking up on Neglect and DVA, as well as wider safeguarding concerns.

There are examples of schools providing timely and appropriate support to the child and family in the audits, as well as being noted in Child Protection Strategy meetings and conferences. Excellent partnership working and Early Help provided by schools is also highlighted in a number of Ofsted reports published over the past year eg free access to Breakfast Clubs and linking families into Housing and Benefits.

Officers from Education teams and school staff are amongst the NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 champions and have supported the delivery of multi-agency training sessions.

GMFRS - Both through Safe and Well delivery and also post- fire reassurance work, GMFRS staff have identified and reported many cases of neglect to local social services staff. All front line staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills and access to the resources required to make appropriate referrals and to ensure the immediate safety of the individual(s) concerned.

CASE STUDY - Strategic Housing - Example of a case study from Wythenshawe Community Housing Group:

Mother, 1 adult son and 1 child under 10

Neglect – Child

WCHG were notified by GMP over the Police communications radio that there was a kitchen fire in a first floor cottage flat. When GMP arrived at the property the fire had been put out by GMFRS and had been caused by burning food. The handle had fallen off the kitchen door and trapped them in the living room and unable to turn off the oven. The property was found to be in a very poor condition, there was evidence of hoarding, animal waste all over the floor and no obvious signs of a clean living space or clear beds for the family to sleep in.

Both GMFRS and GMP were concerned for the family remaining in the property in that condition and asked WCHG if we could relocate the family temporarily whilst it was cleaned but the mother did not want to leave the property. GMP took the child into custody and placed him/her in the care of another relative and told the mother that he/she would not be returned until the property had been cleaned up. The mother had been caring for an elderly relative who had just recently passed away, was working full-time whilst looking after a child and everything had got too much for her.

An 'if in doubt shout' referral was done and the Safeguarding team contacted the assigned social worker and arranged a meeting with them and the tenant. We offered to support the tenant in clearing the property, help her to get back on her feet and the tenant agreed. Our teams arranged for a contractor to clean the bathroom and for a skip to be delivered so that the family could start clearing the rubbish out of the property. Once cleared a new kitchen and bathroom was installed and repairs were made to walls and internal doors. The Social Worker also arranged for replacement furniture. We arranged for the tenant's benefits to be reviewed and a HB claim was completed. The adult son was encouraged to make a claim for Job Seekers Allowance, his confidence was boosted and he attended a number of courses. The family now have a clean and safe home and feel grateful for the support that they received.

10. Budget

The Manchester Safeguarding Adults and Childrens Board budget was combined for 17/18. The total budget during that period was: £ **707,019.74**

A full breakdown of the budget can be found at [Appendix 4](#).

11. Future Challenges and Priorities

The MSCB reviewed its objectives and priorities from March to June 2017 and for the first time developed a shared strategic plan along with the MSAB. Each of the Boards have their own vision and objectives however the overarching strategic priority to be assured that safeguarding is effective across Manchester is shared, as are the thematic priorities, key functions and the four specific priorities of engagement and involvement, complex safeguarding, transitions and neglect.

It has been agreed that because work on this shared plan and specific priorities only really started in September 2017 that these would be carried forward into the financial year April 2018 - March 2019. The details are set out in the plan on a page which can be found at [Appendix 5](#).

After careful consideration it was decided that the previous thematic priorities of mental health, learning disabilities and substance abuse, which are much wider than safeguarding, are more appropriately addressed through other arrangements for example the Health and Wellbeing Board. It remains important however for the Board to ensure that safeguarding issues in relation to these areas are appropriately considered.

The Board has a detailed business plan to which each of the subgroups contribute to ensure that work is progressed. Other groups are established as necessary for example a locality group has been established in the North to oversee the implementation of the neglect strategy. Similar groups will be established as the roll out continues in 2018/19.

This report has demonstrated the progress made thus far on the priorities, however as indicated a number of challenges still remain. These include neglect and complex safeguarding. In order to mitigate the risk around neglect, a neglect strategy and toolkit has been developed and communication and engagement across the partnership is supported by briefings, events and workshops. There is still much work to do to raise the profile of neglect and for agencies to embed this.

In order to mitigate the risk around complex safeguarding, information on new initiatives is shared via the MSB website - including key messages, new policies and seven minute briefings on new research etc. The Board also works to ensure the focus of the impact of Domestic Violence & Abuse (DV&A) on Children and Young People is enhanced and is in line with the DV&A Strategy, with emphasis on understanding and responding to underlying causes.

The number and complexity of Serious Case Reviews presents both a challenge in terms of resources required to complete these very complex pieces of work; and also in terms of ensuring the learning across such a large number of agencies is shared and embedded changes in practice are made and sustained.

Improvements still need to be made regarding attendance at strategy meetings and engagement in child protection planning.

A system wide challenge is the number of children and young people and families who are needing support and contact from a range of services thereby supporting an Early Help approach not provided by all agencies and there are many referrals received by social care that require no further action. A piece of work is planned which is looking at the 'front door', which will focus on timely interventions being provided that are focussed on the most vulnerable children and families and reducing the number of children looked after.

An area for future consideration is the changes being made to move from Safeguarding Children's Boards to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership arrangements. Whilst these do not have to be established until September 2019 at the latest, joint planning has started to take place to ensure that the close working between the two current Boards remains whilst ensuring that the future arrangements are fit for purpose. Working Together July 2018 is very clear that a child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. It seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding is achieved by every individual and agency playing their full part.



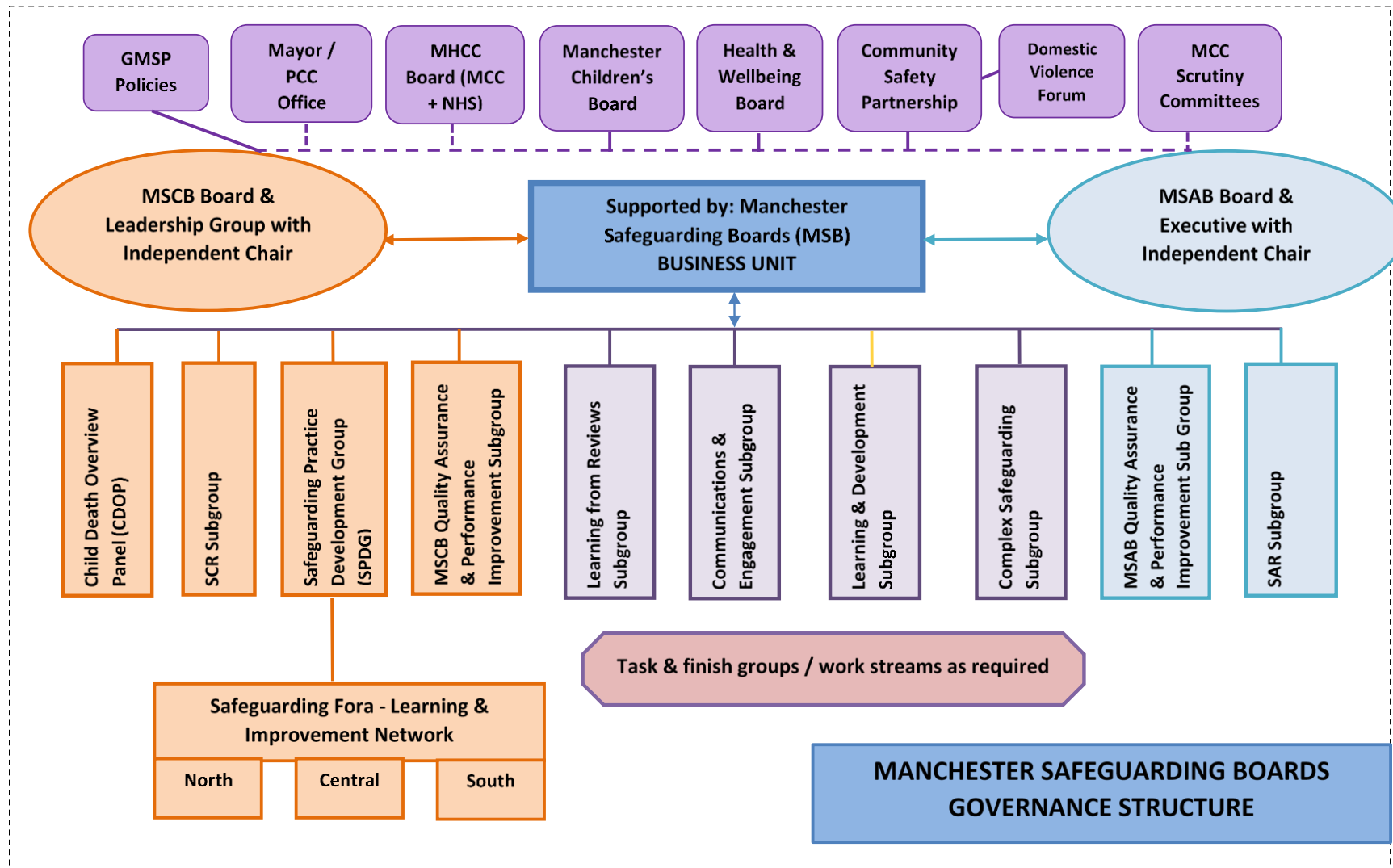
12. Glossary

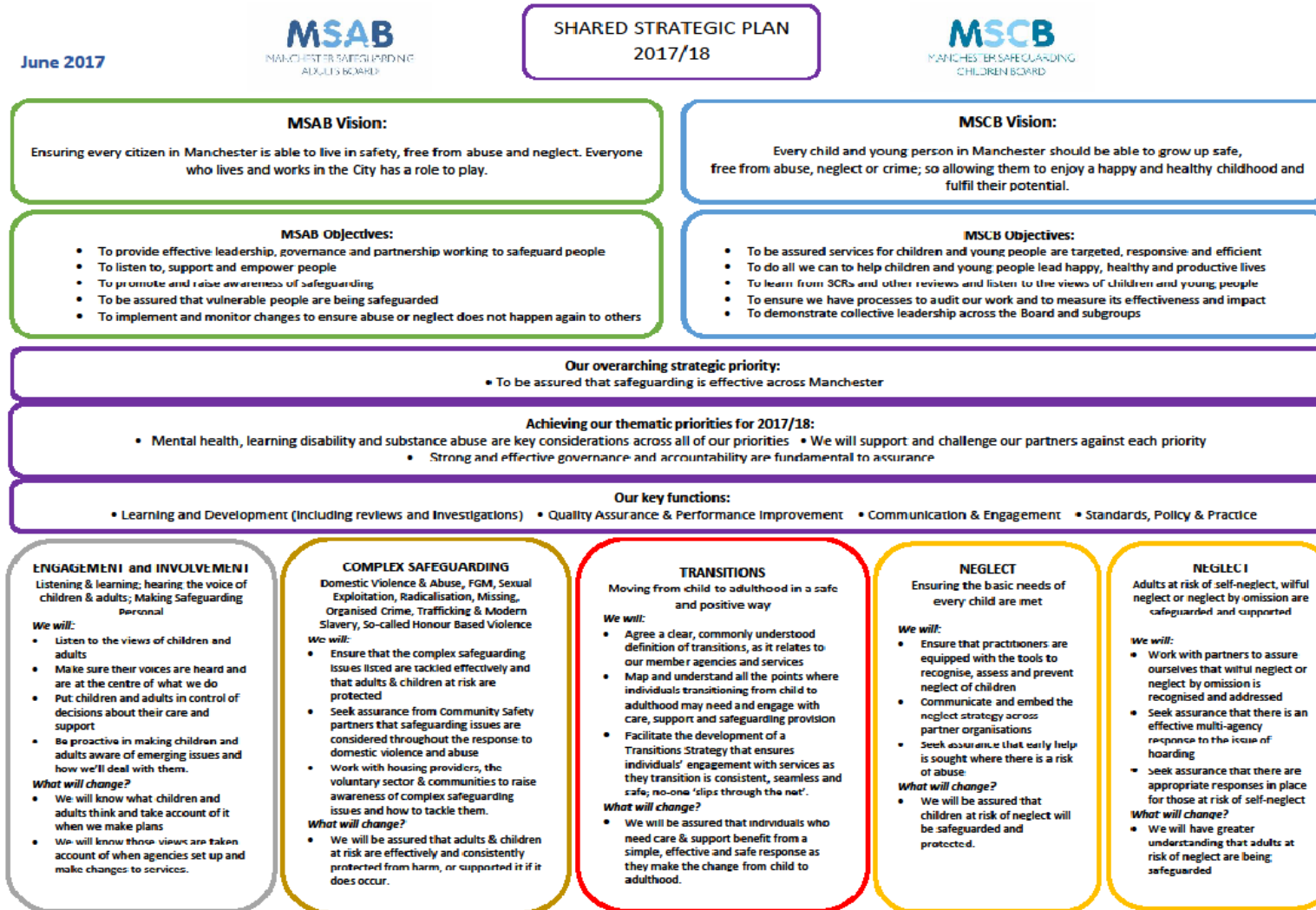
GLOSSARY			
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	DfE	Department for Education
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	DoH	Department of Health
CCGs	Clinical Commissioning Groups	EHA	Early Help Assessment
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel	FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
CMFT	Central Manchester Foundation Trust	GMFRS	GM Fire and Rescue Service
CQC	Care Quality Commission	GMP	Greater Manchester Police
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company	GP	General Practitioner
CSC	Children's Social Care	HWBB	Health & Wellbeing Board
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
CSP	Community Safety Partnership	IRIS	Identification and Referral to Improve Safety
LAC	Looked After Children	MFH	Missing From Home
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer	MSAB	Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board	MSCB	Manchester Safeguarding Children Board
MACC	Manchester Alliance Community Care	PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	SCR	Serious Case Review
MCC	Manchester City Council		

13. Appendices

Appendix 1

MSCB MEMBERSHIP LIST 2017/18 AS AT MARCH 2018	
Barnardos	Manchester City Council Education
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)	Manchester City Council Population Health and Wellbeing Team
Career Connect	Manchester Communications Academy (MCA)
Central Manchester Foundation Trust (CMFT) (Joined with University Hospital of South Manchester (UHSM) to become Manchester Foundation Trust (MFT) on 01/10/17.)	Manchester Grammar School
Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	National Probation Service (NPS)
Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)	NHS England
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS)	North West Ambulance Service (NWAS)
Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (GMMH)	Pennine Acute NHS Trust (PAHT)
Greater Manchester Police (GMP)	The Christie NHS Foundation Trust
Manchester Alliance for Community Care (MACC)	University Hospital of South Manchester (UHSM) (Joined with Central Manchester Foundation Trust (CMFT) to become Manchester Foundation Trust (MFT) on 01/10/17.)
Manchester City Council Childrens Services (MCC)	Youth Justice





Manchester Safeguarding Boards For the 12 Months ending 31.03.2018			
Cost Elements	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Var.YTD
PAY Costs			
Total Pay Costs	441,470.00	442,189.63	719.63
Non-Pay			
* Premises	7,000.00	1,659.20	-5,340.80
* Transport	2,300.00	2,615.94	315.94
* Supplies & Services	148,849.74	179,310.47	30,460.73
* Third Party Payments	101,000.00	0.00	-101,000.00
* Internal Charges	6,400.00	13,613.92	7,213.92
* Onwards Internal Trading	0.00	1,138.58	1,138.58
Non-Pay Expenditure Childrens	265,549.74	198,338.11	-67,211.63
TOTAL EXPENDITURE Board	707,019.74	640,527.74	-66,492.00
INCOME			
Miscellaneous Income	0.00	-50.00	-50.00
MCC Education	-71,000.00	-71,000.00	0.00
MCC Housing	-9,450.00	-9,450.00	0.00
MCC Other	94,500.00	0.00	-94,500.00
Total Contribution from MCC	-174,950.00	-80,450.00	94,500.00
National Probaton Service		-4,381.86	-4,381.86
NHS	-52,400.00	-52,400.00	0.00
Cafcass	-550.00	0.00	550.00
GMCA(GM Police)	-38,800.00	-64,282.00	-25,482.00
External Income	-91,750.00	-121,063.86	-29,313.86
Interest	0.00	96.31	96.31
Contribution from MCC General Fund	-440,319.74	-440,319.74	0.00
Total Revenue Income	-707,019.74	-641,787.29	65,232.45
Over/Underspend	0.00	-1,259.55	-1,259.55



SHARED STRATEGIC PLAN
2018/19



April 2018

MSAB Vision:

Ensuring every citizen in Manchester is able to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Everyone who lives and works in the City has a role to play.

MSCB Vision:

Every Child in Manchester is Safe, Happy, Healthy and Successful. To achieve this we will: Be child-centred, listen to and respond to children and young people, focus on strengths and resilience and take early action.

MSAB Objectives:

- To provide effective leadership, governance and partnership working to safeguard people
- To listen to, support and empower people
- To promote and raise awareness of safeguarding
- To be assured that adults at risk are being safeguarded
- To implement and monitor changes to ensure abuse or neglect does not happen again to others

MSCB Objectives:

- To be assured services for children and young people are targeted, responsive and efficient
- To do all we can to help children and young people lead happy, healthy and productive lives
- To learn from SCRs and other reviews and listen to the views of children and young people
- To ensure we have processes to audit our work and to measure its effectiveness and impact
- To demonstrate collective leadership across the Board and subgroups

Our overarching strategic priority:

- To be assured that safeguarding is effective across Manchester

Achieving our priorities for 2018/19:

- Engagement and Involvement, Complex Safeguarding, Transitions and Neglect are our key priorities
- We will support and challenge our partners against each priority
- Strong and effective governance and accountability are fundamental to assurance

Our key functions:

- Learning and Development (including reviews and investigations)
- Quality Assurance & Performance Improvement
- Communication & Engagement
- Standards, Policy & Practice

ENGAGEMENT and INVOLVEMENT

Listening & learning; hearing the voice of children & adults; Making Safeguarding Personal

We will:

- Ensure the views of children and adults are listened to
- Ensure their voices are heard and are at the centre of the decisions we make
- Ensure children and adults are in control of decisions about their care and support
- Be proactive in making children and adults aware of emerging issues and how we'll deal with them.

What will change?

- We will take the views of children and adults into account when the Board makes decisions.
- We will see greater involvement of children and adults in decisions about their future.

COMPLEX SAFEGUARDING

Domestic Violence & Abuse, FGM, Sexual Exploitation, Radicalisation, Missing, Organised Crime, Trafficking & Modern Slavery, So-called Honour Based Violence

We will:

- Ensure that the complex safeguarding issues listed are tackled effectively and that adults & children at risk are protected
- Seek assurance from Community Safety partners that safeguarding issues are considered throughout the response to domestic violence and abuse
- Work with housing providers, the voluntary sector & communities to raise awareness of complex safeguarding issues and how to tackle them.

What will change?

- We will be assured that adults & children at risk are effectively and consistently protected from harm, or supported if it does occur.

TRANSITIONS

Moving from child to adulthood in a safe and positive way

We will:

- Ensure partners are aware of the agreed transitions definition, as it relates to our member agencies and services.
- Ensure support is provided at all the points where individuals transitioning from child to adulthood may need care and support and provide any safeguarding requirements.

What will change?

- We will be assured that individuals who need care & support benefit from a simple, effective and safe response as they make the change from child to adulthood.

CHILD NEGLECT

Ensuring the basic needs of every child are met

We will:

- Ensure that practitioners are equipped with the tools to recognise, assess and prevent neglect of children
- Communicate and embed the neglect strategy across partner organisations
- Seek assurance that early help is sought where there is a risk of abuse

What will change?

- We will be assured that children at risk of neglect will be safeguarded and protected.

ADULT NEGLECT

Adults at risk of self-neglect, wilful neglect or neglect by omission are safeguarded and supported

We will:

- Work with partners to assure ourselves that wilful neglect or neglect by omission is recognised and addressed
- Seek assurance that there is an effective multi-agency response to the issue of hoarding
- Seek assurance that there are appropriate responses in place for those at risk of self-neglect

What will change?

- We will be assured that adults at risk of neglect are being safeguarded.

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 9 October 2018

Subject: Leaving Care Service

Report of: Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

Summary

This report is to update members on the progress of activity to reform the delivery of Leaving Care Services for Manchester's formerly looked after children.

Recommendations

Scrutiny committee members are asked to:

1. Note the successful decommissioning and transfer of the Manchester's Leaving Care Service to Manchester City Council.
2. Comment on the developments planned to improve the experiences and outcomes of 'our' children and seek a progress and impact report in the next municipal year.

Wards Affected: All

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective Children's Social Care Services are critical to ensuring our most vulnerable citizens are afforded opportunities and supported to connect and contribute to the city's sustainability and growth.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Ensuring the most vulnerable in our society are supported and afforded the opportunity to access and achieve in the City; empowered and supported by the delivery of a strong and cohesive social care/corporate parenting system
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by	Improving social care services helps build the resilience children and families need to achieve

unlocking the potential of our communities	their potential and be integrated into their communities
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for the children and families across the City, helps build and develop whole communities and increases the livability of the City
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Successful services support successful families who are able to deliver continuing growth in the City

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

None

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The previous report presented to Scrutiny Committee members in respect of Manchester's Leaving Care Service outlined the rationale to inform a decision that would lead the service from a commissioned service to a wholly owned trading company. The case for change was clear, an improved offer and excellent service for 'our' young people in Manchester that would continually improve the experiences of our young people in care and ensure that all our young people leave care with a positive sense of self image and have stability. We have engaged with local businesses, stakeholders and partners to help us co-parent our care leavers by providing opportunities and support as outlined in section 2.4.
- 1.2 Following the Executive decision on 30th May 2018 and the subsequent serving of the 'notice to terminate' the existing provider contract, the due diligence exercise was able to progress into detailed discussion. Throughout that process a number issues were highlighted.
- 1.3 Our young people co-presented at a care leavers conference in June 2018 to highlight what life is like for them and what would make a better service. The young people's asks and aspirations of creating a "corporate parenting family" is starting to show positive responses and engagement from partners. The decision to bring the service back "in house" prior to establishing a Wholly owned trading company has not resulted in any change in engagement or services offered to our young people and our ambition remains for our young people to make successful transitions into independent living and have the stability and security they need to progress and develop in all aspects of their lives. From 1st October 2018, Manchester City Council, will bring the service back in house.

2.0 Progress to Date

- 2.1 It is important to note, our underpinning primary objective to the proposed change was to accelerate positive outcomes for our young people, and the staged transformation of services to be 'Safe', to 'effective' and efficient, in line with the considerations. Further, a reason for the primary option being to establish the WOTC was the drive for greater scale and integration of services across Greater Manchester. However, circumstances on this work have also change since the initial option appraisal was carried out. The pace of the GM work has slowed and the local authorities who were interested to be part of the service have not committed to this yet and are unlikely to do so in the short to medium term. Therefore the immediate need to have a trading vehicle for this reason has diminished. Concurrently the opportunity to achieve the economies of scale in the delivery of back office infrastructure to the WOTC are not envisioned as being realisable in the short to medium term have necessitated revisiting the WOTC as the best value and 'safest' option at present.
- 2.2 Through bringing the service in house we will be able to focus on: moving to the provision of a excellent service; implementing a robust governance model

that involves our young people; and workforce development plans to provide a highly skilled and motivated workforce. This will then provide a strong platform for the future developments planned, including the establishment of the WOTC. Henceforth the transformation plan for the service over the coming months will follow a three phased approach, that being to first secure a safe service, with later stages to increase its effectiveness and subsequently refine its operations and efficiency:

1. 'Safe' transfer
2. Staff development/culture and expectations
3. Performance and impact

2.3 Subsequent to the revised decision made considerable activity has taken place to progress the safe transfer of the service to be led and managed by the City Council. The project work streams are as follows:

2.4 ***Offers and Consultation with our young people*** has continued throughout the process. An exclusive email account has been set up for our young people, which they can email and ask questions direct. All our young people have been advised of The Leaving Care service being delivered by Manchester city council, and we had the following comments:

“ I think it's a really good idea as our PA's will be part of Manchester” “ will everything stay the same , like our change group?” will there still be a board with a care leaver sitting on it”

2.5 Our young people views were that it was important to them to receive a consistent service post transfer. The main questions they asked was around entitlements and the change group continuing. The care leavers conference (June 2018) has led to a local businesses offer sports clothing from our young people. Barclays Bank are co-designing with Manchester City council a bespoke budgeting skills for our young people. In addition to mentoring and work/skills opportunities being developed via North West Business Leaders' Forum, Barclays are also providing an exciting opportunity by supporting young care leavers in the city. This is by use 'Connect With Work' program to put a bespoke 6 week course together for young care leavers in Manchester, with a guaranteed job at the end of it. Barclays will achieve this by working with businesses to understand their needs, agree what job opportunities we could then building this into the training that we provide. we were advised that this scheme has been running previously and Barclays have achieved excellent retention rates with the people that we have placed (most of whom are NEETs or with significant barriers to employment). Each course could have 20/25 young people on it.

2.6 We have had offers from other businesses such a wide range of companies that work on repairs and maintenance on behalf of clients, such as Housing Associations and Councils. This includes a variety of trades and skills such as plumbers, electricians, joiners, gas engineers etc. In addition, the administration side of things, such as planners, admin staff, HR, finance that would like to work with our care leavers on a offer. It is envisaged that our

young people will be given the opportunity to be involved in these meetings to enable active participation. The Youth Strategy and Engagement team will support the current members of the Change Group to develop as a reference group to influence the next phase of young care leavers participation in decision making across the City. The role of Vice Chair for the new Manchester Care Leavers Executive Board has also been ring fenced for a suitable care leaver to take up. This role and a standing item 'voice and experiences of our young people' on the agenda of the board will create systemic representation and contribution from our young people at the heart of key decision making; thus ensuring this is a service shaped and influenced by and for them. It is expected that the vice chair will work closely with the participation and engagement team to engage our care leavers both within and outside the City.

