

Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel 29 July

Childrens improvement projects and
Ofsted focused visit.



Our Improvement Journey

- 2016 Onwards. Significantly increased activity post inspection including numbers of children becoming looked after
- 2018. Investment in early help and sustainability. Led to improvements in performance, earlier support for children and families- reduction in demand and level of statutory intervention
- 2019 – Improvements recognised by Ofsted
- 2020 - DFE intervention ends- assured around progress
- 2020. Pandemic. Following initial reduction in contact have seen increases in contacts and numbers of children and families needing our help. Impact less than some other areas due to focus on early help

Our Improvement Journey

- Invested in early help, social work, signs of safety, accommodation options, 7 day a week model, social workers in schools and much more
- Ongoing independent oversight through Improvement Board.
- 2021 Covid Ofsted Monitoring Visit. Focused on how we supported children and families and where we could improve- no Priority Actions

Our Improvement Framework

- 7 Sustainability Projects- Phase One
- 4 Investable Propositions- Phase Two
- One Million Pound Investment
- Oversight from Improvement Board, Strategic Review Meeting and Scrutiny
- Cross Organisational Priority

Phase one - 7 Sustainability Projects

- Safely reduce the need for children to be care
- Strengthening prevention work, improving children's progress through care.
- Ensuring Cared for Children have a plan to achieve permanence at the earliest opportunity
- Tameside Children should be placed in Tameside in a family setting.
- For those Tameside children who cannot live in a family setting we need to ensure they have the right alternative provision that supports their needs and where ever possible this should be in Tameside.

7 Sustainability Projects

System wide from Early Help to Leaving Care

- 1 – Early Help & Prevention At A Neighbourhood Level
- 2 – Family Intervention Service
- 3 – Team Around The Setting
- 4 – Duty / Locality Restructure
- 5 – Positive Futures (Respite / Assessment)
- 6 – Fostering Service Improvement
- 7 – Placements Review & Sufficiency

Phase Two - 4 Investable Propositions

To move forward Faster and Further

1. Delivery of a Rapid Improvement Plan
2. Social work and Personal Advisor capacity
3. Enhanced Commissioning, Brokerage and Monitoring function.
4. Enhanced Quality and Performance capacity

The Covid Impact on Current Demand