- 2.7 ***HR & Transactional People Services*** - This has included the TUPE transfer of staff into the City Council through a period of consultation, the establishment of payroll and pensions arrangements for the incoming staff group and the creation of the reporting structure and systems. Staff consultation has taken place. It has been agreed that the consultation period will be extended by two weeks after the date of transfer to allow further discussions over the transition to the extended 8.00am to 8.00pm operating model. The service will be suitably staffed to ensure consistency of service for our young people. In addition the new structure has 2 specialist social workers (child welfare and youth justice). We have recruited a senior Social worker and in the process of recruiting the youth justice social work post.
- 2.8 ***Finance*** - This has included both establishing the budget structure for the service and developing mechanisms to ensure the smooth transition of payments to young people. The associated budget for the Leaving Care service has been established. The annual cost of the commission was £1.4m. The cost of the new service is estimated to be £1.6m, the additional cost is fully funded and is as a result of expertise from existing resources being aligned to the new service. In the build up to the new arrangements associated with MCC's intervention leading to improvements in management oversight and grip of associated spend such as accommodation and support arrangements, has led to a reduction in overall spend and achievement of £200k budget saving. There are 46 fte posts in the budgeted structure, 32 fte are personal assistants, currently there are 28 fte in post, vacancies will be covered through agency.
- 2.9 ***Communications, Young People's Engagement & Participation*** - A priority for the second phase of transformation - Service Improvement - will embrace the Our Manchester principles and be built on strong consultation and engagement with our young people about what matters to them and will make a difference. An Engagement & Participation Lead Officer has been identified to re-define our approach and work with young people to design the forum and groups that will engage wider with our young people than the current approach and include them in the wider community of participation of manchester's young people in order to drive forward a shared vision and improvements for the service.

- 2.10 **Estates** - Corporate colleagues have supported Children's Services with the decommissioning of the current provider, who currently occupy an MCC building on a rental arrangement, and the return of the facility as a going concern to support the transition back to the Council and business continuity of the future Leaving Care Offer. In parallel we have completed a health and safety assessment and our Estates department have identified further buildings options that could be potentially used as new care leavers building. However, this will be phase two of the project and consultation with 'our' young people.
- 2.11 **ICT** - Similarly, ICT colleagues have worked to ensure a smooth transition from the external provider to the use of in-house equipment and systems. With the aim being to make the transition as smooth as possible in the interests of ensuring the best environment for the staff group. All staff will be provided MCC laptops and mobiles in readiness for transfer on 1st October 2018. ICT 'floor walkers' and Micare trainers will be available to support staff and ensure business continuity. Agreements have been drafted with Barnardo's to provide historical data as an interim measure, with a view to then migrating this data to MCC systems before the end of December 2018.
- 2.12 **Workforce Development, Policy, Practice and Procedure** - Alongside the project to move the service into MCC, the Strategic Lead for Leaving Care and Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding, have been active in preparing a comprehensive training and development programme for the staff which will begin upon transfer and induction into MCC. A social worker will be joining the service on day 1 and work with the staff on staff development by creating systems for group supervision with personal advisors and start to implement training on the new practice guidance on improving quality of pathway plans. This is also underpinned by an exciting development to create a bespoke accredited training programme for Personal Advisors that will offer a qualification on completion, and potentially be a national first for this role. This will be delivered in partnership with the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy. Staff will be provided training by the Social worker on practise standards and the Manchester policies.

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 As indicated in the report presented to Manchester City Council Executive on 30th May 2018 and within this report, it was until contract termination was served that the service was able to appraise the full extent of the service readiness, requirements and resources to successfully establish a WOTC for Manchester's Care Leavers. Those issues are now understood and the associated requirements and impact have been scoped and costed, giving rise to the decision to bring the service in house. This reflects the context of our first priority to improve outcomes for our young people, Whilst he evidence and benefits from a WOTC is ultimately the right model, the removal of the more immediate need to establish a trading vehicle has enabled us to rethink how the improvements on outcomes can best be achieved.

- 3.2 In conclusion, through the service in house we will be able to give greater focus on driving the quality of the service to deliver an excellent service to our young people, a robust governance model that involves our young people; and workforce development plans to provide a highly skilled and motivated workforce. This will then provide a strong platform for the future developments planned, including the establishment of the WOTC which is cost effective,value for money and sustainable.
- 3.3 At the time of writing the project is on track to deliver the safe transfer of the service into MCC on 1st October 2018. A verbal additional report will be provided to committee directly on the first week of operations.

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - 9 October 2018

Subject: Draft Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2017 - 2018

Report of: Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding

Summary

The purpose of this report is to introduce the draft Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2017 - 2018. The report provides an account of the activity of the Independent Reviewing Service between 1 April 2017 and the 31 March 2018.

This report evaluates practice, plans and arrangements for looked after children and the effectiveness of Independent Reviewing Officer service in ensuring the local authority as a corporate parent discharges its statutory responsibilities towards looked after children.

This report draws on evidence from the views of children and young people, carers, and professionals from the local authority and from partner agencies.

Recommendations

Members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee are asked to review and consider the content of the report.

Wards Affected: N/A

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective Children's Social Care Services are critical to ensuring the most vulnerable citizens are able to connect and support the drive towards a thriving and sustainable City
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Ensuring the most vulnerable in our society are given the opportunity to access and achieve in the City is supported by the delivery of a strong and cohesive social care system
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our	Improving social care services helps build the resilience children and families need to achieve their potential and be integrated into their

communities	communities
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for the children's and families across the City, helps build and develop whole communities and increases the livability of the City
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Successful services support successful families who are able to deliver continuing growth in the City

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2017 - 2018

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Annual Report 2017-18

Linda Evans
Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding
30th June 2018

Report to:

Children's Leadership Team
Corporate Parenting Panel
The Change Group
The Group

This report will also be published on the Manchester City Council external website.

Principal Authors:

Linda Evans, Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding
Sharon Cooper, Lead for Children's Safeguarding

Co-Authors:

Marian Flaherty, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager
Melanie Sharples, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager

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4.4.	<i>Legal Status of LAC</i>
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1. Foreword

This annual report provides an account of the activity of the Independent Reviewing Service between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.

This report evaluates practice, plans and arrangement for looked after children, now known as 'Our Children and Young People' and the effectiveness of the Independent Reviewing Officer service in ensuring the local authority as a corporate parent is discharging its statutory responsibilities towards them.

Independent Reviewing Officers have a pivotal role to play in ensuring care plans for children effectively address their needs, take into account children and young people's ascertainable views and opinions and improve outcomes for them.

This report demonstrates continuous development and improvement in the Independent Reviewing Officer service over the past year and highlights the improvements that are required if the service is to achieve its aspiration to be outstanding.

Manchester City Council and its partners continue to be committed to its promise 'Our Children' whether they are currently 'looked after' or have left care in the past year. The Independent Reviewing Officer service are clear about their role and responsibilities in relation to the delivery of the promise.

The Chair of the 'Voice and Influence sub a young person with care experience stated:

'Well done to everyone that has helped us on this improvement journey and is making sure we get things right for our children and young people and that they have happy, healthy successful lives.'

'There is good evidence that the voice of our children and young people is being heard by Independent Reviewing Officers. We are getting some really good feedback from children and young people about the use of MOMO, which was introduced by Children's Services in late 2017. Children and young people are telling us when things are not going right and also telling us when we are getting things right. However, there is still some work to do. Independent Reviewing Officers are in the right place to support Foster carers and other professionals working directly with children to use MOMO and to ensure our children and young people continue to get their voices heard.'

Macauley Parr Lead for Voice and influence Subgroup of Our children and Young People in Manchester (2017-18)

The report will be presented to the Children's Leadership team, and the Corporate Parenting Panel. An easy read version of the report will be created for the Children in Care Council 'The Group'..

Progress against recommendations and actions identified in the 2016/2017 annual report are referenced throughout this report.

Linda Evans
Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding

**Please note that data provided in this report for 2017/18 is provisional pending year end validation processes and submission to and publication by the Department for Education. Rates per 10,000 of the Child Population have been calculated using the latest available population estimates published as part of the CIN Census data. This may be slightly different than the population figure used by the Department for Education to calculate rates per 10,000 in subsequent data publications later in 2018.*

2. SERVICE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

2.1 The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer

The primary task of the Independent Reviewing Officer is to ensure that the care plan for a child cared for by the local authority fully reflects the child's needs, ensures that the child's wishes and feelings are given full and due consideration and that the actions set out in the plan are consistent with the local authority's statutory responsibilities towards the child. As corporate parents each local authority should ensure that they act for the children they look after as a responsible and conscientious parent.

The appointment by local authorities of an Independent Reviewing Officer is a statutory requirement. The Children and Young Persons Act 2008, followed by revised care planning regulations and guidance which came into force in April 2011 strengthened the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer.

The statutory duties of the IRO are to [section 25B (1) -1989 Act]:

- Monitor the performance by the local authority of their functions in relation to the child's case;
- Participate in any review of the child's case;
- Ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child concerning the case are given due consideration by the appropriate authority; and
- Perform any other function which is prescribed in regulations.

There are two clear and separate aspects to the function of an Independent Reviewing Officer:

- i. chairing the child's review; and
- ii. monitoring the child's case on an ongoing basis.

The Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook sets out the statutory roles and duties as well as the strategic and managerial responsibilities of Local Authorities in establishing an effective Independent Reviewing Officer service. [1]

The Independent Reviewing Officer service in Manchester sits within the Safeguarding and Improvement Unit. The service is managed independently of children's social work line management and is therefore offering an appropriate level of independence that enables the service to effectively challenge plans, arrangements and the practice of the local authority. The strategic lead Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding for the service reports directly to the Strategic Director of Children's Services. Independent Reviewing Officers and their managers have no involvement in preparing a child's care plan, management of the case, operational decision making and/or allocation of resources to 'Our Children'.

Whilst undertaking their statutory duties the Safeguarding and Improvement Unit are also fully committed to adhering to and embedding the 'Our Manchester' principles.

- We work together

- We're proud and passionate about Manchester
- We take time to listen
- We 'own it' and were not afraid to try new things.

Manchester Children's Services is committed to achieving a fully effective Independent Reviewing Officer service that is outstanding. We continue to be successful in creating a culture and climate within the local authority that values the Independent Reviewing Officer service and professionals across Children's Services and our partner agencies encourage and expect Independent Reviewing Officers to offer robust scrutiny, be child-centred and to offer challenge as and when required.

Independent Reviewing Officers are respected and equipped with the right knowledge and skills that enable them to effectively scrutinise practice, plans and arrangements for 'Our Children and Young People'. They continue to have open access to expert advice, including the provision of independent legal advice. The dispute resolution protocol is embedded and works effectively, from informal conversations to the escalation of cases to senior management and CAFCASS if necessary. Most importantly there is clear evidence of Independent Reviewing Officers practicing in a child-centred way and of their footprint on the child's case file.

The Independent Reviewing Officer must be the visible embodiment of our commitment to meet our legal obligations to this special group of children. The health and effectiveness of the IRO service is a direct reflection of whether we are meeting that commitment, or whether we are failing.

***Mr Justice Peter Jackson
Family Division Liaison Judge for the Northern Circuit
NCB The role of IROs in England final Report 2014***

2.2 Manchester's Vision and Plan for Children

Our commitment to continuously develop and improve the Independent Reviewing Officer service is underpinned by high aspirations for Manchester's children, young people and families as set out in the Children and Young People Plan 2016 - 2019, 'Our Manchester, Our Children 2016 - 2019' which is underpinned by key behaviour and principles; none more than delivering services that are fiercely child-centred and by having high aspirations for children, young people and families in Manchester.

Manchester Children and Young People Plan 2016 - 2019, 'Our Manchester, Our Children', sets out the following vision for children and young people in the City:

- Safe** *All children and young people feel safe; their welfare promoted and safeguarded from within their homes, schools and communities.*
- Happy** *All children and young people grow up happy - having fun, having opportunities to take part in leisure and culture activities, and having good social, emotional, and mental health.*
- Healthy** *All children and young people enjoy good physical and mental health that enables them to lead healthy, active lives, and to have the resilience to overcome emotional and behavioural challenges.*
- Successful** *All children and young people have the opportunity to thrive and succeed in their education, emotional and personal lives.*

The Children and Young People Plan sets out 21 priorities and 4 'passions' which Manchester City Council and its partners have agreed to relentlessly focus on:

- Children and young people living in stable, safe and loving homes.
- Safely reducing the number of children and young people who are in care.
- Children and young people having the best start in the first years of life.
- Children and young people fulfilling their potential.

The Our Manchester strategy 2025 sets out a shared ambition for the city for the next 10 years. The Our Manchester approach puts people at the centre, recognising that people are more important than processes, procedures or organisational boundaries and connecting with people in a different way that starts from a focus on people's strengths and asks not "what's the matter with you" but instead "what matters to you". The approach is grounded in four underpinning principles:

- Better lives - it's about people.
- Listening - we listen, learn and respond.
- Recognising strengths of individuals and communities - we start from strengths.
- Working together- we build relationships and create conversations.

2.3 Profile of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service in Manchester

There was a stable management team during 2017/2018 that continued to provide vision and leadership for the continuous development and improvement of the Independent Reviewing Officer service. The Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding has strategic responsibility for the Independent Reviewing Officer Service and has been in post since October 2015; they are supported by a Service Lead and two Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Managers.

In the reporting period Manchester had 18 full time Independent Reviewing Officers who are managed by two Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Managers. The Independent Reviewing Officers in Manchester have dedicated roles to review children's care plans. They do not undertake a dual role in child protection conferencing.

The Independent Reviewing Officer team remained relatively stable during 2017/2018. Consistency and continuity of service has been offered to our children and young people. One manager and two Independent Reviewing Officers left the service during the year. Another Independent Reviewing Officer was successfully promoted to the vacant manager post. One post was moved from the Independent Reviewing Officer Team to support the Child Protection Conference Chairs and the Designated Officer Service. This decision was taken following the reduction in the number of looked after children and young people. Our Children and young people in the first 6 months of the year. A small number of agency staff have been engaged to cover during periods of recruitment or staff sickness. Reducing the change in Independent Reviewing Officers for our children and young people by retaining a skilled and stable workforce continues to be a priority.

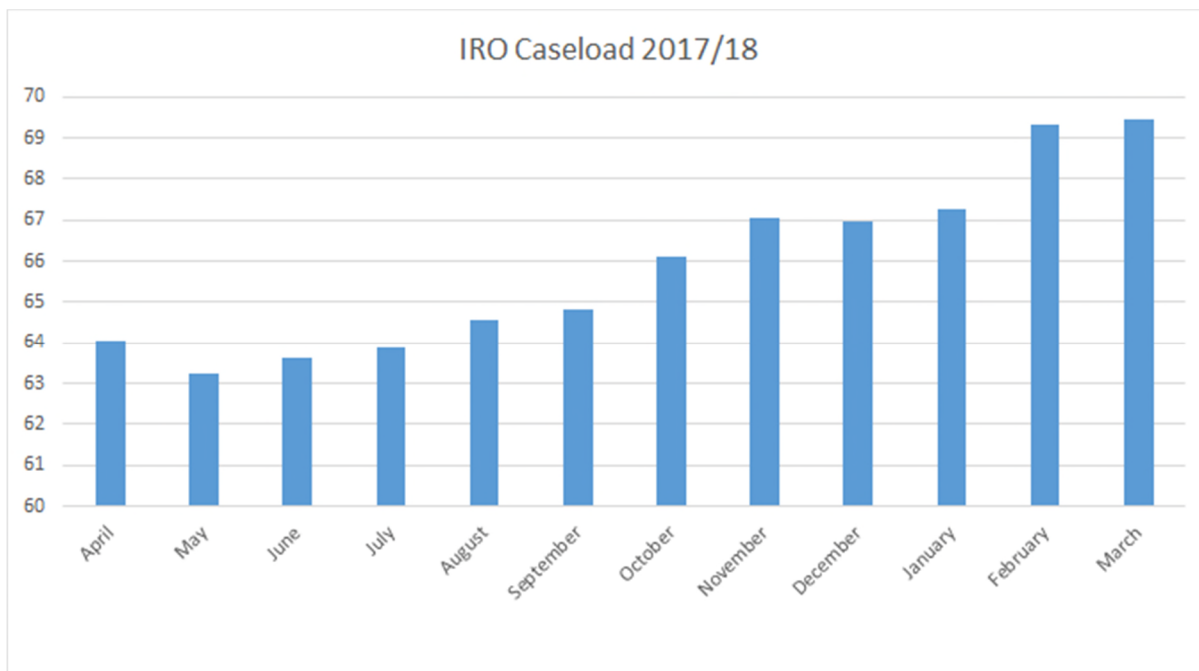
Due to the increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) two Independent Reviewing Officers now offer a specialist service to this specific group of children.

It is also good to note that all of the Independent Reviewing Officer posts were permanently filled, which will increase stability moving forward and is also an indication that the Safeguarding and Improvement Unit is held in high regard by colleagues within the authority and by experienced professionals who are now applying to come and work in Manchester.

The Independent Reviewing Officer team has a good balance of experienced Independent Reviewing Officers and those newer to the role. The profile of the team is diverse being balanced with male and female workers of varying ages and from different ethnic backgrounds. This reflects the diversity of our children and young people in Manchester.

2.4 Independent Reviewing Officer Capacity

Service resourcing throughout the year has ensured there is an adequate number of Independent Reviewing Officers in post enabling the service to maintain caseloads within the number of 50 - 70 children recommended in the Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook. The average caseload in 2016/17 was 67, this reduced to 66 in 2017/18.



Manchester is committed to caseload levels remaining under 70 per Independent Reviewing Officer to offer them the time and space to carry out their role fully. This is critical when considering historical concerns (Ofsted Inspection Report 2014) that Independent Reviewing Officers did not have sufficient oversight or challenge appropriately when the local authority practice, plans and arrangements for looked after children were poor and not in children's best interests.

In October 2017, Ofsted undertook a re-inspection of services for 'Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children looked after and Care Leavers'. The Report was published on the 21st December 2017.

"Services for children in Manchester are no longer inadequate. They now require improvement to be good". (Ofsted Inspection Report 2017, page 2)

"The Independent reviewing service is strong. IROs reduced caseloads now enable them to work effectively across the full range of their responsibilities. Their influence is evident throughout all stages of case planning, including during care proceedings. The right people are actively involved in timely and robust statutory review meetings. Between reviews, IROs work hard to get to know children, who participate well in the planning for their futures". (Ofsted Inspection Report 2017, page 19).

The IROs and managers appreciated this positive feedback from Ofsted and it is testament to the hard work and dedication of the Independent Reviewing Officers and managers over the last 3 years. The momentum to improve further and deliver an outstanding service is very strong.

2.5 Supervision, Observation and Appraisal

2.5.1 Supervision

Independent Reviewing Officers receive monthly supervision and have access to informal supervision as and when needed. Managers remain committed to ensuring the level of supervision, oversight and support to Independent Reviewing Officers is of the highest standard.

Supervision is offered to Independent Reviewing Officers on a monthly basis. In 2017/2018, the monthly average was 79.6%. This reflects a small drop in performance when compared to last year's figure of 82% mainly due to a manager leaving and a period of sickness.

Independent Reviewing Officer managers are now using supervision pro formas which reflect 'Signs of Safety', to ensure the framework continues to be embedded across the service.

2.5.2 Appraisal - About You

In 2017/2018 15 of the 18 (83.3%) Independent Reviewing Officers had an annual appraisal which considered individual strengths, areas for development and learning needs. This reflects a drop in performance from last year where 17 of the 18 (94.4%) staff had an appraisal mainly due to a manager leaving and a period of sickness. The new Corporate 'About You' proforma was used.

2.5.3 Observation

18 out of 20 staff members were observed chairing our children and young peoples reviews meetings within the period. This data was not provided in last year's report. The emerging themes are summarised below.

What is working well?

- There is evidence of Independent Reviewing Officers visiting children before their meetings, discussing the venue, agenda and attendees. One young person was observed co-chairing her meeting.
- There is good evidence of use of 'Signs of Safety' in the meetings, promoting the use of simple language and less jargon.
- There was some robust scrutiny of the quality of assessments and plans for children.
- There was evidence of challenge in respect of contact arrangements, missing Health Assessments, Personal Education Plans and Social Work Reports.
- There was strong evidence of good Independent Reviewing Officers relationships with children, families and involved professionals.
- There was evidence of Independent Reviewing Officers ensuring there are contingency plans for young people.

What are we worried about?

- Independent Reviewing Officers need to ensure their visits to children are recorded in a timely way. They need to evidence their oversight and preparation for the meeting.
- In some cases, parents were not invited to the meeting and the reason for this was not explored by the Independent Reviewing Officer.
- The 'Mind of My Own' App was not always promoted routinely via the Independent Reviewing Officer visits and 'Our Children' meetings.
- Recommendations were not always SMART.

What needs to happen?

- The Service needs to address the worries highlighted in the themes above in the next 12 months.
- The Service needs to ensure that themed meetings are promoted and reflect the child's interests.
- The Independent Reviewing Officers need to continue to engage our children and young people in their meetings as their input is critical. It is clear that meetings where children and young people have not been involved or engaged are less child focussed and this is something we need to work on going forward.

The outcomes of observations have been discussed with individual Independent Reviewing Officers in supervision and themes will be shared with the team with the aim of improving practice.

Manager will be required to observe each Independent Reviewing Officer on no less than two occasions during 2018/2019 in accordance with the Quality Assurance Learning and Improvement Framework.

2.6 Independent Reviewing Officer Learning and Development

A training needs analysis informed by Independent Reviewing Officer self-evaluation, annual appraisals, statutory and local requirements, the Local Government Association Peer Review and OFSTED recommendations.

The training needs analysis considered 28 areas of competency. For example:

- Planning, prioritising and organising tasks and activities, time management, self and team, setting goals using SMART objectives.
- Communication skills for colleagues and service users, questioning and active listening, building trust, empathy and mutual understanding. Managing relationships, interpersonal, peers, upwards, obtaining approval for projects, changes etc.
- Planning and chairing meetings, effective follow-up.
- Innovation, vision, creativity, taking initiative, problem-solving and decision-making.
- Quality awareness and managing, according to quality standards and procedures.

- Keeping up to date on new legal requirements and new legislation.
- Understanding of Signs of Safety.
- Understanding of Strengths Based Conversations.
- Voice of the child.

On 18th May 2017, Manchester hosted the North West Independent Reviewing Officer Conference. Independent Reviewing Officers from all over the North West and representatives from CAFCASS attended. The speakers included the Director of Research in Practice, Judge Newton and young people themselves. There were also workshops led by Adoption Counts (Regional Adoption Agency), Coram Voice (Children's Rights Service) and our young people.

Service development days have taken place held in May 2017, September 2017 and January 2018. These days have enabled staff members from across the service to contribute to key service developments. Guest speakers have included legal services, CAFCASS, Prevent Officers (WRAP training) and the Chair of the Voice and Influence group delivered autism training. Independent Reviewing Officers have contributed to and engaged well in development days that have focussed on discussing and agreeing service development plans for 2018-19.

During 2017/2018 three of our experienced Independent Reviewing Officers undertook and passed an accredited Advanced Practice for Independent Reviewing Officers course delivered by Edgehill University. We now have 5 Independent Reviewing Officers who have successfully completed the course. The accredited course awards 20 credits at Masters Level.

The course module learning is as follows:

- Critically analyse the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer with reference to current legislative, policy and guidance frameworks for looked after children in England.
- Critically analyse effective approaches to risk assessment and management.
- Critically analyse effective approaches to planning, delivering and evaluation of care and support for looked after children.
- Critically reflect on and evaluate learner's practice in Independent Reviewing Officers role for looked after children to identify strengths and areas and strategies for effective professional development.

A further two members of staff are currently undertaking the course and are due to complete in July 2018. Independent Reviewing Officers have reported that this course has offered them a positive learning and development opportunity and improved their confidence in practice.

In 2018/19 three members of staff from across the service will take part in Phase 1 of the National Assessment and Accreditation system (NAAS).

Signs of Safety, Practice Leads continue to be offered regular development sessions focussed on embedding the model into practice.

2.7 *Independent Legal Advice*

Independent Reviewing Officers have had consistent access to good quality independent legal advice via Wigan Children's Services, as part of a reciprocal arrangement Manchester has agreed with Wigan.

The provision of independent legal advice has helped inform Independent Reviewing Officer thinking and decision making. In 2017/2018 Independent Reviewing Officers contacted Wigan on 20 occasions. The reason for seeking independent legal advice included:

- Issues related to children remanded to custody.
- How to assist a child to make a complaint about his solicitor.
- The use of Section 20 of the 1989 Children Act.
- Placement with Parents Regulations.
- Interim Care Orders.
- Immigration issues.
- Overseas adoption.

3. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE "FRONT AND CENTRE"

Manchester Children's Services is committed to placing children and young people front and centre to everything that we do. The Children's Board provides overall leadership for delivering the vision for children, young people and their families; which is **'Our Manchester - building a safe, happy, healthy and successful future for children and young people'**.

A Voice of Children and Young People Framework is an integral part of our Quality Assurance Framework. It sets our expectation that clear and immediately accessible information about the child or young person, their views and ascertainable wishes and feelings are available. Its purpose is to:

- Outline expectations in relation to how we will engage with children and young people to elicit their views and ascertainable wishes and feelings.
- Ensure clearly defined roles and responsibilities and strong lines of accountability.
- To ensure the views of children and young people influence the care and services they receive and service development.
- Bring about improved outcomes for children, young people and their families by improving professional practice and the quality of service delivery.

The Independent Reviewing Officer role is central to building an outstanding Children's Services in which our children and young people have the best care experience and life opportunities.

Independent Reviewing Officers have an important role to play in championing and ensuring Manchester City Council and its partners are fulfilling the Promise that it made to our children and young people. (See Appendix 1)

We are driving continuous development and improvement by:

- Placing children and young people at the centre of everything we do ensuring their rights, needs and welfare is promoted.
- Ensuring children and young people's voices are consistently heard and influence, practice plans and arrangements for them, service development and improvement.
- Creating the conditions in which strong positive relationships can be developed between the Independent Reviewing Officer and our children and young people.
- Exploring more creative ways in which the child or young person can participate in care planning and reviews, including the use of MOMO.
- Developing timely plans for permanence, SMART care plans and pathway plans that are clear, accessible and understood by our children and all caring for them.
- Having plans that are robustly reviewed both at review meetings and the period between them, to ensure they are delivering the outcomes in a timely manner, adapted and changed when needed.
- Respecting our children and young people, ensuring they are shown the priority they deserve and have a right to quality reports and plans that identify both the needs and outcomes along with their wishes and feelings.
- Seeking assurance that our children and young people are receiving the best of care and that their right to regular health and dental checks, personal education plans and a passport is met.
- Offering a service that will robustly challenge any areas of poor practice exhausting all stages of the Dispute Resolution and powers to have the child's needs met promptly.

3.1 *The voice of 'Our Children'*

The Independent Reviewing Officer service is committed to listening to the voice of our children and young people and enabling them to influence and shape practice and service development. During 2017/2018 positive steps continued to be made and practice embedded to ensure we continue to have a service which listens effectively to the voice of children and young people and responds to the issues raised. We recognise that continuous improvement is required and that we will need to revisit some issues to ensure changes in our practice become part of our everyday work.

The following outlines the different ways Independent Reviewing Officers hear about the views of children and young people and understand what is important to them.

- Independent Reviewing Officer visits and contact with young people prior to reviews.
- Engagement in their reviews.
- Voice and Influence sub group.
- Children in Care Council 'The Group'.
- Children's Rights - advocacy and independent Visitors.
- Complaints.
- Social Work reports.

- Surveys.
- Corporate Parenting Panel representative.
- MOMO (Mind of My Own).

3.2 Corporate Parenting Panel

The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel is to ensure the Council with its partners effectively discharges its responsibilities as Corporate Parents to all children and young people looked after and care leavers. Put simply, the term 'Corporate Parent' means the collective responsibility of the council, elected members, employees, and partner agencies, for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by the council.

As a Corporate Parent to all children and young people looked after and care leavers the Council and its partners must act as a responsible and good parent would act.

Every good parent:

- Ensures their children are kept safe and have a secure and stable environment in which to grow and thrive.
- Supports their children to remain healthy and promotes their emotional well-being and resilience.
- Protects their children from harm and ensures they know how to keep themselves safe and are supported to cope with the dangers and challenges life presents.
- Hold high aspirations for their children's future and wants the bests for their children and encourages and supports them to attend education regularly and reach their potential.
- Nurtures their children and prepares and supports their transition to adult life promoting their economic prospects and preparing them to become responsible citizens.
- Recognises, celebrate and shares in their achievements and celebrates them.
- Listens to their children views and ensures they are taken into account.
- Understand children and young people make mistakes and offers guidance and support.

The corporate parenting panel is made up of representatives of the Council, its partner agencies (including Coram Voice) and members of the Children in Care Council (The Group) and the Care Leavers Council (The Change Group) and is influencing development and improvement in services.

The Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding is the strategic lead for Corporate Parenting.

As well as being members of the Corporate Parenting Panel our children and young people agree the agenda and lead the meeting on a quarterly basis. During 2017-2018 our children and young people have influenced changes in a number of key area:

- They asked for the MOMO (Mind of My Own) App and they got it.
- They helped to plan the first North West Regional Conference for Children in Care.

- Youthforia. They have attended the regional youth council events and influenced which topics go onto the National Make Your Mark Ballot
- Social Worker's Mobiles Policy. They raised the issues and now every young person has their social worker's work mobile phone number.

In March 2018 at a youth person led corporate parenting panel, they highlighted a number of issues surrounding the stigma of being in care. One of the issues related to words commonly used by professionals when talking about cared for or care experienced young people. They identified five key terms; Contact, Placement, LAC, Care Leavers and Hard to Reach. Young people and corporate parents were asked to consider alternative words that could be used. The top five words voted for were; family time instead of contact, home instead of placement, our children and young people instead of Looked After Children, LAC or Care Leavers and Unsuitably supported instead of hard to reach. The Director of Children's Services has asked staff across children and education services and partner agencies to use these alternative words in their day to day work. The young people signed off the Director's letter sent out to all partner agencies informing them of the new words, and we are already seeing them being put into practice.

Through their direct influence corporate parents from across Manchester have made the following promises:

Organisation	Promise
Youth Justice Service	Set up a writers workshop on the use of 'professional jargon' in court reports. Making better use of everyday language to describe a young person's care experience.
Barnardo's	Support The Change Group to fight stigma and the challenges this causing them in their lives. Help the change group to be a real force of change. Don't label Treat young people as individuals Use the new words
Coram Voice	Hold people to account when young people are not viewed as individuals
Health	Listen to children and young people and promote their views. Specialised lac nursing team will not label care leavers and use these new words
Manchester Foster Care Association	To make sure all carers at training know the impact of young people's experience of care
Deputy Director Children's Service	Mind my language, understanding the impact of labels, using alternative words that better explain things.

Virtual Schools	Promise to use the new terms chosen by the young people at all times. When liaising with professionals refer to 'our children' and young people in order to ensure that they will understand that 'our children' are the same as all of the others they teach/support and records.
Director for Children's Services	Promote plain language across partnerships Use of 'Our Child' to describe a looked after child Ask for forgiveness when I don't and explain why
Manchester Foundation Trust	Use the words/labels that young people prefer us to use
Elected Members	To use the language young people prefer us to use
Engagement Team	To use some of the terms when in conversation with others and in written reports

A member of 'The Group' chairs the Voice and Influence Group, which is attended by key partner agencies from across Manchester.

'Our Children' have also been involved in a number of other events:

- 'Take Over' Day led by the Virtual School and the Head of Safeguarding 'Our Children' took over key roles within Manchester City Council, including Director and Head of Safeguarding.
- The Virtual School also organised the 'Our Children' Achievement Awards.
- Interviewing new staff and influenced key appointments such as Head of 'Looked After' Children and Head of Localities.
- Commissioning of the new Children's Rights Service, the National Youth Advocacy Service.
- The Bright Spots Survey last year resulted in "We will Statements" which were disseminated across Children's Services.

3.3 MOMO (Mind of My Own)

In November 2017 Manchester Children's Services launched Mind Of My Own. This is a mobile app which allows children and young people to communicate with their Social Worker and Independent Reviewing Officer online. They can express any worries, achievements, give feedback on meetings among other options. The launch has been a great success with Manchester having been nominated for an award at the MOMO Annual Conference for the 'Swiftest Implementation'. There are currently 362 staff and 151 children have signed up to MOMO. 134 documents have been sent by children and young people to their Social Worker or IRO. 126 documents have been created by workers alongside children and young people to capture their views. The documents are uploaded on Micare. In 2017 -18, 72 forms were completed using the app for 'Our Children' reviews.

Our Children have been key in the promotion of the MOMO App at staff engagement events, delivering information to over 200 people in total, and will continue to be involved in the embedding the sign up and use of the App across Children's Services.

Through the use of MOMO we know:

- Respondents are from across a wide age range.
- The majority of respondents, 53 were in 'our' care, 13 lived at home, 3 were Care Leavers and the remaining did not respond.
- 148 felt excited, happy, enthusiastic, calm, hopeful, fine, cool and okay as they prepared for their review.
- 43 felt unhappy, confused, anxious, angry, unsure, ignored, nervous, stressed, annoyed and not bothered.
- 196 told us they were happy where they live, it was 'okay', 'it suits me', were settled, supported they 'loved it, liked it', were fine and safe. It was 'cool' or 'super'. 1 said they were 'staying put'. 13 said they were unhappy, felt unsafe, not supported, it didn't suit them or in 1 case they had bad neighbours.
- When asked what was good in life they said; My friends (37), Family contact (47), Where I live (36), My School (34), My pets (27), My health (26), My money (14), My hobbies (13), Sport (13), Something I have achieved (10), How I feel (9), A place I go (8) and My care plan (7).
- When asked what was 'Not Good in Life' they stated; My care plan (8), Where I live (10), Someone else (6), Family contact (17), My school (6), My money (4), How I feel (6), My friends (3), My health (1) and My hobbies (2).

As MOMO becomes more embedded in our everyday work the IRO's and IRO Managers need to seek assurance that the feedback from 'Our Children' is being listened to, heard and acted upon.

3.4 IRO Survey

In May 2018 a survey was sent out to 579 of 'Our Children' aged between 11 and 16 years. 92 (16%) responses were received. The survey provided us with the following information about what 'Our Children' think about Independent Reviewing Officers and their reviews.

- 72.1% of 11-16 years olds surveyed told us that they enjoyed attending their reviews (score of 5 or more).
- 81.4% said that they felt comfortable in their review (score of 5 or more).
- 82.7% of children advised they were given the opportunity to have their say in reviews.
- 74.4% said they knew what had been agreed at their review and 76% said these had been done.
- 59.3% stated they received a written copy of the record of their meeting.
- 95.2% stated that their Independent Reviewing Officer listened and acted upon what they were being told.
- 91.9% rated their most recent review okay, quite good or very good.
- Although 58% had not heard of Signs of Safety, 100% said that their Independent Reviewing Officer asked them 'What they were worried about'

and 97.7% asked them 'What was Working Well' indicating that Signs of Safety is being routinely used in reviews.

- 79.5% did not know what a 'themed review' was, so it is not surprising that 92.2% had not had one.
- 51.7% of children were aware that they could chair their own review, and 14.8% said they had done so.

They also told if they did not attend their reviews, why; what would need to change to help them to attend; what were the characteristics of a good Independent Reviewing Officer. They also designed their own review. The Safeguarding and Improvement will use the information gathered to improve the review process and build upon what children are telling us. The results of this years survey will also be used to inform the questions we formulate next year. For example, comparing what children have stated makes a good Independent Reviewing Officer with their view of their own Independent Reviewing Officer.

3.5 Children's Rights

3.5.1 Advocacy

Throughout 2017-18 Coram Voice delivered Manchester's Children's Rights Service which included the provision of advocacy and Independent Visitors. They have been providing this service since the 1st November 2015. Their Manager has confirmed that Independent Reviewing Officers continue to strongly promote both aspects of the service in conversations and through sharing promotional materials.

- 283 young people accessed community advocacy services in the year.
- 119 young people self-referred for support.
- 251 young people were allocated advocates. Other accessed support via the helpline.
- 191 allocated cases were closed within the year.
- 79 allocated cases remained open after 31 March 2018
- The age of children where there was the highest number of allocations was 17 years.
- There were slightly more females allocated to the number of males 142 and 126 respectively.

The top 4 issues raised by young people were:

- Request for support at meetings.
- Assistance to make a complaint.
- Concerns about the Social Worker or Personal Advisor.
- Requests to increase opportunities to meet with family and friends.

When the work is completed by the advocates at Coram Voice children and young people have the opportunity to feedback to the Service. These are some of the comments:

“It’s been good working with you, its built up my confidence. I pay attention in meetings and speak up now”.

“Having an advocate changed the situation, it’s nice to have someone on your side”.

3.5.2 Independent Visitors

The total number of children and young people accessing the Manchester Independent Visitor Service (IV) in 2017/2018 was 57, which is an increase of 5 from last year.

The Manchester Independent Visitor Service was nominated and shortlisted for a Spirit of Manchester Award in 2017. This recognises the service as a ‘Volunteer Involving Organisation of the Year’.

Feedback from children and young people about their Independent Visitor:

“It’s been good, I’ve loved it. My IV is bubbly and nice. She has visited me when no one else has, even when I’ve moved”.

“My IV listens to me. A good thing about having an IV is to get away from my sisters for a while”

3.6 Complaints

Independent Reviewing Officers have a responsibility to ensure that children are aware of the complaints procedure in Manchester. As identified in the 2016/2017 report we have continued to monitor complaints in order to improve services.

During 2017/2018, there were 43 formal complaints made by Our Children and Young People which is much higher than last year when there were 27 complaints. 38 of the complaints were made via CORAM VOICE. The themes were:

- Poor Service/Service Failure (25.5%) - the concerns ranged from issues in respect of contact, young person feeling unsupported, delays in acquiring passports, delay in progressing a placement to permanence and delay in change of school.
- Disagreed with a decision (25.5%) - the concerns mainly linked to young people wanting to remain in their current foster placement. In some cases the complaint led to a placement freeze. One young person asked for a contact worker to supervise contact with her mother, another wanted a school move and one young mother objected to the removal of her child.
- Lack of contact/consultation (23%) - the concerns mainly linked to children and young people not feeling listened to by their Social Worker. There was an issue around a reduction in contact and a young person wanting to remain in her placement post 18.
- Funding issues (12%) - the concerns linked to a young person having to leave University due to immigration and funding issues and another was regarding a funding request for clothing and new flooring.

- Dissatisfied with suggested placement move (7%) - the concerns linked to issues around a suggested temporary placement.
- Dissatisfied with current placement (5%) - the concerns related to a young person wanting to move back to Manchester and another young person who wanted to return to his previous foster carer.
- Change of level of service provision (2%) - the concerns linked to the delay in identifying a new placement, issues with school and lack of contact from the Social Worker.

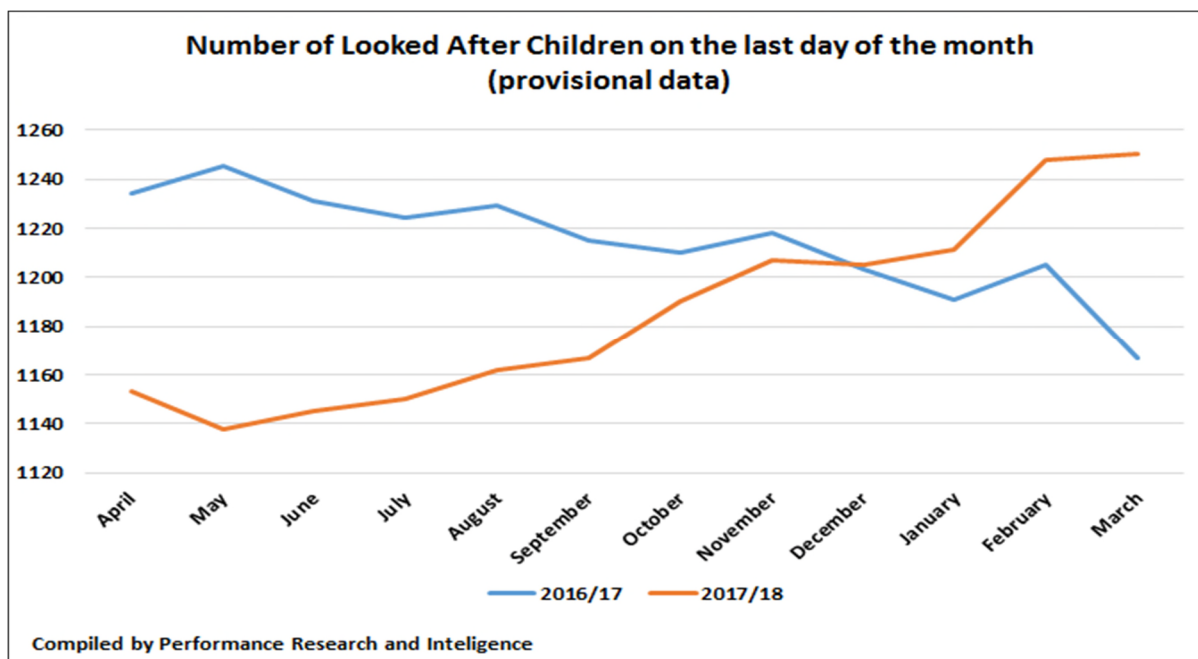
43 of the cases were referred at Stage 1. 2 cases moved to Stage 2 and 1 to Stage 3. These were the issues around a placement move and University funding. 23 of the complaints were not upheld; 15 were upheld and 5 were partially upheld.

Complaints reports are presented at the Children's Leadership Team meetings, the Voice and Influence sub group, Corporate Parenting Panel and the Quality Assurance Framework meeting to monitor progress on themes and action taken to improve practice and services resulting from complaints.

4. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POPULATION DATA 1 APRIL 2017 - 31 MARCH 2018

4.1 Looked After Children Population

At 31 March 2018 provisional data indicates that Manchester City Council had responsibility for 1,250 Looked after Children. This represents an increase of 83 children and young people over this financial year and follows a reduction of 70 children and young people in the previous year. The number of Looked after Children in Manchester remains high when compared to statistical comparator rates for 2016/17. The provisional rate of children looked after in March 2018 per 10,000 population was 104 which marks a increase of 7 from last year's confirmed rate. Nationally the number of looked after children is also increasing. The local trend is demonstrated in the diagram below.



There are ongoing challenges that have resulted in a reversal of the downward trend and the current increase in numbers of 'Our Children'. As set out in the report to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2018, Manchester recognises that:

We have experienced significant growth in our overall population and that of children and young people in recent years. As part of this overall increase we have an increase in children and young people with additional needs. There is increasing complexity in the issues and needs of children and their families requesting a children's social care service.

There remain high levels of demand for children's social care service - a rate of 1019 referrals per 10,000 population in 2016/17, against statistical neighbour averages of 728, and national of 548. The provisional rate for 2017/18 stands at 1,113 per 10,000.'

The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children has risen from 26 in March 2016 to 66 in March 2018 and now represents 5.3% of the total Looked After Children population.

The report sets out that whilst Children's Services are still aiming to reduce numbers to 1,000, this will take longer to achieve than originally planned due to the profile of children being looked after, an increasing complexity of need and the need to ensure stability of existing children and young people in care.

The focus in services for our children remains on:

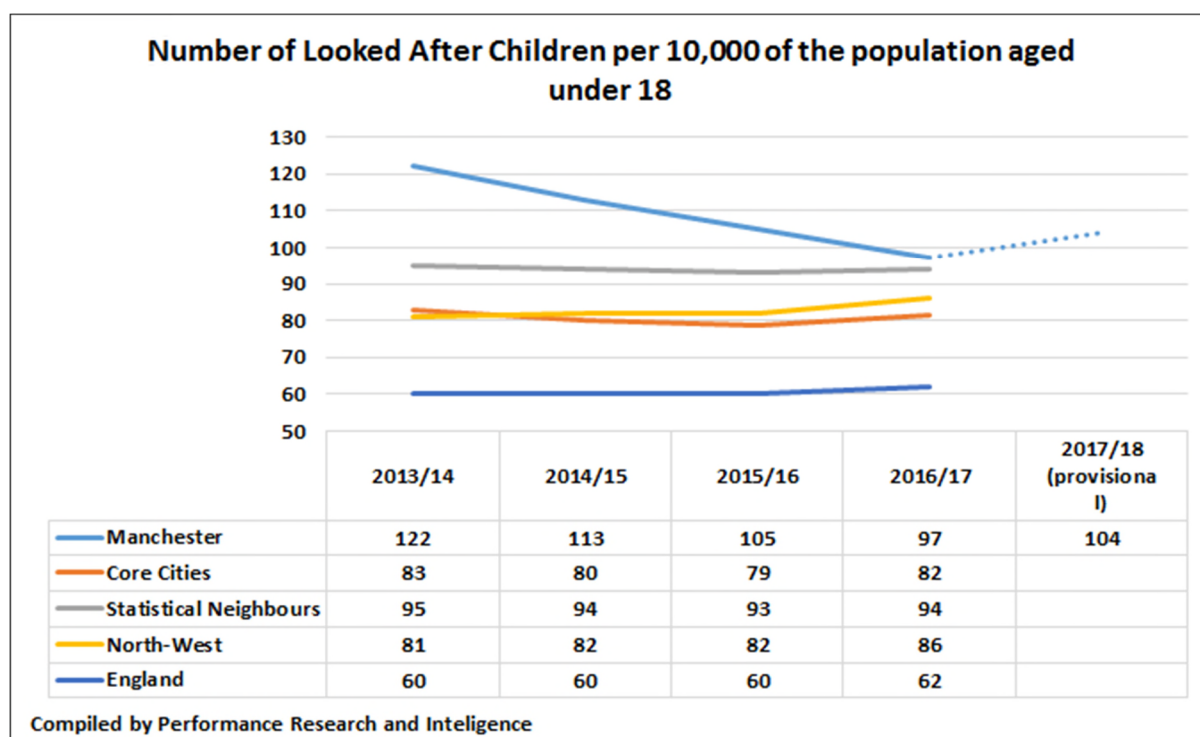
- Ensuring the right help at the right time – reducing complex demand through effective early intervention and prevention.
- Strengthening the 'front door' service via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

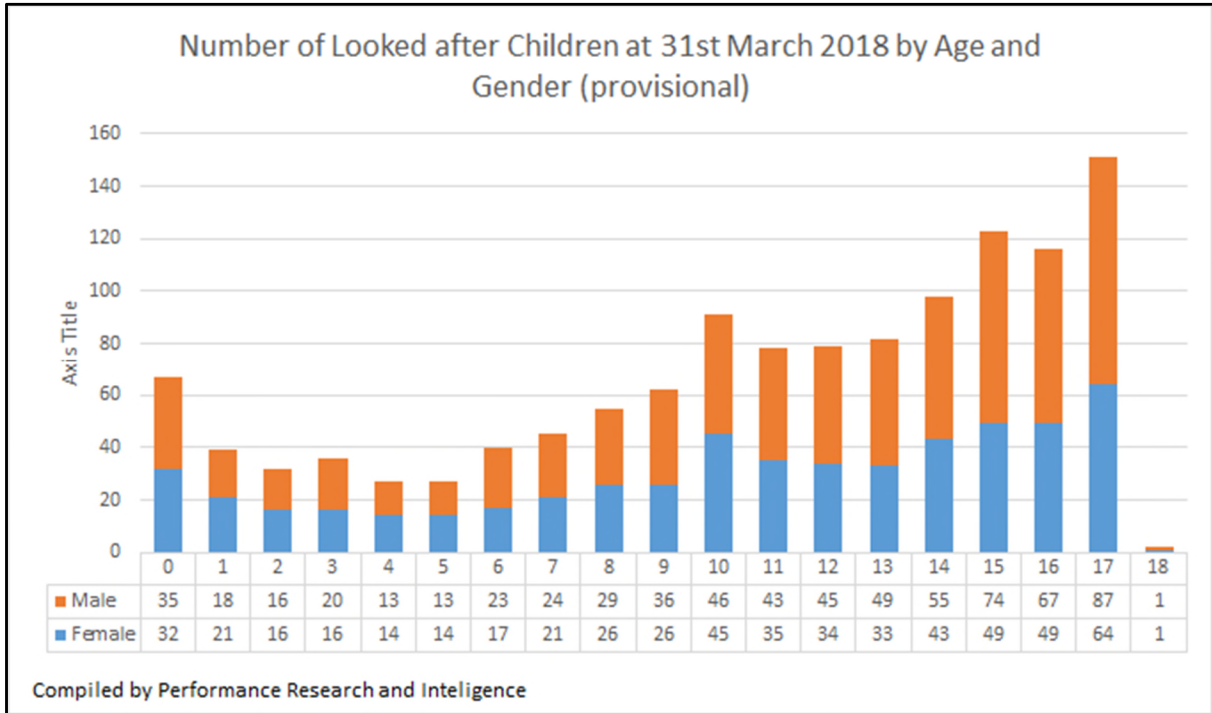
- Continuing work to ensure that children only become accommodated under section 20 where necessary.
- Timely permanence planning.
- Ensuring that children return home when safe and appropriate.
- A continued focus on Special Guardianship Orders within families, which will be achieved through increased confidence in the support and incentives offered.
- Work to convert settled and long term foster placements to achieve Special Guardianship Orders where it is safe to do so.
- Timely discharge of legal orders primarily Care Orders when they are no longer necessary.

In early 2017, a residential 'edge of care' provision opened in Manchester, Alonzi House. Alonzi House offers intensive support, family group conferencing and short break care to children and young people who are at risk of breakdown in family relationships. Keeping children at home with their families and providing support in times of crisis where safe, has been made a priority in the provision of preventative services in Manchester.

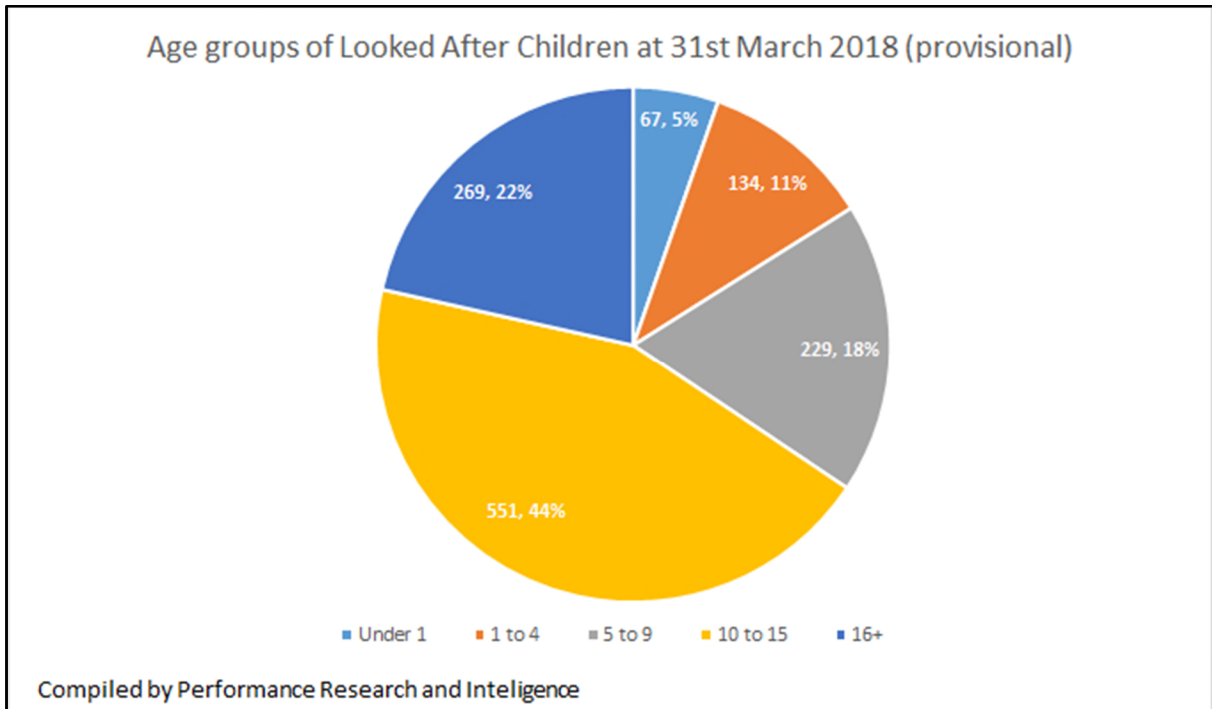
Increased scrutiny by Independent Reviewing Officers continues to contribute to the reduction in numbers of 'Our Children' who are looked after, where it is safe to do so. In 2016/2017 there was an increase in the number of applications made by Children's Services to discharge Care Orders. The total number of Full Care Orders which ceased was 144 in 2017/18. At times this has presented a challenge for Independent Reviewing Officers when ratifying the child's care plan, and more detailed discussions were required with Social Worker, Team Managers and with our colleagues in CAF/CASS to ensure this was the right plan for the child.

4.2 Age and Gender of Looked After children as at 31 March 2018





As in previous years there are more boys (694 = 55.5%) than girls (556 = 44.5%) who are looked after in Manchester, although both have increased from 2016/17. This closely resembles the national gender split in Looked After Children.



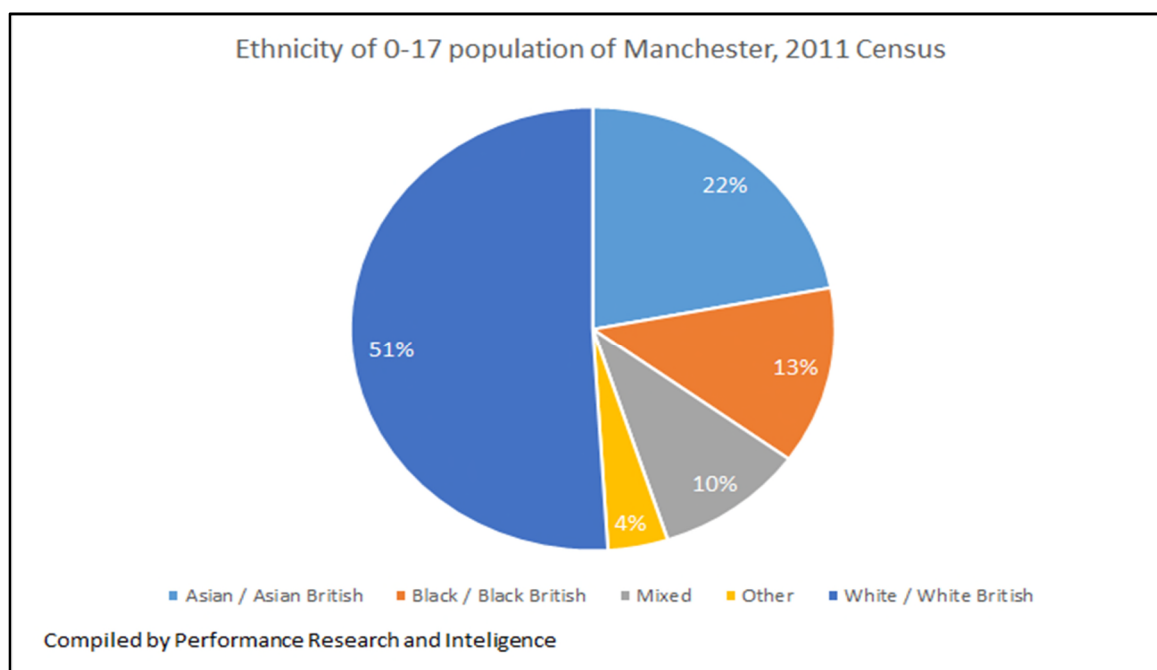
The number of looked after children has increased across all age groups with the exception of those aged 5 to 9 which has seen a reduction of 53 (5.8%). Proportionally all other groups have increased as a result of this fall.

When comparing these figures to the national picture, Manchester is in line with the national trend regarding the same proportion of children looked after who are aged under 1 (5%); a slightly smaller than national proportion of 1 to 9 year olds (29% against 32%) and a corresponding slight increase in the proportion of those aged 10 and over (66% against 63%). This would support a hypothesis that continued strengthening of the early help offer and effective partner agency working through early help and the Mash are a factor in the decrease of younger aged children becoming looked after.

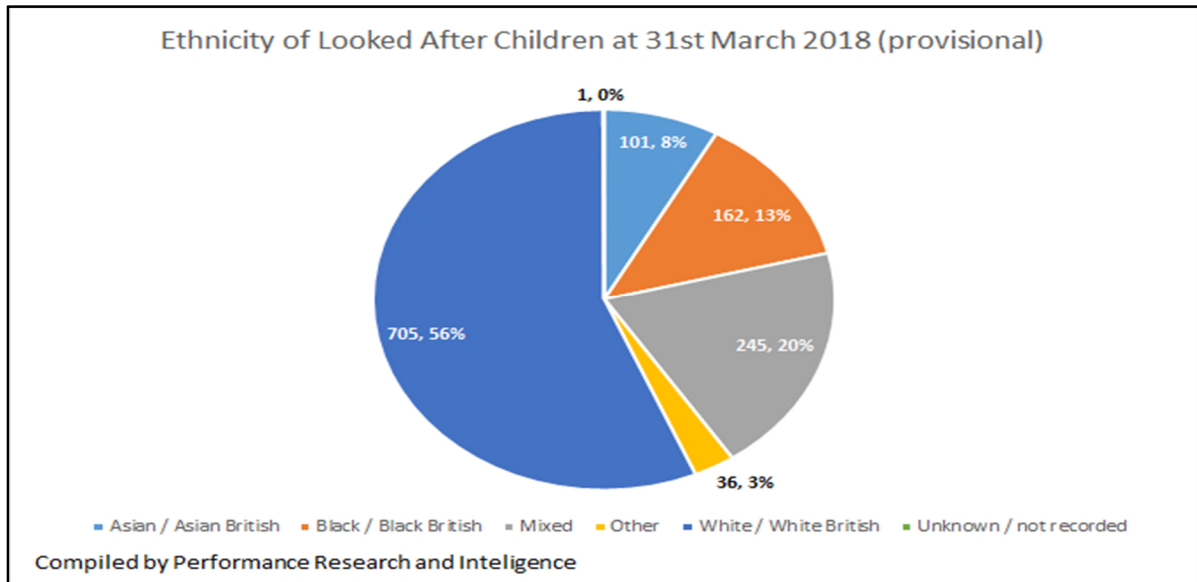
Locally, the number of looked after young people aged 16 and 17 years old has increased from 239 (20%) at 31 March 2017 to 269 (22%) at 31 March 2018. Breakdown in family relations is the most common reason for this cohort of children coming into our care. The Independent Reviewing Officer teams have reinforced the crucial importance of family group conferences to enable young people to remain within their wider family. Where this is not possible, Independent Reviewing Officers promote the need for quality pathway planning and need assessments to ensure young people are well supported if their Care Plan is to live in semi-independent accommodation or live independently. This can be evidenced through the Dispute Resolution process which will be considered in more detail later in this report.

During 2017-2018 it was agreed that Independent Reviewing Officer would undertake Post 18 Pathway Plan reviews. These take place when Independent Reviewing Officers have not been satisfied with the plans and arrangements in place to support the young people into independence. Young People can also request that a Post 18 review takes place. There have been a 14 of these post 18 reviews in 2017-2018, which have been held to ensure all actions have been carried out by the Social Worker and other agencies as agreed, to agree additional support and strengthen the transition process.

4.3 Ethnicity of Looked After Children as of 31 March 2018

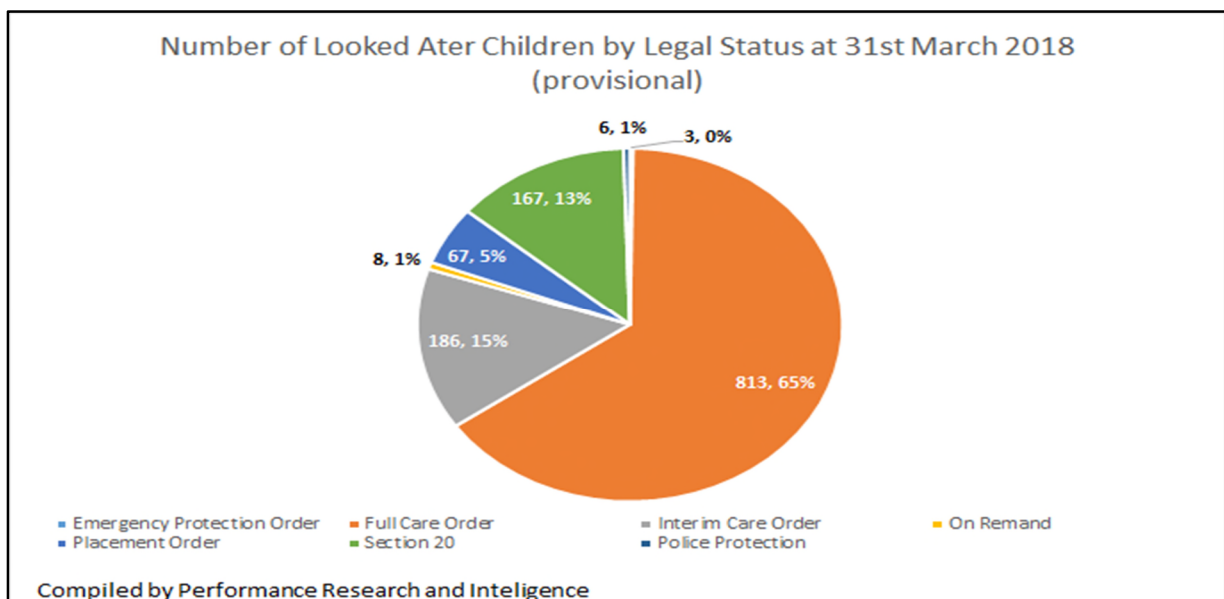


The most recent Information on the ethnicity of the wider child population of Manchester from the 2011 Census is set out below. When comparing the ethnicity of our ‘looked after children’ population with the ethnicity of children in Manchester 7 years ago, we are looking after a greater proportion of children of mixed ethnicity and White / White British ethnicity, compared to proportionally fewer young people of Asian / Asian British ethnicity.



The ethnic background of our looked after child population has remained stable over the last year. Whilst there has been an overall increase in our looked after children population, there has been a slight reduction in the proportion of Looked After Children who are White or White British (59% to 56%) and a slight reduction in Black / Black British young people from 14% to 13%. The percentage differences have been mirrored by slight increases in the proportion of those young people of mixed ethnicity (18% to 20%) and Asian / Asian British Ethnicity (6% to 8%).

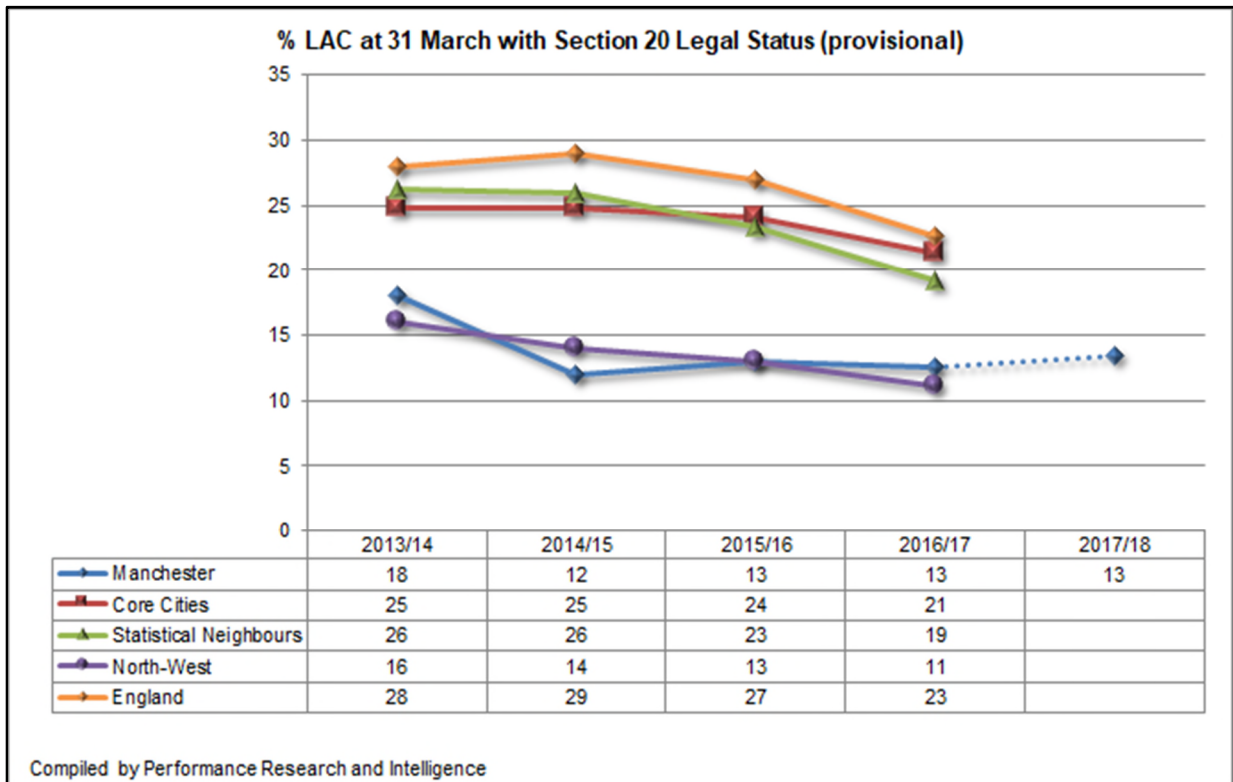
4.4 Legal status of Looked After Children at 31 March 2018



The proportion of children subject to Interim Care Orders (ICO) has risen to 15% as 61 more children are subject to ICO than was the case at the same point last year. As a key part of the reviewing process, Independent Reviewing Officers robustly scrutinise plans for children who have been voluntarily accommodated under Sec 20, CA 1989, for more than 3 months. IROs scrutinise access to legal planning through legal gateway meetings and challenge where permanence plans are not being achieved within the child’s timeframe. The increase in the number of children subject to Interim Care orders, now 186, indicates that fewer are remaining subject to Section 20, which is positive.

The majority of our children looked after (65%) are subject to Care Orders. The number has only fallen by 9 children during the year, but due to increasing overall numbers of children this actually represent 65% of the cohort as opposed to 70% last year. In order to secure permanence for our children there continues to be a focus upon achieving a sense of belonging and stability within one settled family unit for the child. Between March 2017 and March 2018 there were 15 Care Orders that were discharged due to Special Guardianship Orders and a further two moved to Child Arrangement Orders within wider birth family.

The number of children subject to Placement Orders has remained relatively static over the year and accounts for approximately 5% of Looked After Children. Independent Reviewing Officers will ensure the right plan is in place for the child at the right time. They have access to the case progression manager’s court tracker, to be able to challenge where drift and delay is identified with care plans and assessments required for court. Equally, IROs will challenge any drift through the dispute resolution process with regard to the revocation of Placement Orders where this is deemed that adoption no longer the best plan for the child.



On the 31 March 2018 there were 167 (13%) children voluntarily looked after, subject to Section 20 of the 1989 Children Act 1989. Manchester has remained at approximately 13% for the past four years, which is significantly below the level seen nationally (23% in 2016/17).

One of the key priority areas identified in the 2016/2017 Annual Report was that Independent Reviewing Officers would provide increased scrutiny of children who were 'looked after' under Section 20, of the 1989 Children Act. The IROs and team managers are now provided with weekly performance reports highlighting those children who have been Section 20 for over three months.

Independent Reviewing Officers continue to promote timely planning via the Review process for young people who are accommodated under section 20 to avoid any drift or delay within the care system and ensure that a clear permanence plan is achieved by the second review. Increased scrutiny between Looked after Children Reviews and the use of the Dispute Resolution Protocol is assisting in ensuring timely planning for individual children and young people are within their timescale.

There were 37 Dispute Resolutions raised in respect of Section 20 issues in 2017/18 and also 14 Dispute Resolutions with regard to the delay in the Social Workers submitting court paperwork. Use of Section 20 arrangements is only intended to be a short term measure and this has been reinforced in legal judgements nationally over recent years. Escalations have highlighted that in some cases, Section 20 arrangements have continued for too long when assessments had concluded that it is no longer in the child's interest to return home.

To further enhance tracking in the area of securing early permanence, Manchester are one of four local authority areas within England who are taking part in a DfE Innovation project in conjunction with the Coram research organisation. The IRO service have been closely working with Coram to track children in a pilot project from their entry into care, to achieving early permanence. This has been effective and a permanence tracker is now being cascaded out to all districts. It is identified that Independent Reviewing Officers play a key role in the tracking and endorsing of plans for each child. Our recording mechanisms on the child record have been adapted this year to contribute to tracking key activity and decisions at our children and young peoples reviews.

Independent Reviewing Officer managers also undertook an audit of a sample month in 2017 to identify trends where some young people had been subject to Section 20 arrangements on two or more occasions. The data used for this audit was based on the cohort of children and young people who became Looked After under Section 20 for a second or subsequent time during the period January 2017 to January 2018. The purpose of the report was to highlight emerging themes; to ensure that effective plans were being put in place to bring about lasting change within the family setting and where this was not possible, alternative permanence plans were being made to avoid multiple Section 20 entries into the care system. The data list contained the details of 56 children. Of these 26 were now the subjects of Care Orders or Interim Care Orders and as such were not considered.

Findings:

- 3 children returned to their parent's care by default as a placement could not be identified. They then returned into Local Authority care when this broke down.
- The mental health of the young person was identified as a factor.
- Some parents required support regarding children with additional needs including ASD and ADHD as their behaviour was difficult for parents to manage.
- There was evidence of a number of children becoming 'looked after' for short periods e.g. between 1 and 11 days. whereby the LAC notification came to SIU post discharge. This meant there was no Independent Reviewing Officer oversight of the plan.

What is clear is that Independent Reviewing Officers need to consistently challenge premature or inappropriate discharge plans by ensuring discharge reviews always take place and that any dispute resolutions sent to managers progress to the correct level. There is evidence to support that Independent Reviewing Officers are escalating these issues.

Also Social Workers and Team Managers are now encouraged to email the Safeguarding and Improvement Unit as soon as a child becomes 'looked after' and so an Independent Reviewing Officer can be allocated. Greater scrutiny regarding support plans for this cohort of children is in place.

5. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES 2017/2018

5.1 *Placement with Parents*

At the end of 2017/2018 reporting year Manchester had 116 children subject to Interim Care Orders or Full Care Orders placed at home (9.3%) which is a slight reduction from 123 children (10.5%) last year. Nationally this figure stands at 6%.

The number of care proceedings between the end of March 2017 to the end March 2018 that concluded with Care Orders Placed with Parents (PWP) was 20. A further thirteen children had care orders granted and support was working towards 'Placement with Parents' arrangements.

Independent Reviewing Officers have a key role when considering the appropriateness and safety of a plan for a child to be placed at home subject to a Care Order. This has been an area of increased scrutiny in the last year and a greater number of dispute resolutions. 64 were raised regarding the quality of planning and arrangements for this cohort of children. The Independent Reviewing Officers also monitor and track progress of children placed with parents and subject to Care Orders who can be safely discharged and raise challenge where delay occurs in discharging these Care Orders.

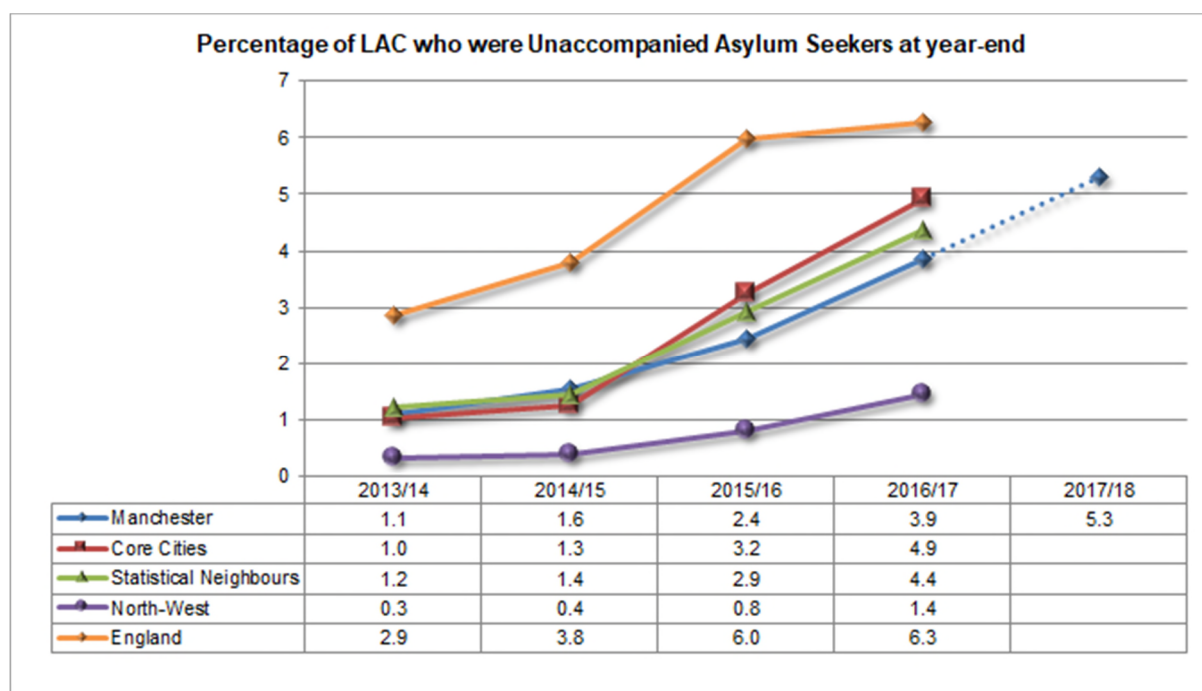
In 2017 the Independent Reviewing Officer Team managers took part in a North West regional audit looking into the reasons why local authorities in the area had a

higher proportion of children subject to Care Orders placed with parents than the national average. The Audit aimed to determine, why 13% of children in the North West were placed with parents in 2016 compared to the England average of 5%. The audit set out to consider if this was of concern? Findings indicated that further periods of “testing” were often cited as the reason for Placement with Parent arrangements with either a new parent being assessed during proceedings, (commonly fathers), parents where previous children had been removed; or a balance of risk when older children wished to remain at home.

Independent Reviewing Officers will need to maintain a robust oversight of care plans and support arrangements when endorsing a return home, considering the need for the Care Order to remain or the safety of the rehabilitation. Research from Bristol University indicates 48% of return home placements breakdown, identifying poor assessment, risk management and planning as the main contributing factors. This area of work will be audited during 2018-19.

Also there were a small number of children subject to Care Orders who returned home without the knowledge of the Independent Reviewing Officer. Dispute resolutions were raised as the Independent Reviewing Officer in these cases had not ratified the Care Plan.

5.2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children



The diagram above illustrates the continued increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (USAC) over the last 12 months now reaching a total of 66 which represents 5.3% of the looked after children population. The total is 20 more than at the same point last year. The proportion is higher than our Statistical Neighbours (4.4%), the North West Average (1.4%) and Core Cities (4.9%) but slightly lower than the national average (6.3%).

Due to the increase in numbers in 2017/18, the safeguarding unit now has two identified Independent Reviewing Officers who have developed expertise in this area of work and a specialist knowledge of the particular needs of this cohort of young people. This ensures their needs are being met and their rights upheld and promotes greater awareness amongst social work teams. This additional resource provided an opportunity to share and develop expertise in this area.

As identified in the 2016/17 Annual Report the scrutiny in relation to this specific group of children is recognised as being particularly important. Throughout 2017/2018, the Independent Reviewing Officers have continued to quality assure and triangulate information in respect of UASC with our Performance and Intelligence Team, Health and Finance. Information is collated weekly and monthly in respect of new UASC on arrival in Manchester, including information of country of origin, mode of arrival, religion, language, trafficking, among other issues. LAC Review dates are shared with the specialist UASC LAC Nurse on a weekly basis.

The UASC Leaving Care Service offers specialist advice to young people and Personal Advisors get involved as soon as they've been allocated.

Manchester also has agencies commissioned to support our UASC. These include Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (with their Asylum Claims) and Child Action North West (Appropriate Adults for Age Assessments)

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children can also have access to an Independent Visitor. They are also referred on to other outreach services which they value including the 'All4One' Group run by a support worker at the GMIAU and the Hope Project (Youth Group) run by the Children's Society.

The Independent Reviewing Officers have escalated concerns regarding placement, legal status and delays in Age Assessments. 7 Dispute Resolutions were being completed with regard to Age Assessment in 2017-18. Others fit into other categories used for all of 'Our Children' such as Placement, Pathway Plans and Health.

5.3 Leaving Care

A Pathway Plan is important to a young person as it details the services and support they need from the age of 16 years and 3 months to 21 years. It is the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer to review the Pathway Plan as it is critical to the process whereby young people map out their future, articulate their aspirations and identifying interim goals along the way to realising their ambitions.

It has been identified in the previous Annual Report that too many young people did not have a good quality pathway plan in place between 16 years 3 months and 18 years at their Looked After Child review. The Ofsted inspection report published December 2017 also highlighted that:

“The quality of help and support for young people leaving care is not consistently good enough. In too many cases, pathway plans lack sufficient detail and do not

contain enough information about how to develop young people's skills to be able to live independently"

Independent reviewing officers and their managers now receive weekly information regarding young people who are in need of a first Pathway plan or Pathway Plan review, in order to more consistently challenge to improve practice. There is also a greater focus upon the quality of good pathway planning being a comprehensive, well rounded, aspirational plan to meet a young person's individual needs. At 31 March 2018 96.3% of young people either in need of a Pathway Plan or care leavers had a plan in place. This represents an increase from 89.7% at the same point the previous year.

In 2017-18 36 Dispute Resolutions were raised about the absence of a Pathway Plan for young people and 21 in respect of issues re a pathway plan for children after they reached the age of 18. The objective set out in 2015/2016 to improve the consistency of good quality of Pathway Planning has not yet been achieved. As well as ensuring continued compliance, Independent Reviewing Officers need to focus more on the quality of this work and ensuring improved outcomes for young people. Pathway Planning improvement will remain a focus of all Independent Officers in 2018-19.

In order to strengthen our oversight of Pathways plans that assist young people to move successfully into independence; Independent Reviewing Officers can decide to hold a further post 18 Pathway plan review when they are not satisfied that plans and arrangements are secure enough to meet the young person's need. The young adult at 18 is asked if they wish the Independent Reviewing Officer to remain involved and a further review can be held up to 3 or 6 months post 18 years. There have been 14 such reviews which have taken place since this initiative started. Reasons for review have included unstable accommodation plans, transitions to adult services not yet secured and/or issues securing cross boundary services for young people residing outside Manchester.

5.4 Children remanded to Custody

The number of children on remand and looked after has remained relatively stable; there were 8 at 31 March 2018 which represents an increase of 1 child in comparison to the end of 2016/17. Independent Reviewing Officers are responsible for reviewing the Care Plan for this small group of 'looked after' children. Work has been undertaken with our colleagues in the Youth Offending Service to update our procedures in this area to ensure that the young people have a robust plan of support when their remand status ceases and/or children who were Section 20 prior to receiving a custodial sentence, have a robust discharge plan in place.

The Safeguarding and Improvement Unit has developed strong links with Youth Justice service to enhance IRO understanding of Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act. Leads from the Youth Offending Service have attended the Independent Reviewing Officer Team meetings and development sessions. There is a recognition of national issues raised re access of young people to sufficient programmes of education and core curriculum subjects. This has been raised as a thematic issue during the year with our colleagues in Youth Justice and

Independent Reviewing Officers ensure this is of focus of Looked After Children review meetings for these children.

5.5 Children subject to a Secure Order

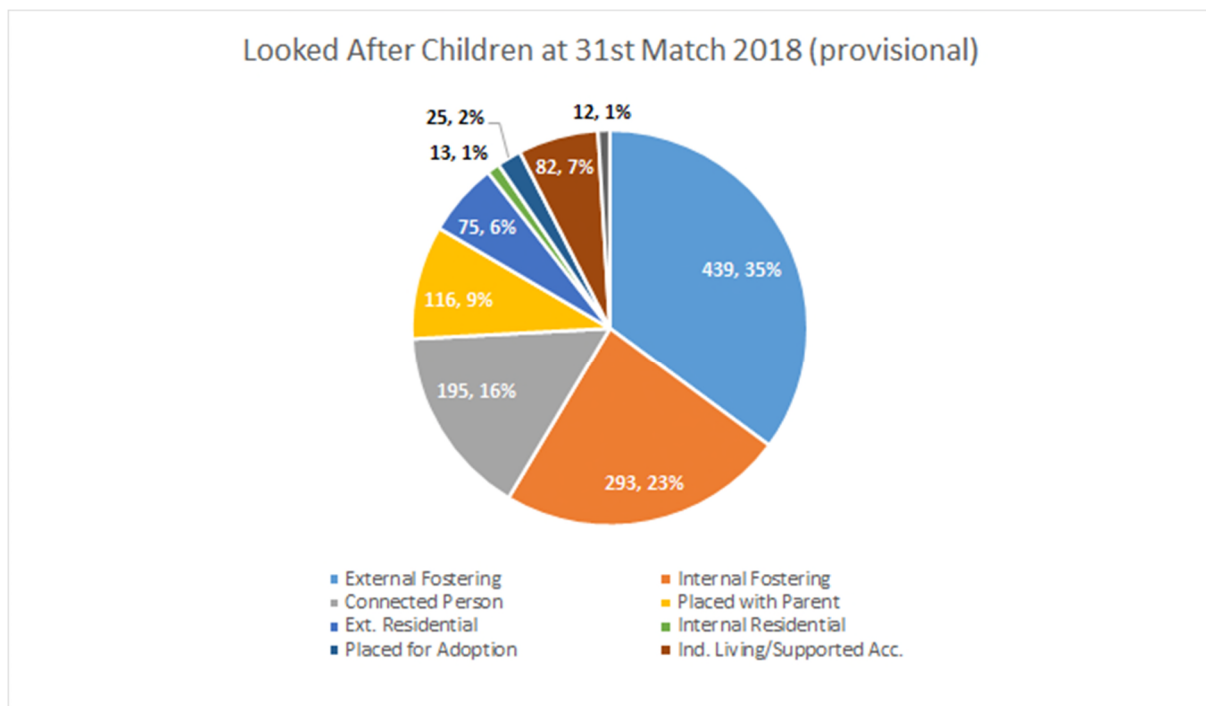
The use of ‘secure accommodation’ by local authorities is dealt with by section 25 of the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Secure Accommodation) Regulations 1991. A child who is being ‘looked after’ by a local authority by being provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act cannot be placed or kept in accommodation which has the purpose of restricting the child’s liberty unless the requirements of section 25 are met. They are:

- that the child has a history of running away and is likely to run away from accommodation which isn’t secure; and
- if he runs away, he is likely to suffer significant harm; OR
- if he isn’t in secure accommodation, he is likely to injure himself or someone else; ‘likely’ means a real possibility, a possibility that can’t be ignored when looking at the nature and extent of the harm its feared will come to the child.

If the local authority apply for a secure accommodation order, the court will have to be satisfied that those requirements exist. In 2016/17 there was 1 child made subject to a Secure Accommodation Order. The child was place in a secure unit for 7 months. During this period all statutory requirements were met. In 2017/18 no children were made the subject of a Secure Order.

6. THE PLACEMENTS OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AT 31 MARCH 2018

6.1 Type of Placement



The majority of children and young people (74%), continue to be placed in foster care or with connected carers. This is a slightly reduced proportion from last year when it stood at 75.9%. It remains very close to the national figure of 73.5%.

Within the last 3 years there has been a significant drive in Manchester to increase the number of our foster carers who can support 'Our Children' within more local areas and be supported by Manchester family placement team and support services. The success of this is reflected in the significant reduction in the number of children placed with external foster care. In March 2017 there were 489 children in external fostering placements, (41.8%). The number has reduced by 50 in March 2018 to 439 children (35%) This is balanced an increase of 64, in the number of children placed with internal foster carers, now at 293 (23%).

Numbers placed with connected people also increased by 28 during the year, indicating that more children are being placed with family and friend carers.

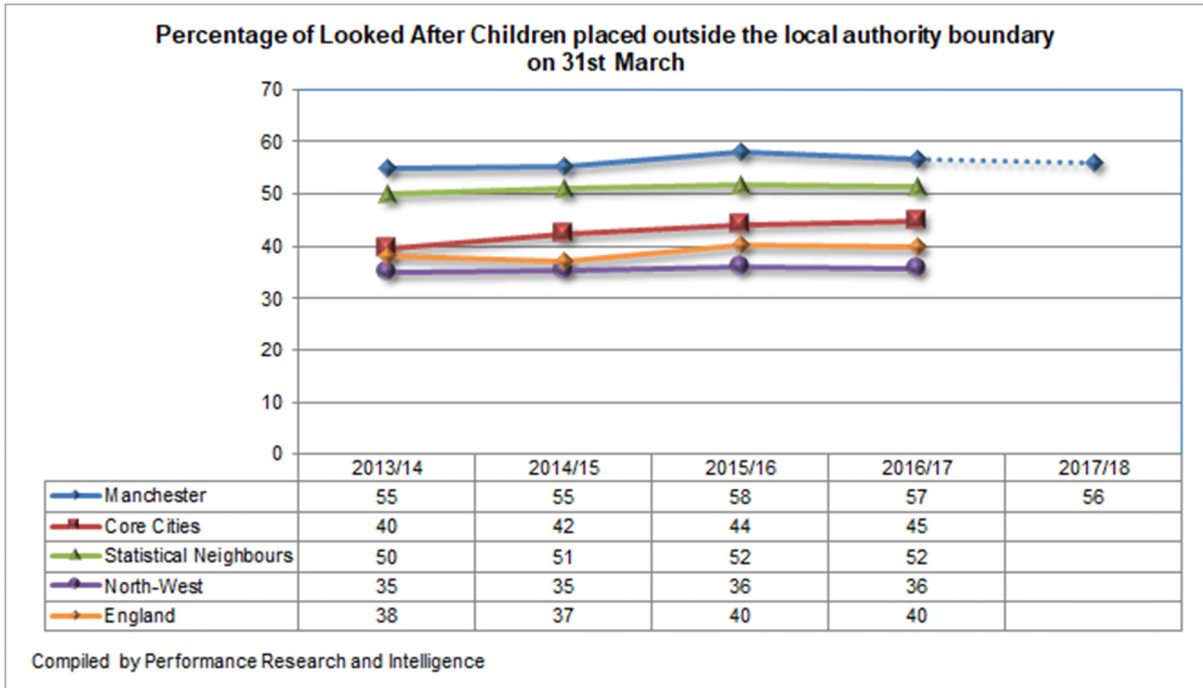
In terms of other placement types there has been an increase in the use of residential care from 67 places to 88 (7%). Independent Reviewing Officers recognise the importance of children being placed, wherever possible, within a family unit and will review what plans are in place to safety move this cohort of young people on in to a foster care placement, to extended family or back home to the care of their parents.

In the year between March 2017 and 2018 there has been an increase of 29 places in independent living/supported accommodation. Provision of good quality accommodation for young people moving towards leaving care is a current focus for our improvement journey. As noted by Ofsted, Children's Services are working with our corporate colleagues to ensure that young people leaving care have better access to safe and suitable accommodation.

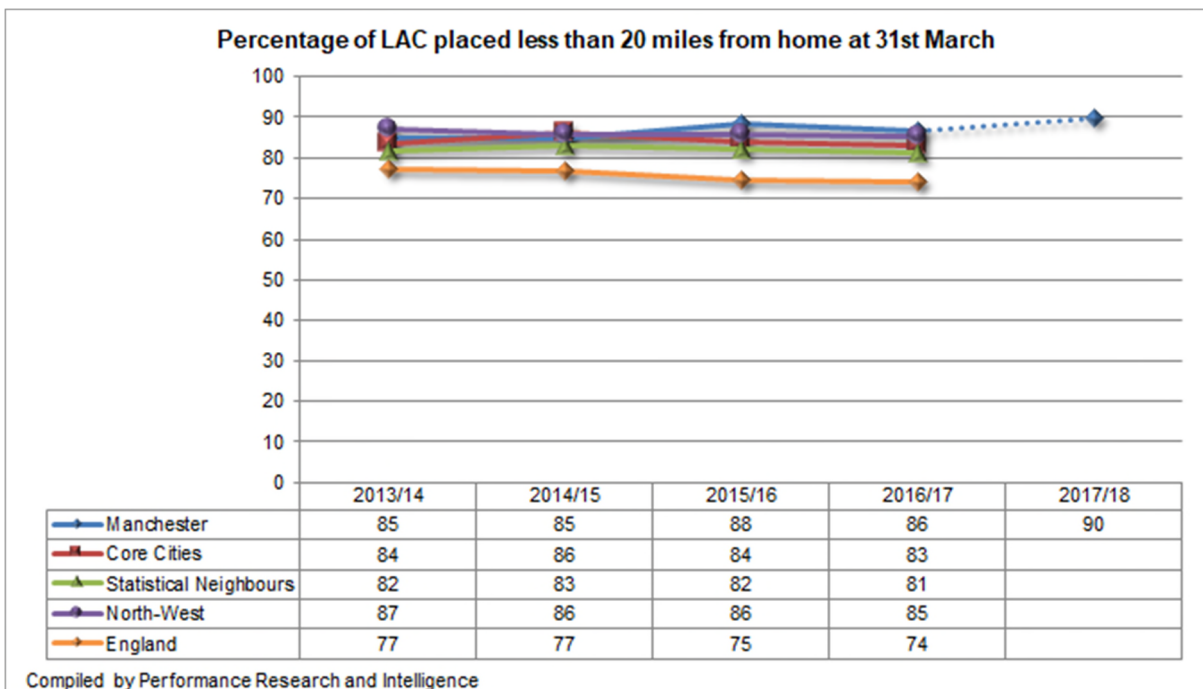
6.2 Placement Location and Distance from Home

In 2017/18 there was a slight decrease in the percentage of looked after children placed outside Local Authority boundaries in Manchester from 57% to 56%. Manchester has a higher percentage of children placed outside the Local Authority boundary than its statistical comparators. This is probably due to the fact our neighbouring authorities are in close proximity. However, the percentage has remained relatively stable at between 55% to 58% over the last five years.

The table below confirms that this area of performance has remained fairly stable for the last five years, but continues to remain higher than the figure for England. It is also higher than our Statistical Neighbour, North West regional and core city averages.

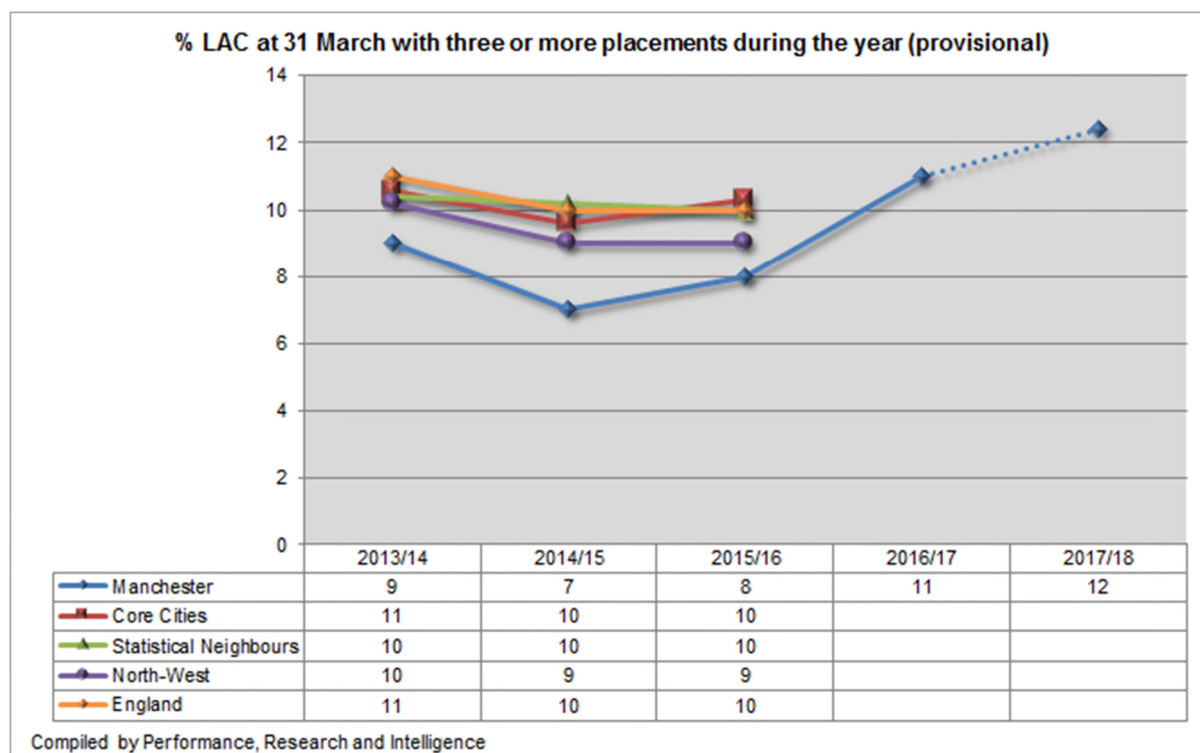


In contrast Manchester’s performance in placing children within a 20 miles’ radius from their home, remains better than the national average and all other comparators.



7. PLACEMENT STABILITY

7.1 Three or more placements



During 2017-2018 Placement stability has been a challenge for Manchester Children's Services and the percentage of children with three or more placement moves has risen from 11.0% to 12.4%. There needs to be more scrutiny of this areas of work in 2018-19.

Placement stability is critical for the emotional wellbeing of our children and young people', enabling them to build relationships and to invest in their future by engaging in their education and local community groups. The potential attachment disruptions and conflict of loyalty to carers are also extremely unsettling; this should not be compounded by unnecessary and frequent changes of placement. In order to support carers to have a greater understanding of young people's attachment needs and how early life experiences can impact upon the child's ability to form secure trusting relationships; Manchester has committed to ensure all its foster carers are able to access the Secure Base training. This model aims to increase this understanding, build resilience in carers and hence reduce breakdown of placements. Independent Reviewing Officers scrutinise plans and arrangements for foster carer support at reviews to promote ongoing stability.

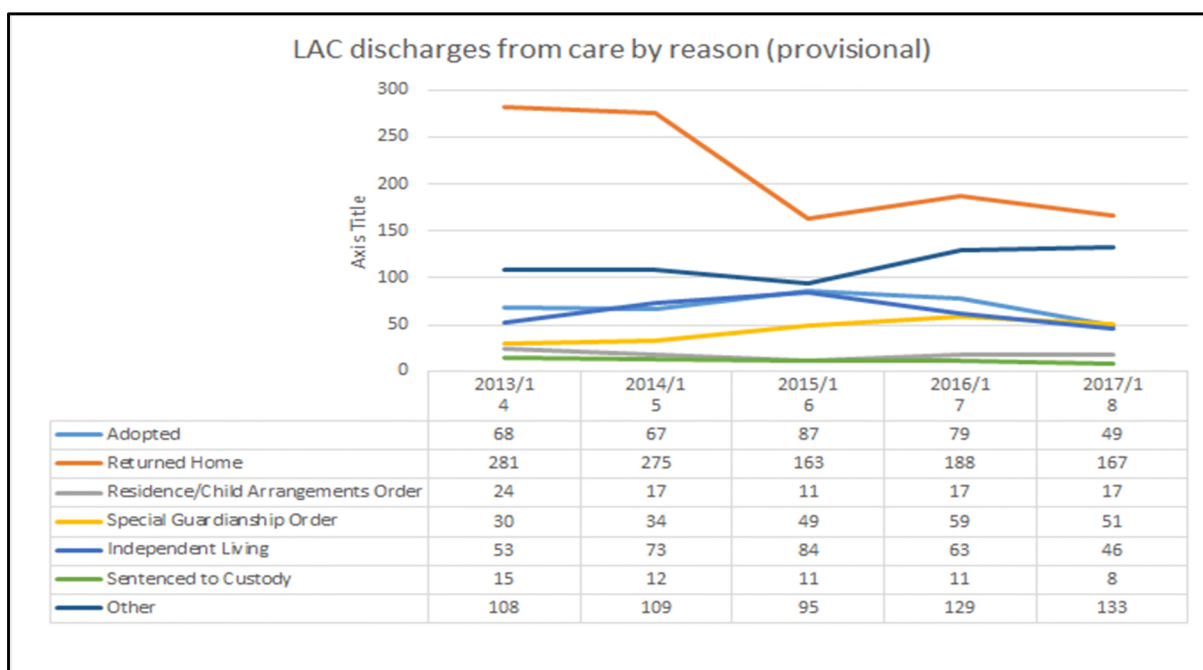
Disruption in attachments and change is often traumatic for anyone, this is especially true for our looked after children given the quality of their care and relationships were probably compromised and led for the need for them to come into care. Our children and young people and those who have left care have told us that maintaining relationships with previous foster carers is important to them and they would like Independent Reviewing Officers to consider this at reviews when discussing 'Who is Important to Me'. This has been shared with IROs to take forward in future plans.

7.2 Placement for 2 years or more

At 31 March 2018 the percentage of children under 16 years and looked after for at least 2.5yrs, in the same placement for 2 years or placed for adoption was 63% . This represents a slight reduction from the previous year.

7.3 The reasons why children cease to be looked after

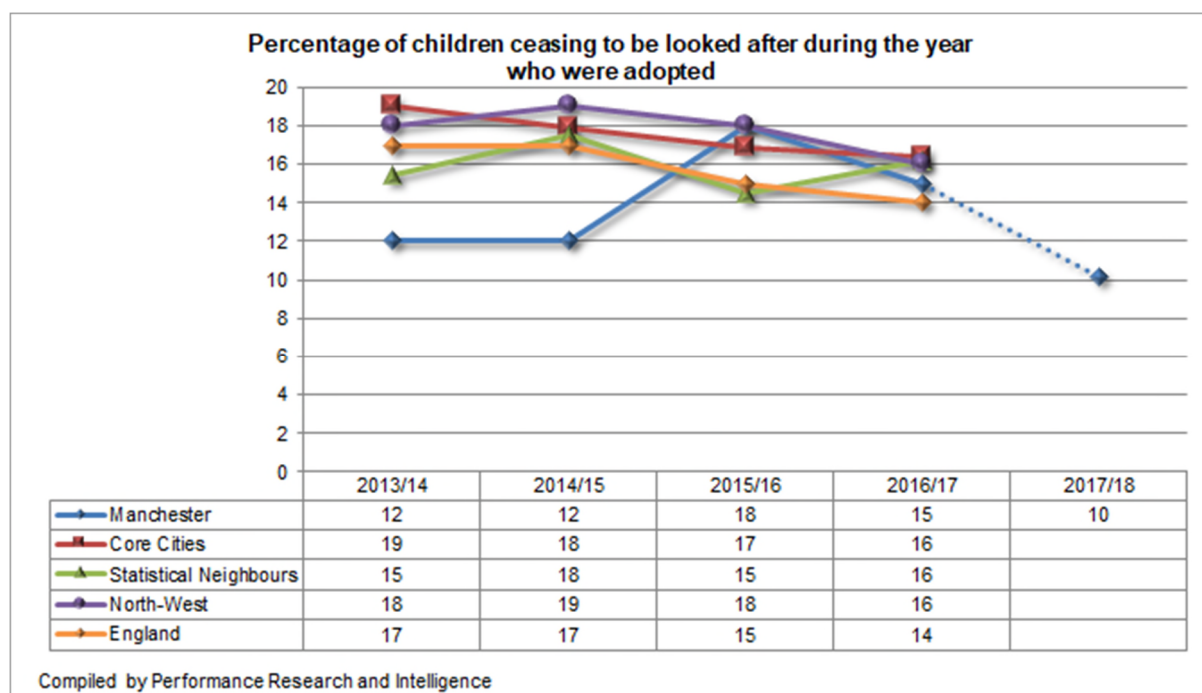
The table below shows that returning home continues to be the most common outcome for looked after children ceasing to be looked after. Independent Reviewing Officers have an important role to play in ensuring decision making in relation to rehabilitating children home in a child's best interest and that they and their families are provided with high quality support both during the transition period and after.



The percentage of children leaving care for specified reasons in 2017/18 are as follows:

- 35.5% Returned home (an increase from 34.4% in 2016/2017)
- 28.2% Care ceased for any other reason (an increase from 23.6% in 2016/17)
- 10.4% Adopted (a decrease from 14.5% in 2016/17)
- 9.8% Independent living (a decrease from 11.5% in 2016/17)
- 10.8% Special Guardianship Order (the same as 2016/17)
- 3.6% Residence / Child Arrangements Order granted (an increase from 3.1% in 2016/17).
- 1.7% Sentenced to custody (a decrease from 2.0% in 2016/17)

8. ADOPTION



Information for 2017/18 has been supplied from Adoption Counts. Adoption Counts are a collaborative adoption agency, bringing the professional expertise and specialist skills of five local authorities from across Greater Manchester and Cheshire together to deliver adoption services of the highest quality.

'Manchester had 44 children placed for adoption between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018. In the 3 month period April to June 2017 before Adoption Counts went live 11 children were placed. 6 of these were inter-agency placements and 5 were with Manchester approved adopters. In the period July 17 to March 2018 33 children have been placed. 27 of these were in house, as in Adoption Counts adopters, and 6 were inter-agency placements. In the previous year 2016 / 2017, 48 children were placed for adoption, of whom 50% were placed in inter-agency placements.'

Adoption Counts have advised that this reduction in children placed is due to two factors.

1. A number of complex children waiting from previous years were successfully placed in 2016/17.
2. There has been a national reduction in the numbers of Placement Orders granted by the courts. Although this trend has now reduced, with more Placement Orders being granted, it has continued to have an impact on numbers placed and adopted in the year 2017/18.

The number of SHOBPA decisions has increased in the year 2017/18 so this may lead to an increase in numbers placed moving forwards.

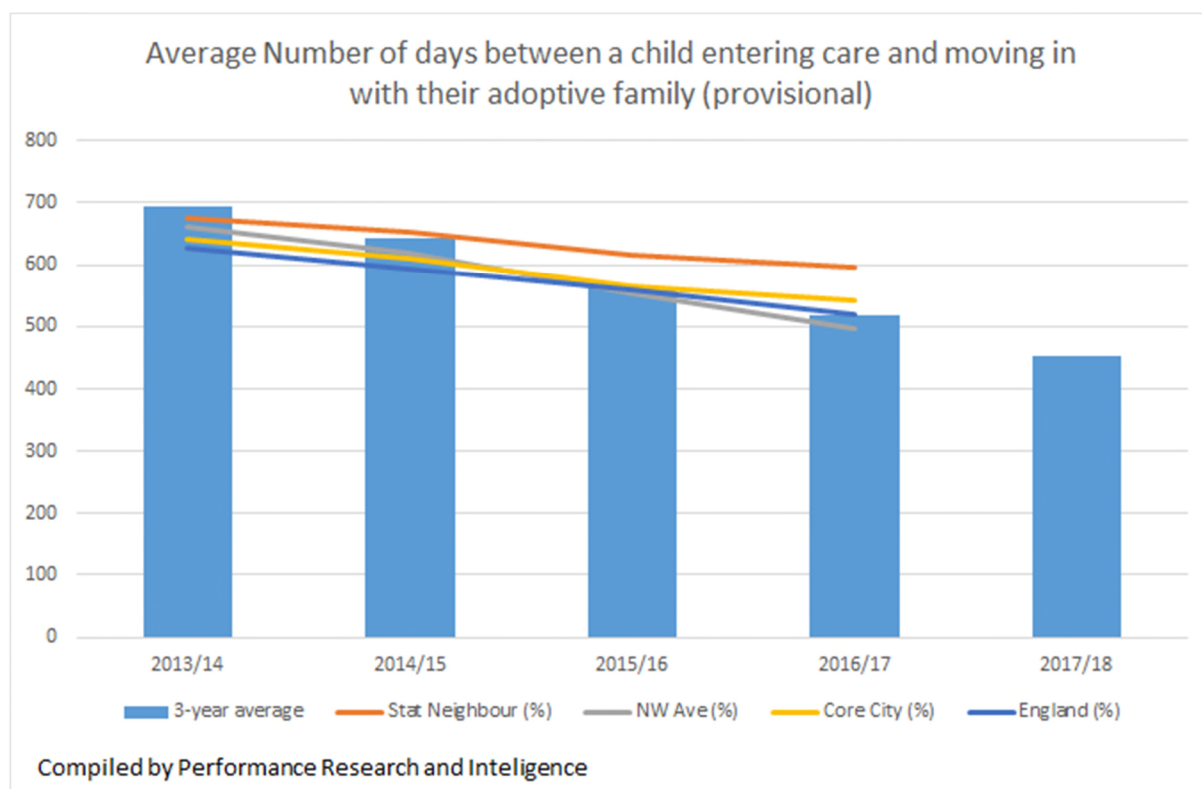
Adoption counts further stated that as at the 31 March 2018 Manchester had 27 children *placed for adoption* but not yet adopted. 3 of these had been placed for over

10 weeks without an application being submitted by their adopters to the court for an adoption order. This was a sibling group.

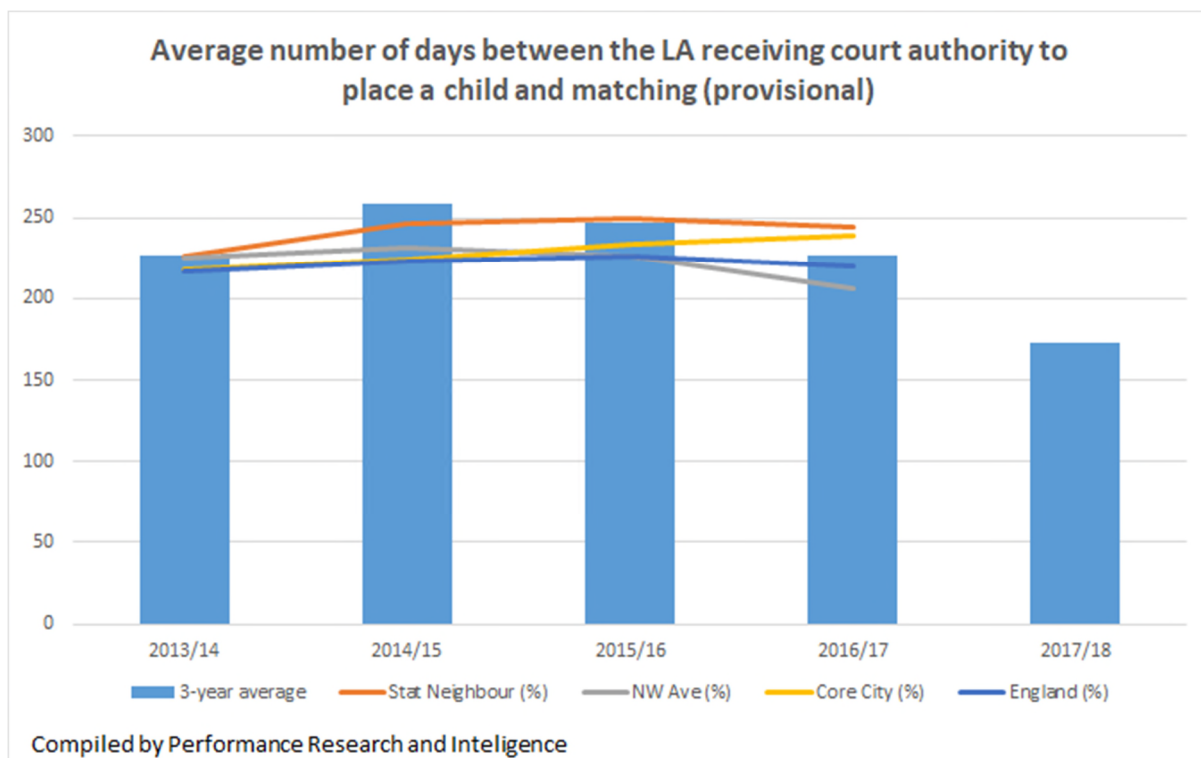
As at the 31 March 2018 Manchester had 34 children *waiting for adoption* but not yet placed. These are made up of 9 singleton children, 1 sibling group of 5, 2 sib groups of 3 and 7 sibling groups of 2.

- 11 children have been waiting less than 3 months.
- 3 children have been waiting between 3 and 6 months.
- 14 Children between 6 and 12 months.
- 6 children have been waiting over 12 months but less than 2 years.

Independent Reviewing Officers work closely with the social work teams and the adoption service, they have an overview of the progress in respect of timely adoptions and ensure that children who have been waiting over 9 months are reconsidered at adoption panel, to ensure this plan remains the right one for each child.



There has been continued improvement in the timeliness of adoption during 2017/2018, which has had a positive impact on the three year averages measured by the Department for Education in the Adoption Scorecards. As you can see from the above graph the average number of days for a child entering care to being placed with the adoptive family has decreased year on year since 2013/14.



Also following a rise in 2014/15, the average number of days between the local authority receiving agreement via the court to place a child for adoption, and matching has also fallen.

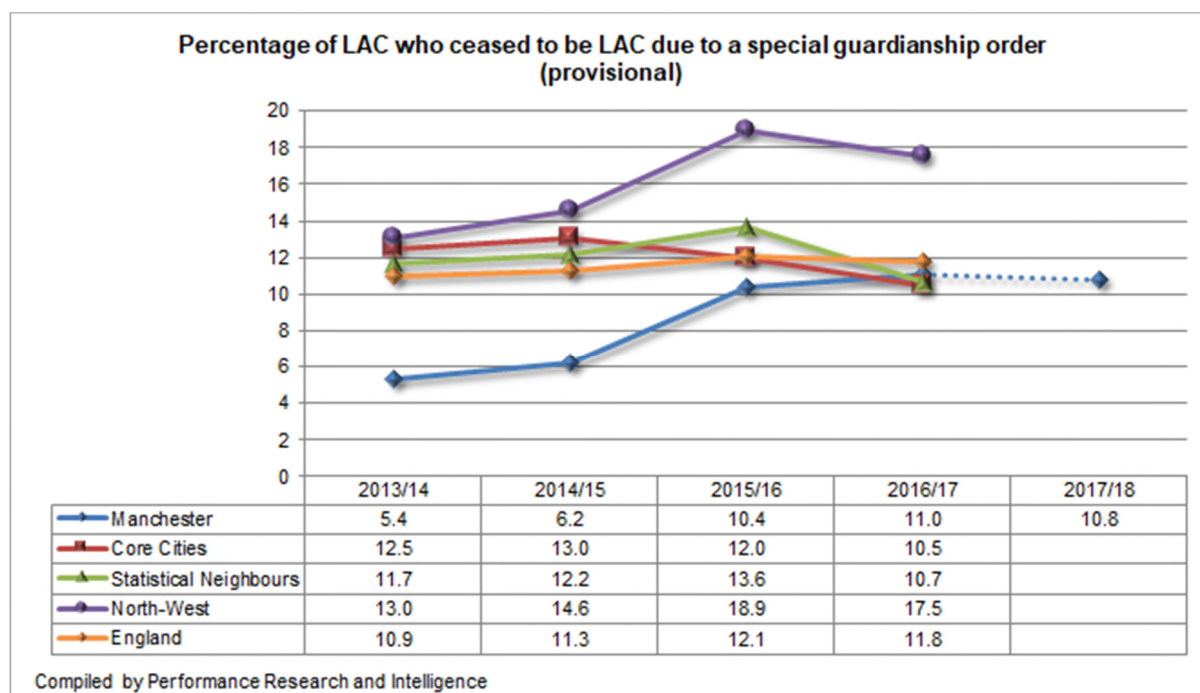
At the same time the proportion of children discharged from looked after status through adoption has fallen. The age of children coming in to care is a factor in achieving permanence through adoption.

Nationally, there has been an increase in the numbers of children over ten years old when becoming looked after over and the proportion of children under one years old has fallen. This is being reflected in Manchester although DCS Paul Marshall has indicated we are also experiencing the predicted population growth in Manchester in respect of under 5's.

According to information from the court case progression manager in Manchester, the type of legal orders at end of proceedings are changing. There has been a steady increase in Special Guardianship Orders being granted. The dedicated Special Guardianship Order team within Family Placement team has been successful in their work to advance the understanding of Special Guardianship with foster carers and connected person carers. The Special Guardianship Order team now undertake the introductory visits to explain Special Guardianship Orders in Manchester, complete the full assessment and support plan. This more streamlined service has resulted in more children being able to achieve their permanence and sense of belonging within their current family unit and not requiring to transfer attachments on to new parents through adoption.

9. SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP

The percentage of looked after children who became subject to Special Guardianship Orders has been maintained at approximately the 11% figure reported in 2016/2017. This is commensurate with our Core Cities, Statistical Neighbours and the England Average.



It is important that wherever possible, children should be placed with family members, friends or permanence secured via a Special Guardianship Order with their foster carer. For children who cannot be adopted this enables children to have as normal a life as possible without continued statutory interventions.

10. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STATUTORY REVIEWS

Practice and services to 'Our Children' have continued to be improved over the last 12 months. Much of this has been prompted by the continued vigour and pace led by the children's management team and a more focussed Independent Reviewing Officer Service that is scrutinising practice, plans and arrangements and influencing continuous development and improvement in services. Achieving permanency at the earliest opportunity through good quality assessment and planning is vital. Permanence is defined in the statutory guidance that accompanies the Children Act 1989 as providing children with:

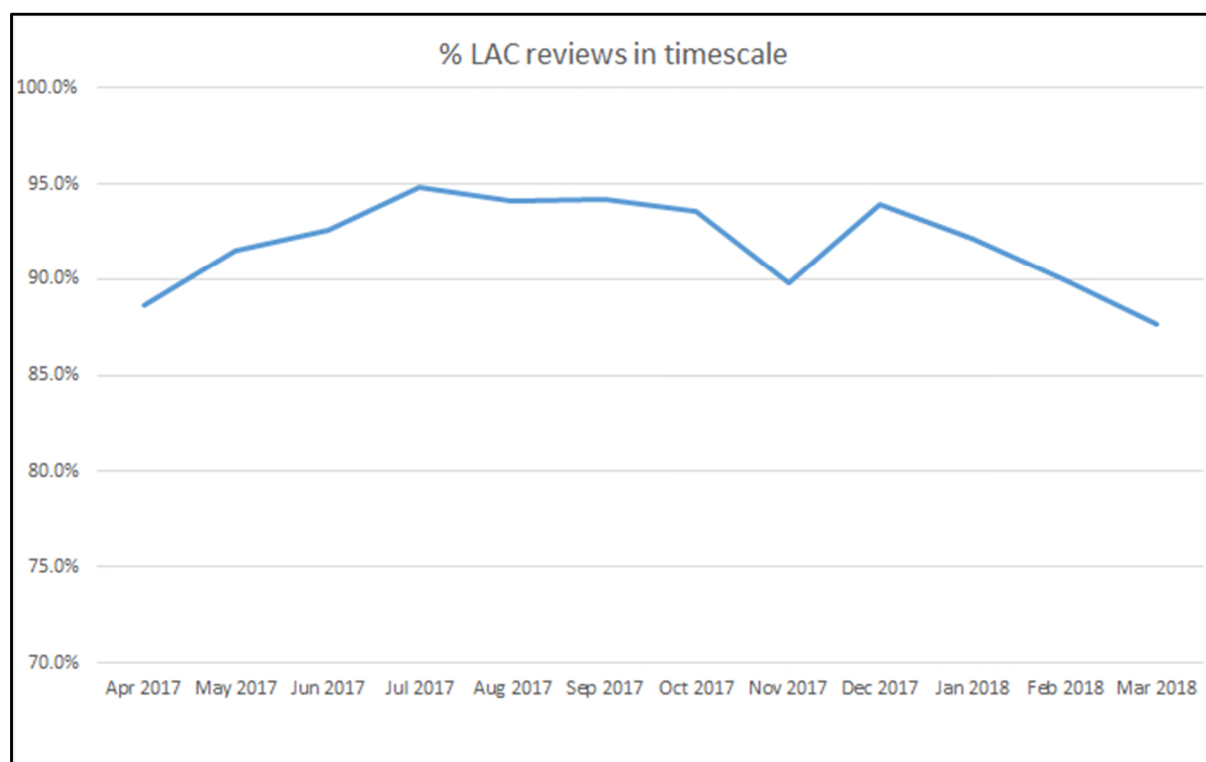
"A sense of security, continuity and identity....a secure, stable and loving family to support through childhood and beyond."

Continuing high quality relationships are important for children in care because they:-

- Help children build security through developing secure attachments
- Support their ability to form healthy, positive relationships as future adults
- Help children to develop a strong sense of belonging and positive identity.

The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer is to ensure that planning for permanence commences as soon as a child becomes looks after and that all options within the family are explored appropriately. The plan for permanence should be presented at the second review where the Independent Reviewing Officer will endorse a care plan, (if appropriate. It is vital that review of the care plans is timely.

10.1 Timeliness of LAC Reviews

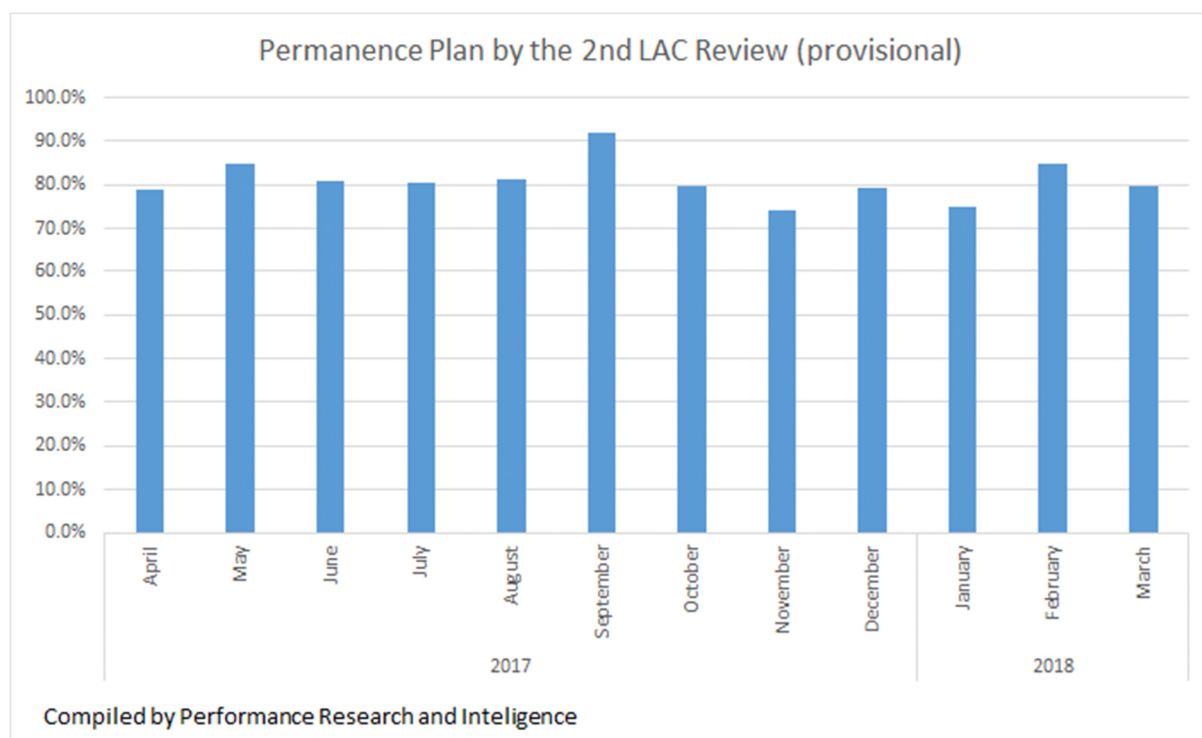


Performance of Looked after Child Reviews held in timescale has fluctuated between 87% and 95% over the course of the year. This is due to the timeliness and accuracy of recording. The final end of year figure for 2017-18 is 95.9%.

Where some Initial Looked after Child Reviews have taken place out of timescale, this was often linked to a late Looked After Child notifications being received from the allocated Social Worker and difficulties around communication with social workers and worker availability. Other issues which led to reviews taking place outside of timescale, included IRO's mis-calculating review dates or misunderstanding how reviews can be chaired as a 'series of meetings'. Social workers are now encouraged to email the IRO team managers immediately when a child becomes looked after to enable an Independent reviewing officer to be allocated on day one. Cases are allocated to Independent Reviewing Officers within 24 hours of notification. Also Independent Reviewing Officers have been spoken to with regard to timeliness and the statutory guidance with regard to how a 'series of meetings' should be managed.

New processes have now been put into place to ensure that there is a centralised diary, with every 'looked after' child having the date known centrally for their next LAC review. This was not in place previously and will be kept up to date by the business support unit and overseen by the Independent Reviewing Officer Managers. Independent Reviewing Officers are committed to arranging the initial reviews within the 20 day timescale.

10.2 Permanence



Independent Reviewing Officers are clear about their role and responsibilities to track permanence decisions as soon as the child becomes looked after and in-between the first and second looked after children reviews. Improvement in this area has been too variable throughout the year and requires improvement and Independent Reviewing Officers will be required to more robustly scrutinise this performance and offer challenge via the Dispute Resolution Protocol more consistently during 2017/2018.

One of the key objectives identified in the 2015/2016 Annual Report was that improvements would be made in this area of performance. In 2015/2016 the % of children who had a permanence plan identified at the second review was 59.6%. In 2016/2017 this increased to 66.4%. In every month of 2017/18 performance was above this level, averaging out at 80.7% for the year.

The Independent Reviewing Officer service has been part of an DfE innovation project, supported by Coram i to improve timeliness of securing permanent families for those children whose long term plan is one of fostering. There has been an introduction of tracking meetings to prevent delay in permanence being achieved through fostering. Our aim is to achieve improvements for these young people in line

with improved adoption timeliness. Independent Reviewing Officer involvement in the project has included:

- Observing the Permanence Tracking Panel pilot in the North Locality which is now being rolled out to other locality areas.
- Independent Reviewing Officers to have agreed to document when the permanence plan is endorsed or the match with a permanent foster carer is endorsed.
- The 'Chairs Monitoring Record' will now evidence key dates with regard to permanency decisions.
- 'Our Children' minutes will clearly record the Independent Reviewing Officer view of the plan, date of endorsement and any challenge, if required.
- Independent Reviewing Officers will consult with the court progression manager to track cases through the pre-proceedings process to the conclusion of court proceedings.
- Independent Reviewing Officers will continue to access caselines - e-bundle. This will ensure that Independent Reviewing Officers have swifter access to court documents, enabling greater scrutiny of progress within care proceedings.

10.3 Participation and Engagement of Children and Young People in Looked After Our Children and Young People Reviews

The Independent Reviewing Officer Service is always seeking ways to improve the engagement and participation of children and young people in all areas of practice including the statutory review process. Increased capacity and managed caseloads have provided Independent Reviewing Officers with the capacity to develop routine home visits to consult children and young people's engagement and participation in reviews. Overall participation and engagement in the review process has increased. The proportion of children attending their reviews has remained stable. Overall, there are now more children participating in their review, with a decrease of children not participating or conveying their views from 4.6% to 2.8%.

PN codes	Definition	2016-2017	2017-2018
PN0	Child aged under 4 at the time of the review	14.2%	16.5%
PN1	Child physically attends and speaks for him or herself	35.8%	35.5%
PN2	Child physically attends and an advocate speaks on his or her behalf	0.9%	0.8%

PN3	Child attends and conveys his or her view symbolically (non-verbally)	0.1%	0.5%
PN4	Child physically attends but does not speak for him or herself, does not convey his or her view symbolically (non-verbally) and does not ask an advocate to speak for him or her	0.5%	0.4%
PN5	Child does not attend physically but briefs an advocate to speak for him or her	24.6%	18.3%
PN6	Child does not attend but conveys his or her feelings to the review by a facilitative medium	19.4%	25.2%
PN7	Child does not attend nor are his or her views conveyed to the review	4.6%	2.8%

Last year we also stated that minutes of reviews would be consistently written in an 'easy read' letter to the child and young person, without use of jargon. This has been consistently achieved. Young people have given feedback that they prefer this style and have a greater understanding of why they are in care, what people are worried about, how well they are doing and what the next steps are.

Manchester has commissioned an online application, Mind of My Own (MOMO) which will support young people to share their views. This was introduced in November 2017.

Independent Reviewing Officers routinely confirm that children know about individual advocacy and how to make a complaint. They also check at Reviews whether an independent visitor is needed, and any communication needs requiring additional or specialist support.

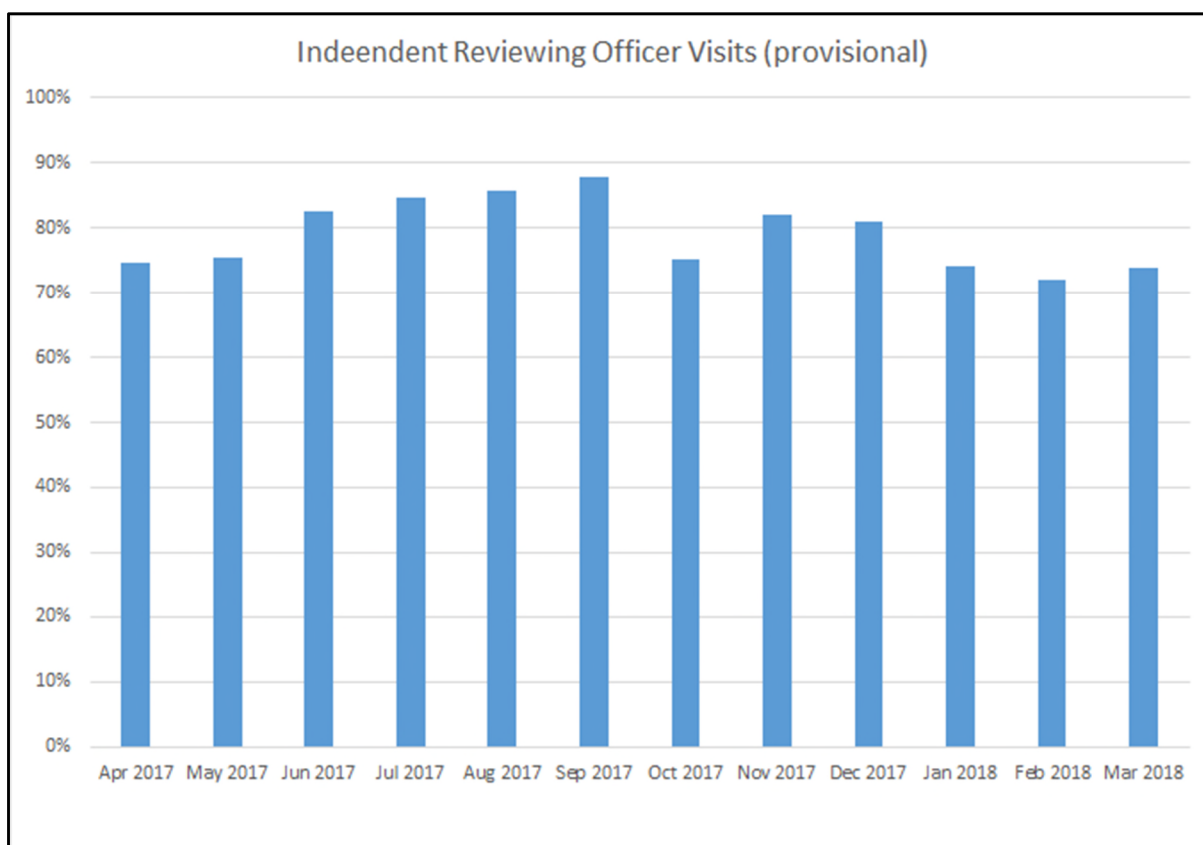
There will be a further focus for 2018/19, to encourage participation and to develop more child centred reviews incorporating child led themes to meetings.

Independent Reviewing Officers are able to use a series of meetings to facilitate smaller meetings for the child that they are comfortable attending.

Also Signs of Safety, the strengths based model of working promotes reviews being a celebration of the child's achievements. This model is now being used routinely by Independent Reviewing Officers.

10.4 Independent Reviewing Officer Visits

Independent Reviewing Officer visits to see children in the six weeks prior to their review are important. This visit is where the child is consulted about how their review will be managed (who will attend; venue, agenda etc.) and how the child wishes to participate. Independent Reviewing Officers are able to utilise a range of tools to assist the children and young people to share their wishes and feelings (Signs of Safety 3 Houses or Wizards and Fairy communication tools).

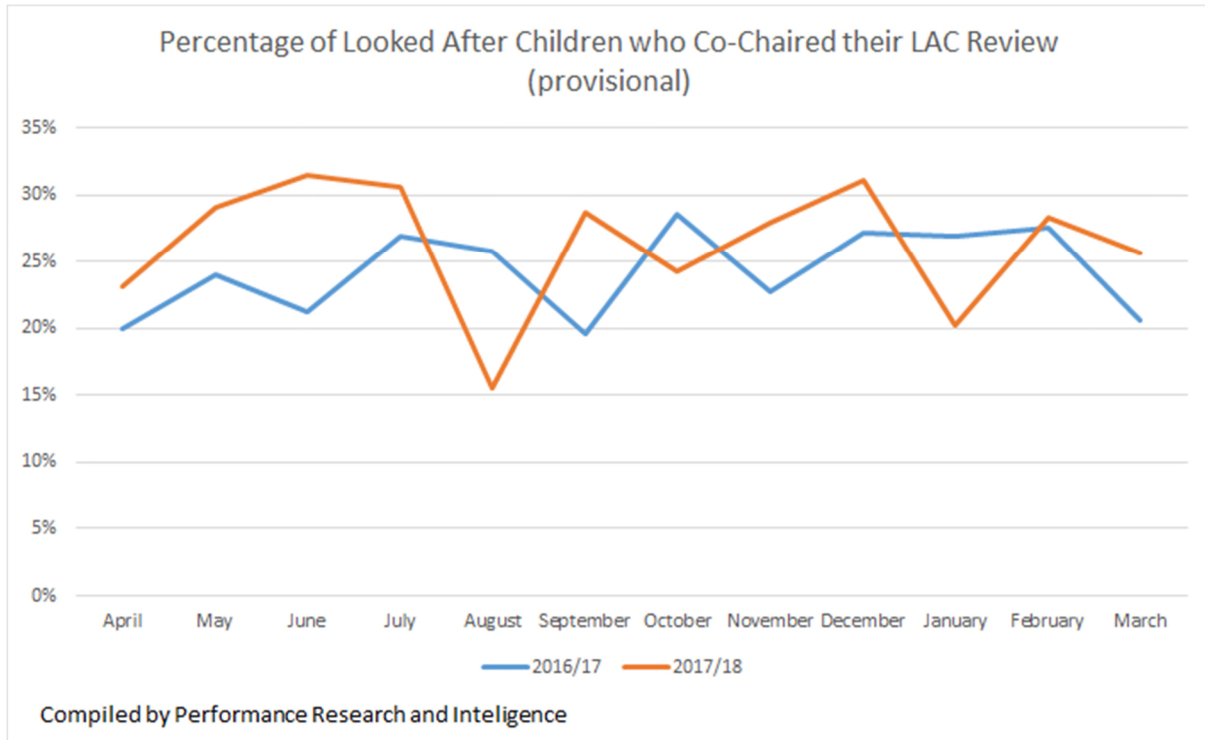


The proportion of visits taking place in 2017/2018 has averaged 79.2%, a significant increase from 63.5% in 2016/17. This information is not routinely collated by other local authorities and therefore we have no comparative data.

Performance around visits has been affected by a period of changes in Independent Reviewing Officers in the latter part of the year and also the fact that some older children choose not to see their Independent Reviewing Officers. In cases where children do not wish to see their Independent Reviewing Officer they will offer a range of alternate methods for children to share their views, set their agenda and be able to influence their care plans. This will include the Mind of my own (MOMO) app; Facetime; telephone contact, or Have your Say booklets. Young people are also encouraged to use the advocacy service where they wish to have independent support to have their views considered.

10.5 Young people co-chairing their reviews

Independent Reviewing Officers continue to support and encourage young people to chair/ co-chair their own review or to agree their own agendas wherever appropriate.



Despite significant fluctuations the proportion of young people co-chairing their review meetings has continued to improve. This figure was 24.1% in 2016/2017 and has risen to 26.8% in 2017/18

We have not reached the ambitious provisional target of 45% as set out in the 2015/2016 Annual Report and work will continue in the coming year to improve performance further.

It is not an easy option for many young people to chair a review and it requires considerable negotiation, planning and support from the Independent Reviewing Officers. The improvement has been assisted by the Independent Reviewing Officers visiting the children on their caseloads before each review and asking them to set the agenda, decide on the venue and attendees. By building supportive relationships and trust this will assist children and young people to feel more confident in co-chairing.

The Independent Reviewing Officers and Managers will continue to support young people to chair their reviews. Other creative ways have been explored that could help increase the influence young people are able to exercise in their own review and planning.

10.6 Parental Participation

Enabling parents to engage in the review process wherever appropriate is important to children because the parent(s) can share an understanding of the child's journey and demonstrate a level of commitment and loyalty to their child even if at this moment in time they are unable to care for them. It is vital if there is any consideration of reuniting them with their child in the future.

Performance in this area has fallen slightly from 2016/2017 when 33.5% of parents attended their child's review. In 2017/2018 the proportion was 32.9%. Feedback from parents may identify the barriers to their attendance.

The Safeguarding and Improvement Unit will look at achieving service user, and agency feedback in 2018/2019. Whilst it can be expected that some parents will not engage in the review, we need to understand why performance is low.

A Parental Participation Audit was undertaken in March 2018. This audit has taken place to seek assurance that when appropriate birth parents continue to be involved in the care planning for their children. The Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook states:

'The IRO should ensure that the views of the following are considered at the review, whether or not they attend the meeting: Birth parents and any other adult with Parental Responsibility.' (IRO Handbook, page 17, paragraph 3.22).

The aim of the audit was:

- To establish how robust the Independent Reviewing Officers are in checking out the accuracy of reasons given for parental non-engagement.
- To evidence that parents are routinely being invited to 'Our Children' Reviews unless there are justifiable reasons why they should not be present at the child's meeting.
- To ascertain if Independent Reviewing Officers are seeking to establish the views of birth parents where they have not attended the review meeting and to look at how these views are recorded.
- To ascertain the frequency with which parents are sent minutes from meetings.
- To establish whether Independent Reviewing Officers are involved in encouraging parents to participate in their child's meetings and that they are invited to review meetings.

A random sample of 100 cases were looked at in detail as part of the audit from October 2017. Differentiation between birth mother and father's participation was gathered in order to explore whether there are different participation levels between parents. Information regarding communication with parents, how their participation was encouraged, how their views were ascertained was sourced from monitoring reports, review minutes, review attendance sheets and case notes.

Identified themes:

- Parents who were invited to their child's meeting but did not attend were not always included in the participation list. This meant they did not receive the minutes which also include the date of the next meeting.
- Independent Reviewing Officers were not always recording their contact with parents outside of the review process.
- There was little evidence of the Independent Reviewing Officer contacting parents directly to update them or establish their views.
- Some Independent Reviewing Officers task the Social Worker to update the parents.
- The Views of Others Section in the minutes rarely includes the views of the parents.

Recommendations:

The full audit outcome will be shared with the Independent Reviewing Officers as a practice development opportunity and their managers will audit casework in this area on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance.

Independent Reviewing Officers will contact parents who do not attend their child's meeting as appropriate. Their views will be included in the minutes or they will be an explain why their views are not available. .

Parents will be asked for their feedback about their experience of attending their child's meetings in 2018-19; feedback will be used to drive continuous development and improvement.

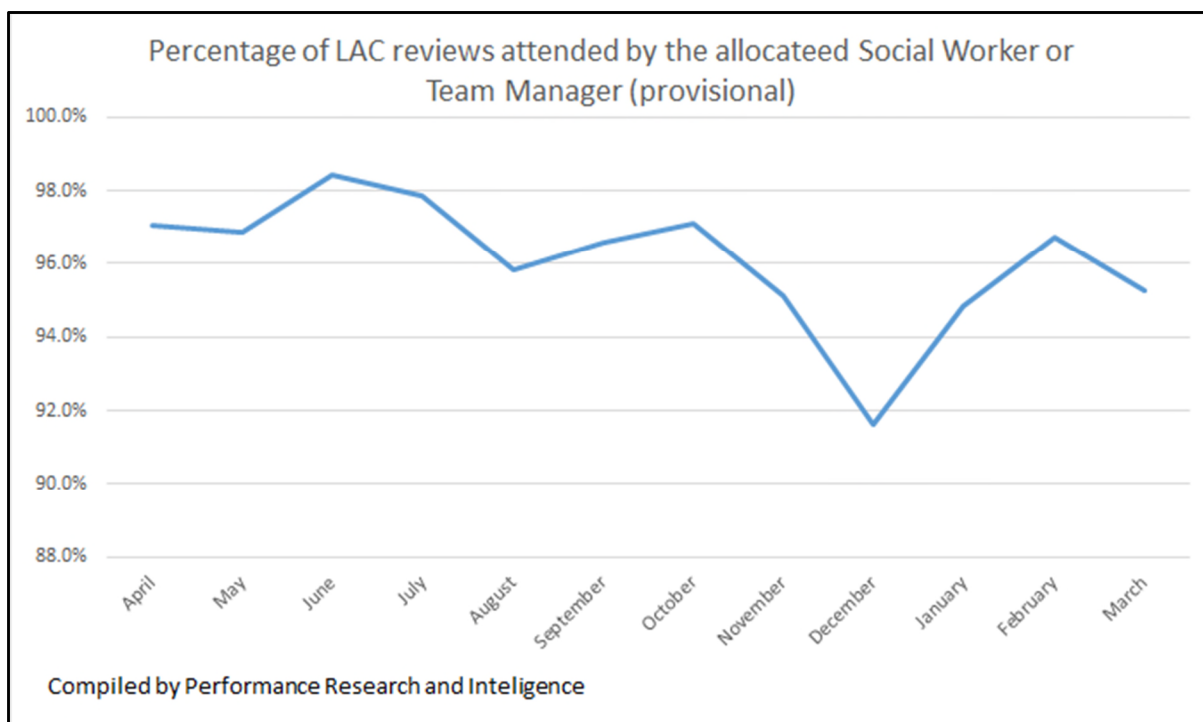
Parents will routinely be sent copies of the minutes which include the date of the next review (unless there are safeguarding reasons not to do so)

Parents will be sent an Introduction letter from the Independent Reviewing Officer to open up contact opportunities.

10.7 Social Worker Attendance and Reports to LAC reviews

The positive improvement in social work practice in relation to the allocated social worker attending and providing reports to reviews and further improvement in the provision of reports has been maintained this year supported by Independent Reviewing Officer scrutiny and the dispute resolution process.

The charts below illustrate the slight fluctuations in social work attendance and reporting at looked after children's reviews over the year.



11. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER SERVICE IMPACT

The Independent Reviewing Officer has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989, 25B (1) to ensure practice, plans and arrangements for Our Children are consistent with their individual needs and welfare and that the local authority is fulfilling its legal responsibilities towards the children.

In accordance to the Independent Reviewing Officer's Handbook, escalations are vital to quality assure the overall effectiveness of services to our children and young people. Escalations can be issues, actions or questions that the Independent Reviewing Officer has raised within the review process but have not been addressed.

The Independent Reviewing Officers have provided some examples of positive outcomes for our children and young people' as a result of their involvement in 2017/2018:

- 5 siblings placed in the same foster home. The carers wanted to adopt all the children but couldn't reach agreement with the LA about the package of support they might receive, and decided to pull out. The children were understandably upset. This was escalated to Stage 4 of the Dispute Resolution Protocol, and after a meeting with senior managers and agreement was reached with the carers and the application to adopt has been made.
- A 13 year old boy, subject to a Care Order since 2013 and in a foster placement since 2014. He had been placed with his sister who was about to reach 18 and would be leaving the foster home. He told his Independent Reviewing Officer when she visited that he didn't want to be left on his own in

the foster home. He said he would like to live with his grandmother. At the next meeting it was recommended that grandmother should be assessed as a potential carer. The child is now living with his grandmother.

- The 1 year old child's parents are both Polish so his first language was Polish, which continued when he was first looked after. The plan was adoption. When placements were being considered, the Independent Reviewing Officer asked if there were any suitable adoptive carers of Polish origin. The response was that there were two families but they weren't being considered. The Independent Reviewing Officer challenged this decision on the basis that as long as they were considered a suitable match, they would meet his cultural needs and be able to speak to him in his first language. Polish carers were considered and he is thriving since being placed with them.

11.1 Dispute Resolution Protocol

In November 2015 the Dispute Resolution Protocol was reviewed and re-launched. The Key principles that underpin the Dispute Resolution Protocol are as follows:

- The rights, needs and welfare of children must remain central at all times.
- Managers at all levels, other professionals and Independent Reviewing Officers must endeavour to establish and maintain positive channels of communication at all times and should seek to resolve issues and concerns that arise about practice, plans and arrangements for children looked after informally wherever possible and in a timescale consistent with the child's welfare.
- Independent Reviewing Officers must ensure there is a record of all issues and concerns raised, action taken and agreements reached on the child's case file.
- Allocated social workers, managers at all levels and other professionals as appropriate must always respond promptly to issues and concerns raised.
- Other professionals as appropriate i.e. Legal team, Head of Virtual School, Designated Looked After Child Nurse etc. as appropriate will be alerted to the issue and concern at any stage of the protocol if it is believed they have a role to play in resolving the particular issue or concern.
- When there are disagreements which need to be resolved quickly in order to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.
- Professional judgement must always be used and the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person is paramount. In circumstances where there are immediate concerns or there is a delay in receiving a response at the varying stages of the protocol consideration should be given to by passing stages and escalating sooner.

The protocol expects Independent Reviewing Officers to engage with colleagues to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity and in a timely manner informally wherever possible. Where the colleague does not respond, the response is not timely or where resolution cannot be reached the issue will be escalated through a six stage process. The aim is for issues to be resolved at the earliest opportunity but always within 20 working days as per Statutory Independent Reviewing Officer handbook guidance.

Stage 1 Informal Escalation which is sent to Team Managers by Independent Reviewing Officers,

Stage 2 Formal Escalation which is sent by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager to the Locality Manager,

Stage 3 Lead for Children's Safeguarding to the Head of Service,

Stage 4 Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding to the Deputy Director,

Stage 5 Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding to the Strategic Director of Children's Services,

Stage 6 Referral to CAFCASS. (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service)

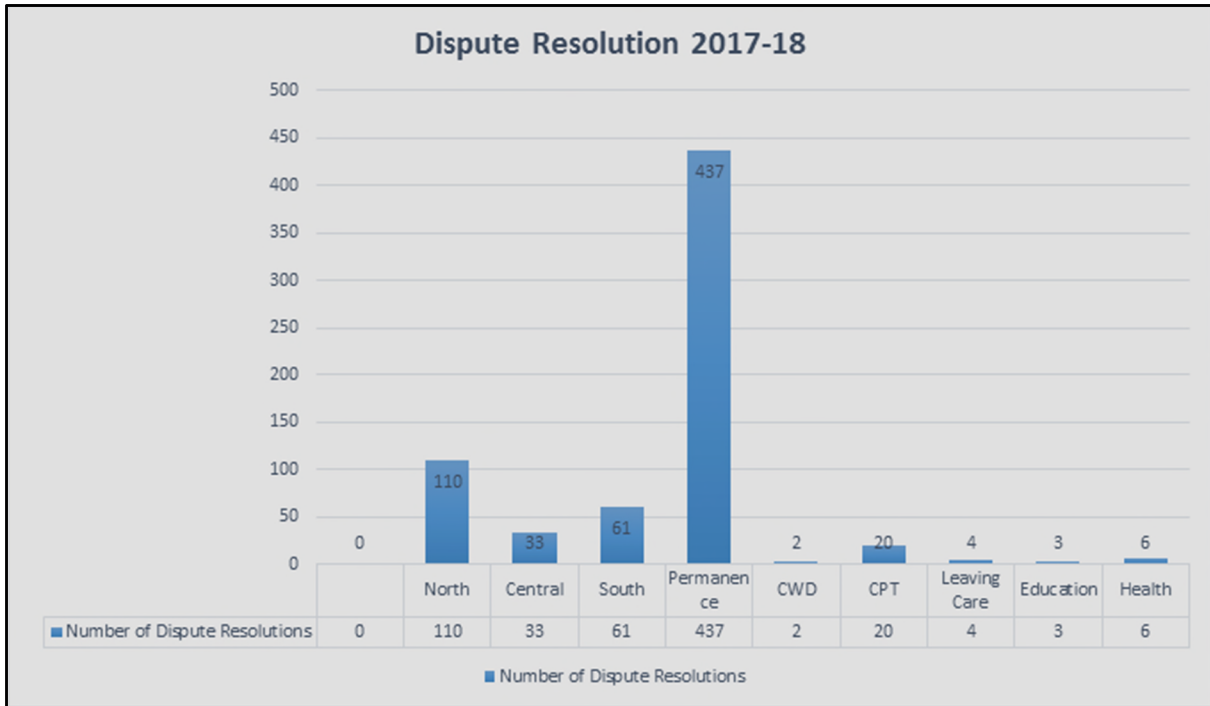
This Dispute Resolution process is completed on the Children's Information System and escalations during 2017/2018 were tracked outside of the system pending development for inclusion in the Children's Information System. This was in place from March 2018.

Monthly reports including data and themes are provided to the Head of Quality Assurance for Safeguarding. Emerging themes are fed back to the Children's Management Team Children's Services Improvement Board, Performance Clinic on a monthly basis and Corporate Parenting Panel.

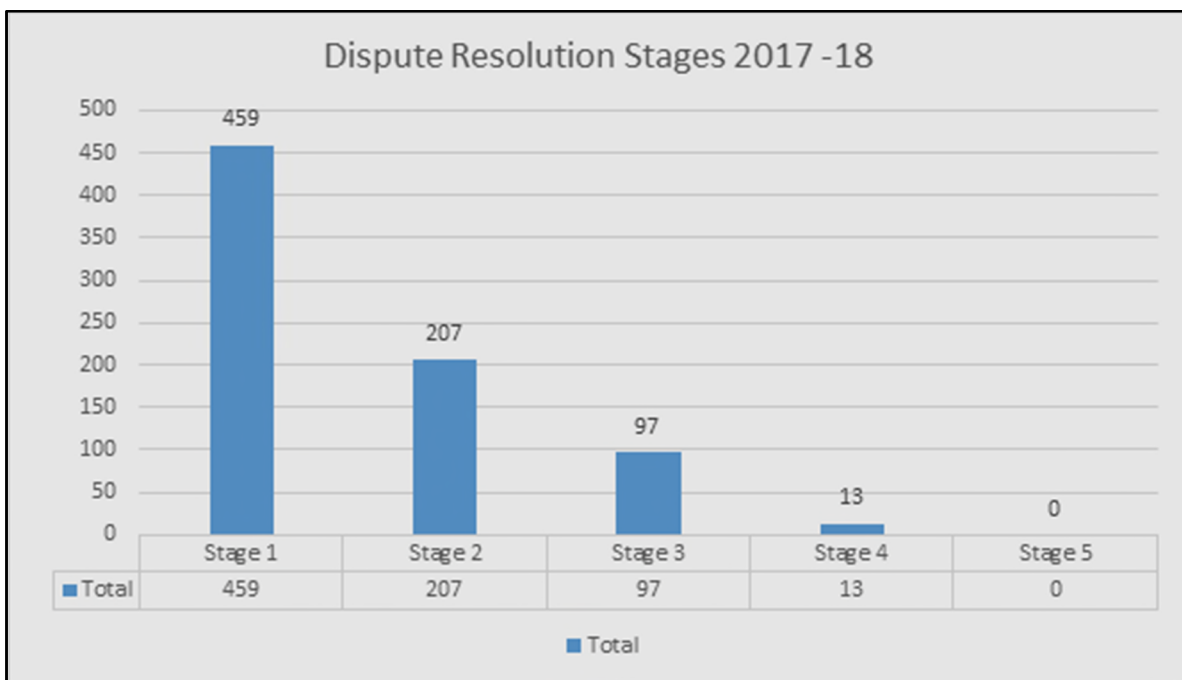
Audits have provided evidence that Independent Reviewing Officers have regular oversight of practice and planning and constructively challenge and influence practice, service development and improvements through use of the Dispute Resolution Protocol.

The 2017 Ofsted Inspection report stated:

'IROs challenge any delay in plans for children appropriately and escalations of concerns to senior managers are increasingly focused on the quality of practice rather than compliance with procedures. (Ofsted report 2017, page 19).'



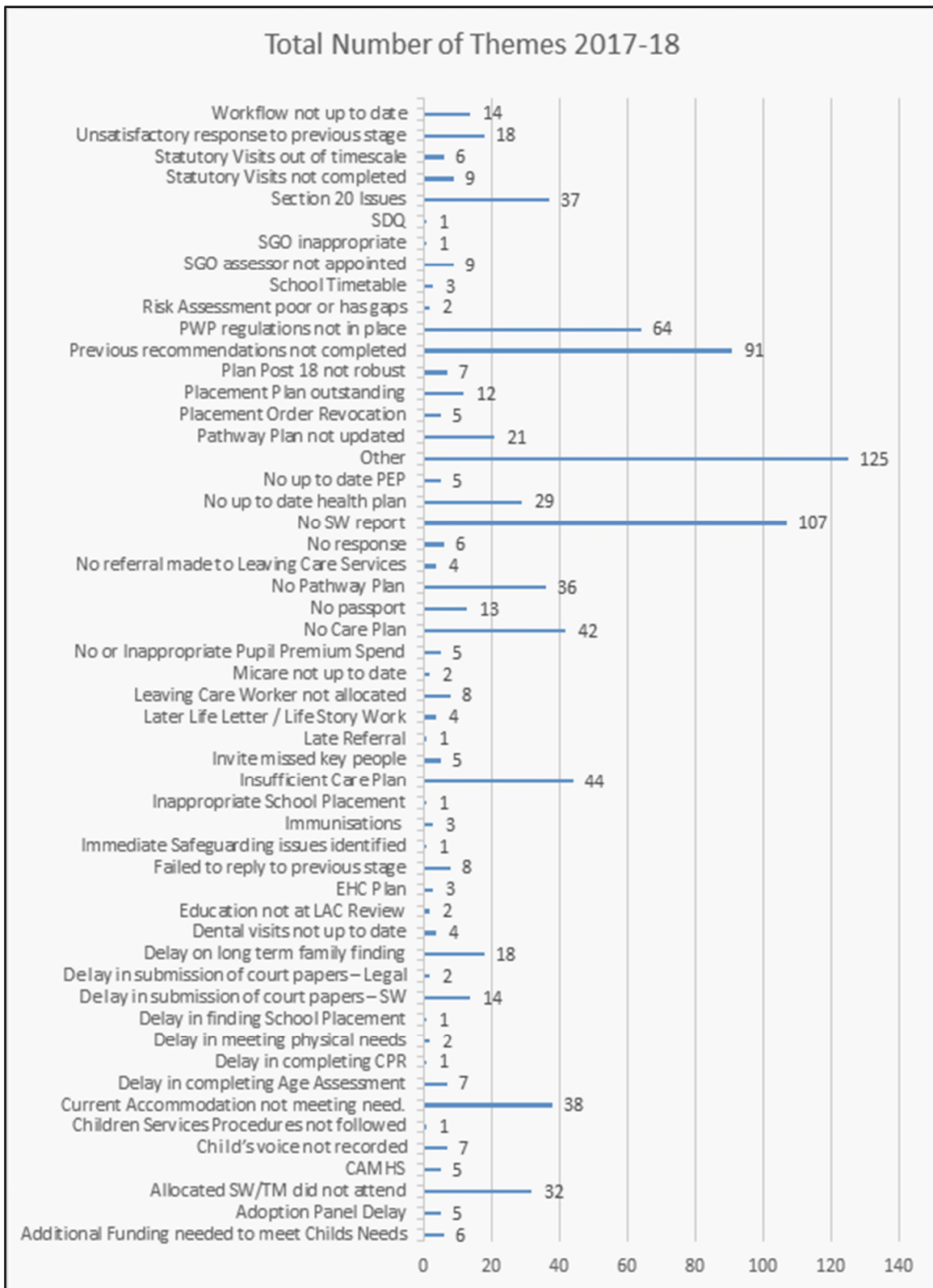
The total number of escalations have reduced this year from 782 in 2016/2017 to 676 in 2017/2018. The fact that numbers have slightly reduced suggests that there is an improving picture in relation to Social Work, but alongside this Independent Reviewing Officers continue to play a key part in driving up performance.



* Please note there will be more Dispute Resolutions overall per stage, as the same dispute resolution can move through several stages.

The Safeguarding Unit also provide monthly performance information with regard to the different stages where the dispute resolution protocol is utilised. As you can see from the graph above, as expected the highest number of escalations were made

and resolved at Stage 1, reducing in number of the stages progress to Stage 5. No escalations reached Stage 5 (Director level) this year, and it as noted that as the year progressed less were being managed at Stage 3 & Stage 4, which is positive and indicates the process is now embedded at Team Manager level.



In total Independent Reviewing Officers raised a total of 891 issues during 2017-18. This year the top 5 (No Social Work Report for LAC Review; Previous recommendations not completed; Placement with Parent not authorised by a Senior Manager; Insufficient Care Plan and Care Plan almost mirror those highlighted in 2016/2017 regardless of the reduction in numbers overall. The majority of the escalations were sent to the Permanence Teams as these are the teams with the majority of our children and young people. One of the main frustrations for the service is recommendations being agreed and then not completed in timescale. This leads to a lot of dispute resolutions escalating unnecessarily. There remain issues around the data linked to Partner Agency Dispute Resolutions and collating information. This should be resolved when the new recording system is in place in 2019.

11.2 Independent Reviewing Officer Impact

Independent Reviewing Officers have demonstrated impact during 2017-18. The increased and more consistent use of the Dispute Resolution Protocol has contributed to improvements in:

Permanency planning Performance measures (increase from 59.6% to 80.7%) and case audits have demonstrated that permanency planning is more robust at the second Looked After Child review and resulted in agreed actions for more consistent practice and recording within the teams.

Pathway planning Independent Reviewing Officers have undertaken work to ensure that robust Pathway Plans are in place for young people by the age of 16 years and 3 months that map out their future, articulate their aspirations and identifying interim goals along the way to realising their ambitions.

Use of Section 20 Independent Reviewing Officers provide increased scrutiny of use of Section 20, Children Act 1989. This will ensure arrangements are appropriate and do not continue for too long when assessments had concluded that it is no longer in the child's interest to return home.

Placement of looked after children with Parents Independent Reviewing Officers are more robust in their scrutiny and challenge in these cases where children return to the care of the parents ensuring placement with parents regulations are adhered to.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Independent Reviewing Officers will continue to offer scrutiny and challenge in order to ensure age assessments and decisions are made at the earliest opportunity.

Audit Continuous development and improvement in the overall quality of practice for 'Our Children' was scrutinised by Managers within Children's Services throughout 2017-18. 9 reports were produced as part of the Quality Assurance Framework which focused specifically on 4 areas of Independent Reviewing Officer practice.

1. *The child's voice 'their ascertainable wishes and feelings' have been sought and taken into account by the IRO as part of the reviewing process. The child*

or young person has been enabled to participate in their review when this is age appropriate and consistent with their wishes and feelings.

61% of case Met this Practice Standard, 23% Part Met the standard with 12% Not and 4% being 'Not Applicable'.

2. *The IRO's footprint on the child's case file demonstrates that they are scrutinising practice, plans and arrangements and ensuring positive outcomes for the child.*

67.5% of case Met this Practice Standard, 26.5% Part Met the standard with 4% Not and 2% being 'Not Applicable'.

3. *The Independent Reviewing Officer has visited the child in the six weeks prior to their review or they have had contact with the child if the child themselves has expressed a wish to have an alternative form of communication with them.*

52% of case Met this Practice Standard, 25% Part Met the standard with 23% Not and 0% being 'Not Applicable'.

4. *In order to ensure the child's needs are met in a timely manner and to avoid drift; timescales must be consistently met. - i.e. minimum of 20 days of being looked after, thereafter within 3 months of the Initial review and subsequent reviews are conducted at no more than six monthly intervals. Independent Reviewing Officer Monitoring Forms and minutes are evident on the child's case file.*

83% of cases Met this Practice Standard, 11.5% Part Met the standard with 5.5% Not and 0% being 'Not Applicable'.

12. WORKING WITH PARTNER AGENCIES

As identified in the 2017-18 Annual Report the Safeguarding and Improvement Unit has developed closer communication and working between Independent Reviewing Officers and Children's Guardians during care proceedings over the year.

There is a shared commitment to ensuring that Independent Reviewing Officers and Children's Guardians develop productive working relationships to ensure the best outcomes for children. CAFCASS were invited to attend the North West Independent Reviewing Officer Conference on 18 May 2017 and attended a meeting with Independent Reviewing Officers in November 2017 and June 2018; maintaining twice yearly direct contact between the two services.

In discussions CAFCASS officers have noted that they have observed an improvement in the Independent Reviewing Officer service in Manchester.

Quarterly meetings also take place with our colleagues in health who are responsible for ensuring good health outcomes for our 'looked after' children, and we have strong links with the 'Virtual School'.

Agencies are regularly invited to the Independent Reviewing Officer team meetings. In 2017-18 attendees from Barnardos, the Virtual School, Health, Legal and Adoption Counts were some of the agencies invited.

The Independent Reviewing Officers and their managers attend and contribute to the following meetings and forums:

- Corporate Parenting Panel.
- Voice and Influence subgroup
- The Virtual School Board.
- Looked After Children Health sub group.
- We have 2 'Child Sexual Exploitation' Champions who attend clinical supervision.
- The Leaving Care Service strategic group.
- Missing from Home Panels.
- Voice and Influence sub group.
- North West Regional Independent Reviewing Officer meetings.
- CORAM i meetings.
- UASC Meetings.
- Learning Circles.
- Liquid Logic development and implementation groups.
- DFE Innovation project.
- MOMO Implementation Group meetings.

13. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER SERVICE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017/2018

- The Independent Reviewing Officer Service undertook it's first direct survey with 'Our Children' which focused on the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer and the review process.
- We increased the number of themed audits undertaken; Pathway Planning; Parental Engagement, Section 20 cases; Placement Order & Permanence Planning.
- MOMO was introduced and implemented.
- There was an increase in the % of 'Our Children' being seen prior to their review meeting from 63.5% in 2016-17 to 79.2% in 2017-18 and improved data accuracy to clarify the reasons why visits are not taking place and whether alternative contact methods are being offered where young people decline a visit.
- Children are now consistently able to choose the date (within statutory timescales), time and venue for all subsequent reviews.
- Children are sent a 'child friendly' invite to their reviews.
- Children have been given the opportunity to contribute to their 'looked after' children reviews and communicate with their Independent Reviewing Officers in more creative ways using technology.
- The % of children co-chairing their reviews has remained stable.
- Some children have participated in themed reviews but this needs to be offered consistently.

- The timeliness reviews has increased in line with our 2017-18 target of 95-100%.
- Through audit we now understand why birth parents are not attending reviews, and need to improve performance in this area to ensure if they do not wish to attend or cannot attend they can contribute and are fully informed of the decisions being made about their child.
- Independent Reviewing Officers and managers now receive weekly performance reports in relation to children accommodated under Section 20; children on Placement Orders for over 12 months; Children on Care Order and placed at home; and the quality and timeliness of Pathway Plans.
- Further work has commenced with our Performance Team to enable us to accurately measure what % of review recommendations were added to the child's file within 5 working days of the child's review.
- There is evidence of the Independent Reviewing Officer footprint on each child's.
- Weekly performance information is now being received by managers and Independent Reviewing Officers. Work has been undertaken with Business Support to ensure that the service have improved processes to ensure improvement in performance in the circulation of minutes in timescale.
- 83.3% of Independent Reviewing Officers were observed by managers last year and received constructive feedback with regard to their practice, performance, learning and development needs.
- The Dispute Resolution Process has been embedded across Safeguarding and Improvement Unit and the way in which we collate information has been streamlined.
- The safeguarding supervision agenda template has been revised and updated to reflect 'Signs of Safety' Framework
- 83% of Independent Reviewing Officers received an appraisal under the new agreed process 'About You'.
- All staff have continued to have access to Signs of Safety training.
- Signs of Safety is now successfully used across the Independent Reviewing Officer Service.
- Manchester Independent Reviewing Service hosted the 2017 North West regional conference.
- CAFcASS attended the North West regional conference in May 2017, Service development day June 2018 and team meeting in November 2017.
- IRO Managers contributed to North West ADCS Audits with regard to 'Children placed at Home on Care Orders'.
- Independent Reviewing Officers have access to electronically held court paperwork via caselines.
- 3 more members of the team attended the Advanced Practice for Independent Reviewing Officer course at Edge Hill University and passed the course.
- Managers continued to attend regional groups.
- All Independent Reviewing Officers continue to have access learning opportunities via Research in Practice.
- Independent Reviewing Officers continue to be provided with legal updates and developments in court practice.
- Independent Reviewing Officers took part in a pilot which enabled them to use 'Voice Recognition' technology.

14. KEY PRIORITY AREAS FOR 2018/2019

- To have a relentless focus on ensuring permanence is secured for our children and young people at the earliest opportunity; a permanence plan is in place for our children and young people by their second review.
- Drive up the quality and effectiveness of Pathway Planning
- To continue to promote the engagement of parents in the child's meeting.
- To develop feedback forms for parents to identify and address barriers to their attendance.
- To develop feedback forms for professionals who attend children's reviews.
- To increase the number of children being offered a child friendly meeting and themed reviews.
- To continue to champion MOMO with 'Our Children' and professionals.
- To increase the number of children co-chairing their review meetings from our 2017-18 performance figure.
- To continue to improve the Independent Reviewing Officer footprint on the child's file and evidence more frequent overview between meetings.
- To increase the percentage of staff observed by their manager over 12 months from 83% to 90%.
- To collate the information on the feedback from our children and young people about their Independent Reviewing Officer, their meeting and evidence changes in practice as a result.
- To improve the Partner agency Dispute Resolution process as part of the Liquid Logic development.
- To decide on whether the roll out of Voice Recognition will take place across the service.
- To ensure that we evidence that we have listened to Our Children about labels and stigma, that we use plain language and change our terminology. We will not use LAC but will refer to Our Children, LAC Reviews will be referred to as the Child/Young Person's meeting, Contact will be referred to as meeting with families and friends.
- To improve the timeliness of Children's Meetings to 98%.
- To increase the percentage of children and young people seen by their Independent Reviewing Officer within 6 weeks of their meeting to 80%.
- To ensure 90% of recommendations are placed on the child's file within 5 days of their review.
- To improve the % of review minutes are sent out within 15 working days.
- To ensure that all of our reports align with the SOS Framework in tandem with the implementation of Liquid Logic.
- To ensure that 'Our Children' are routinely offered an advocate and an Independent Visitor.
- To ensure that our children and young receive an excellent service as they move into adolescence and adulthood, through scrutiny of Pathway Plans and Post 18 reviews.

15. CONCLUSION.

The Independent Reviewing Officer service has continued to build on the significant progress it has made over the last 3 years during 2017-18 which has resulted in strengthening the improvement in practice, plans, arrangements and outcomes for looked after children.

We were very proud of the comments made by OFSTED made following the 2017 Inspection; that the Independent Reviewing Officer Service in Manchester is 'strong' and that 'their influence is evident throughout all stages of care planning'. Furthermore that the 'right people are actively involved in timely and robust statutory review meetings' and that 'between reviews Independent Reviewing Officers work hard to get to know children who participate well in the planning for their future'.

In a survey of 'Our Children' 72.1% of 11-16 years olds surveyed told us that they enjoyed attending their reviews and 81.4% said that they felt comfortable in their review. 82.7% of children advised they were given the opportunity to have their say in reviews. Most importantly 95.2% stated that their Independent Reviewing Officer listened and acted upon what they were being told. 91.9% rated their most recent review okay, quite good or very good.

The Independent Reviewing Officer service is continually building upon the firm foundations of previous years.

- We have stable management and leadership with clear insight and understanding of service strengths and development needs and a robust service plan in place;
- Our Independent Reviewing Officers are appropriately skilled and experienced. They continue to be provided with appropriate support, learning and development opportunities and their views on future service developments are fed into our business plans;
- We are demonstrating continuous development and improvement in practice and performance as well as monitoring the performance of others;
- Statutory role and responsibilities of the Independent Reviewing Officer service are now well understood across Children's Services and partner agencies and our Dispute Resolution processes are well embedded evidencing how we robustly challenge all corporate parents (internal & external);
- We are now engaging with our children and young people more effectively through reviews processes, visits, MOMO and surveys to gain their views and build upon what they are telling us they want from our services.
- We are moving closer to our aspiration to be a fully effective Independent Reviewing Officer service that is driving continuous development and improvement in practice and services for looked after children.

16. REFERENCES

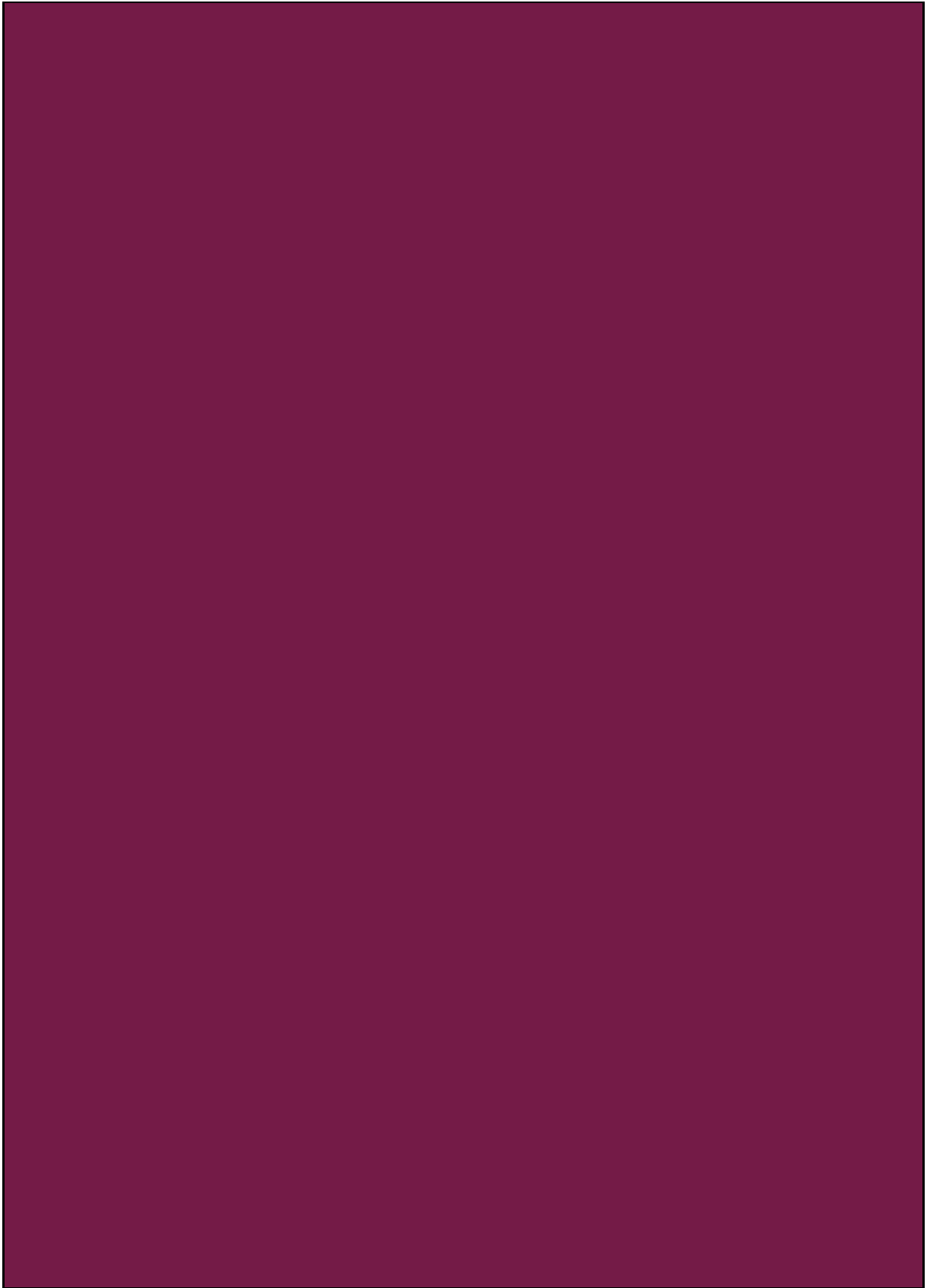
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**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 9 October 2018

Subject: Overview Report

Report of: Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

Summary

This report provides the following information:

- Recommendations Monitor
- Key Decisions
- Items for information
- Work Programme

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to discuss the information provided and agree any changes to the work programme that are necessary.

Contact Officer:

Name: Rachel McKeon
Position: Scrutiny Support Officer
Tel: 0161 234 4997
Email: rachel.mckeon@manchester.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

Background Documents (available for public inspection):

None

1. Monitoring Previous Recommendations

This section of the report contains recommendations made by the Committee, responses to them, if they will be implemented, and if it will be, how this will be done.

Date	Item	Recommendation	Action	Contact Officer
5 September 2017	CYP/17/40 School Place Planning and Admissions	To request further information on the number of siblings who have been allocated places at different schools.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be reported back to the Committee via the Overview report.	Michelle Devine, Interim Head of Access
5 September 2017	CYP/17/41 School Governance Update	To recommend that the Council work to increase recruitment of school governors who reflected the diversity of the local community.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be reported back to the Committee via the Overview report.	Ruth Bradbury, School Governance Lead
5 December 2017	CYP/17/64 Update on Manchester's implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms introduced in 2014	To request a breakdown of the ethnicity of children with SEND and of the children with SEND who were excluded from school.	A response to this recommendation was circulated to Members by email on 5 September 2018.	Amanda Corcoran, Director of Education/ Julie Hicklin, SEND Lead
27 February 2018	CYP/18/14 Update on School	To request that the Director of Education share school-level data on exclusions with the	This recommendation has been completed.	Amanda Corcoran, Director of

	Exclusions	Chair.		Education
27 February 2018	CYP/18/16 The Employment of Children	To request that the Council carry out a social media campaign to raise awareness of the legislation relating to child employment.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be reported back to the Committee via the Overview report.	Amanda Corcoran, Director of Education
4 September 2018	CYP/18/43 Children and Young People's Health including Mental Health Programme	To request that the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, write to the relevant Government Minister to lobby for additional funding for children and young people's mental health services.	A response to this recommendation will be reported back to the Committee via the Overview report.	Rachel McKeon, Scrutiny Support Officer
4 September 2018	CYP/18/44 Early Help Strategy	To request to that the analysis of the Troubled Families outcomes for 2017 be provided to Members of the Committee.	A response to this recommendation will be reported back to the Committee via the Overview report.	Joanne Dalton, Strategic Lead for Early Help and Interventions
4 September 2018	CYP/18/44 Early Help Strategy	To request a breakdown of the Early Help statistics at ward or district level.	A response to this recommendation will be reported back to the Committee via the Overview report.	Joanne Dalton, Strategic Lead for Early Help and Interventions
4 September 2018	CYP/18/45 Children's Services Score	To request an update on progress to arrange a training session for Members, to include	The training request is with the Director of Children's and Education Services who has requested further clarification from the Chair as	Mike Williamson, Scrutiny

	Care (Proxy Indicators)	the Ofsted Frameworks and school attainment measures.	to what precisely the training should cover.	Team Leader
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2. Key Decisions

The Council is required to publish details of key decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before the decision is due to be taken. Details of key decisions that are due to be taken are published on a monthly basis in the Register of Key Decisions.

A key decision, as defined in the Council's Constitution is an executive decision, which is likely:

- To result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or
- To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the city.

The Council Constitution defines 'significant' as being expenditure or savings (including the loss of income or capital receipts) in excess of £500k, providing that is not more than 10% of the gross operating expenditure for any budget heading in the in the Council's Revenue Budget Book, and subject to other defined exceptions.

An extract of the most recent Register of Key Decisions, published on **28 September 2018** containing details of the decisions under the Committee's remit is included below. This is to keep members informed of what decisions are being taken and, where appropriate, include in the work programme of the Committee.

Register of Key Decisions:

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision maker	Planned date of decision	Documents that will be considered	Contact officer details
Capital Investment in schools Ref:	The approval of capital expenditure in relation to the creation of school places through new builds or	City Treasurer	January 2018 or later	Checkpoint 4 Business Case	Amanda Corcoran 0161 234 4314 a.corcoran@manchester.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision maker	Planned date of decision	Documents that will be considered	Contact officer details
2016/02/01D	expansions.				
TC850 – Education Management System 2018/09/24B	An Education Management System which will integrate the Education department(s) at MCC along with parents and educational providers across Manchester.	City Treasurer	November 18 onwards	Report and Recommendation	Jon Nickson Senior Project Manager 0161 234 3723 j.nickson@manchester.gov.uk
Organisation of Special Educational Needs provision Ref: 2016/06/28	Agree to a prescribed alteration to Rodney House school to change designated age range and number of places. Agree to proposed changes to Sensory Services following consultation.	The Executive	March 2018 or later	Report outlining proposals. Outcomes of consultation process.	Amanda Corcoran Interim Director of Education 0161 234 1866 a.corcoran@manchester.gov.uk
School Place Planning	Approval on the strategy and spend	Executive	May 2018	Children and Young People Scrutiny	Name:Amanda Corcoran Position:Director of Education

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision maker	Planned date of decision	Documents that will be considered	Contact officer details
Report Ref: 2018/04/16A	options for the 19/20 basic need allocation			report	Tel no:234 4314 Email address:a.corcoran@manchester.gov.uk
Leaving Care Services Ref: 2018/03/21B	It is resolved for MCC to decommission the current 3rd party contract and establish a 'Wholly Owned Trading Company' to deliver Leaving Care Services.	The Executive	30/5/18	Report, supporting documents and recommendations	Name: Paul Marshall Position: Strategic Director Tel no: 0161 234 3804 Email address: paul.marshall@manchester.gov.uk
Children and Young People Foster Care Flexible Purchasing System Ref: 2018/05/1D	Approval to use the North West FPS for the delivery of Foster Care services	Strategic Director of Children's Services	May 2018	Contract Report and recommendation	Mike Worsley Procurement Manager Tel: 0161 234 3080 Email: mike.worsley@manchester.gov.uk
Children's Residential Care Flexible Purchasing System	Approval to use the North west FPS for the delivery of Residential Care for Children	Strategic Director of Children's Services	August 2018	Contract Report and Recommendation	Mike Worsley, Procurement Manager, Tel: 0161 234 3080 Email: mike.worsley@manchester.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision maker	Planned date of decision	Documents that will be considered	Contact officer details
2018/08/01A					
Contract for the Provision of Housing Related Support for Young People, Homelessness and Drug and Alcohol Services 2018/08/16B	The appointment of Provider to deliver	Executive Director Strategic Commissioning and Director of Adult Social Services	December 2018	Report and Recommendation	Mike Worsley Procurement Manager mike.worsley@manchester.gov.uk 0161 234 3080

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme – October 2018**

Tuesday 9 October 2018, 2.00pm (Report deadline Thursday 27 September 2018)				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB)	To receive the MSCB's Annual Report.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/ Julia Stephens-Row	
Leaving Care Service	To receive a report on the establishment of the Wholly Owned Trading Company (WOTC).	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	See June 2018 minutes
Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service	To receive a presentation on the IRO service.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	
Manchester Curriculum for Life	To receive oral feedback on the pilot.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See July 2018 minutes
Attainment and Attendance – Provisional Results	To receive provisional outcomes of statutory assessments for 2018.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	
Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	-	Rachel McKeon	

Tuesday 6 November 2018, 2.00pm (Report deadline Thursday 25 October 2018)				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Inclusion Strategy	To receive further information on work to reduce the number of school exclusions, including the national review.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See June 2018 minutes
Our City Our Say	This report will provide an update on the implementation of Our City Our say strategy and information on National Youth Agency Hear by Right Award.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran Adam Farriker	
Supplementary Schools	To receive a report that updates the Committee on the work in the City to engage and support Supplementary Schools. This update has been requested by OFSTED subgroup of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Rahman	Jenny Patterson	
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

Tuesday 4 December 2018, 2.00pm (Report deadline Thursday 22 November 2018)				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	<p>To receive a report on CAMHS and transitions; giving due regard to the following areas for the general population and Our Children (looked after/care leavers):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> profile of need in Manchester - set in the context of the national and Greater Manchester picture 	Councillor Craig Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/ Professor Craig Harris, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC)	See September 2018 minutes Invite Mental Health Champion and Chair of

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the voice of children and young people shapes and influences services • caseloads of CAMHS workers and interventions responsive to need • transition arrangements • performance (including waiting times and non-attendance) • impact and outcome • future planning and transformation arrangements including the transformation of mental health services for children in Manchester and any commissioning intentions 			Health Scrutiny Committee
Children's Health	<p>To receive a report on the population health needs of children in Manchester including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school nursing service • health visiting • dental and physical health • public health investment in addressing childhood obesity and malnutrition 	Councillor Craig Councillor Bridges	David Regan/Sarah Doran/Paul Marshall	See June 2018 Audit Committee minutes
Sport and Active Lifestyles for Children and Young People	To receive a further report to include a review of the data from the 2017/2018 academic year.	Councillor Bridges Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran/ David Regan/Lee Preston/Neil Fairlamb	See December 2017 minutes Invite Chair of Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee
Budget - TBC				
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

Items To be Scheduled				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Annual Adoption and Fostering report	To receive a report on the Council's performance in relation to its adoption and fostering services	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	
Children and Young People's Plan	To receive a further report at an appropriate time, to include a 'plan on a page'.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	See October 2016 minutes
Complex Safeguarding/Protect report	To receive a report on the Council's Complex Safeguarding service.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	
Early Help	To receive an update report in a year's time.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	See September 2018 minutes
Early Years	To receive a quarterly update. Next update to report on the Early Years Delivery Model, focusing on the Health Visitor programme.	Councillor Bridges	Amanda Corcoran	See 2 January 2018 minutes
Edge of Care Services	To receive a report on the range of approaches used to support children and young people on the edge of care, to include the context, anonymised case studies and information on value for money.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/ Sean McKendrick	See December 2017 minutes
Foster Care	To receive a further report at an appropriate time, to include information on the success of the Council's fostering service's recruitment and retention activity and an update on the number of children for whom the Council have secured a 'permanent' placement. To update Members on the issues raised by Manchester Foster Care Association, where appropriate.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/ Sean McKendrick	See November 2017 minutes
Greater Manchester Review of Children's	To receive a further report which provides more information on the proposals for Greater Manchester	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	See 31 January 2017

Services	Children's Services, the Children and Families Bill and the Alan Wood review of LSCB, including the implications for Manchester City Council.			minutes
Leaving Care Service	To receive a report in March 2019 on the impact of the Wholly Owned Trading Company (WOTC) which provides the Leaving Care Service.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	March 2019 - TBC See June 2018 minutes
Locality Plan	To receive a report on the Locality Plan as it relates to services for children and young people, including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.	Councillor Bridges Councillor Craig	Paul Marshall	See November 2016 minutes Invite Chair of Health Scrutiny Committee
Looked After Children and Care Leavers Placement Sufficiency Strategy Review	To request a further report in the 2018/2019 municipal year to update on progress and impact. To request that this report includes consideration of the reasons why the number of LAC is increasing in Manchester and nationally and information on the placement of sibling groups.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/Sean McKendrick	See May 2018 minutes
Looked After Children (LAC) and Corporate Parenting	To receive an annual report on the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel. To include an update on recent developments in respect of LAC and corporate parenting. To include the future role/best use of existing children's homes including best practice within other local authorities and models of practice.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall / Linda Evans	See May 2018 minutes
Looked After Children (LAC) Investment Plan budget	To receive a quarterly update.	Councillor Bridges Councillor Flanagan	Paul Marshall /Simon Finch	Invite Resources and Governance Scrutiny Chair
Manchester Curriculum for Life	To receive an update report in 12 months' time.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See July 2018 minutes Invite Chair of

				Economy Scrutiny Committee
Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB)	To receive the MSCB's Annual Report.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall / Julia Stephens-Row	
Post Ofsted Improvement Plan Update	Regular reports provided by the Strategic Director for Children's Services detailing action taken as part of the Ofsted Improvement Plan. An update is currently received at each meeting. Updates will be aligned to themes within the Improvement Plan. Future content of reports will include: Corporate Parenting and LAC, Safeguarding, Fostering and Adoption, Quality of Practice (including a breakdown of the cases which have 'not met' practice standards, including case studies if appropriate) and Missing from Home. To also include an update on the progress and impact of the Getting to Good Board and its priorities. To receive a report outlining the impact of the actions in relation to the following Ofsted recommendation: "Monitor and improve the frequency and quality of management oversight and supervision in all teams. Ensure that supervision is regular, reflective and challenging, and that managers record the rationale for their decisions."	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/ Linda Evans	See September 2017, 30 January 2018 and May 2018 minutes.
Proxy Indicators	To receive quarterly presentations of the proxy indicators outlined in the report considered by the Committee in June 2018 and to request that these presentations also include information on school attendance and exclusions.	Councillor Bridges Councillor Rahman	Paul Marshall/ Sean McKendrick/ Amanda Corcoran	See June 2018 minutes
Raising Standards of Practice in Children's	To receive an update report.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	See September

Social Care				2016 minutes
Safeguarding	<p>Regular reports provided by the Strategic Director for Children's Services, three a year. Future content to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together • Sex education in schools, safeguarding risks of access to internet porn, internet bullying • Feedback of action from lifestyle choices • Information on multi-agency work to disrupt and enforce against activities leading to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) • Safeguarding children in sport 	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall / Linda Evans	See July 2017 and February 2018 minutes
School Attendance and Attainment	To receive regular reports regarding attainment and attendance. To include information on the use of flexi-schooling in Manchester and on children who are not included in the school attendance figures because they are waiting for a school place or are being home schooled.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See 30 January 2018 minutes
School Calendar	To receive a report on progress to better align school calendars for 2018/2019.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See June 2016 minutes
Working Together to Safeguard Children	To consider Edwina Grant's discussion paper on future arrangements for working together to safeguard children at a future meeting.	Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall	See 30 January 2018 minutes
Young Carers	To receive a report on Young Carers.	Councillor Bridges	Amanda Corcoran	See 30 January 2018 minutes
Youth and Play Trust	To review progress, including information on the transition arrangements for the hubs. To receive an update on the response to the recommendations of the Youth and Play Task and Finish Group.	Councillor Bridges Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See December 2015 & February 2016 minutes

Changes to Lancasterian Sensory Support Service	To receive a report in order to monitor the impact of the changes.	Councillor Rahman	Amanda Corcoran	See February 2017 minutes
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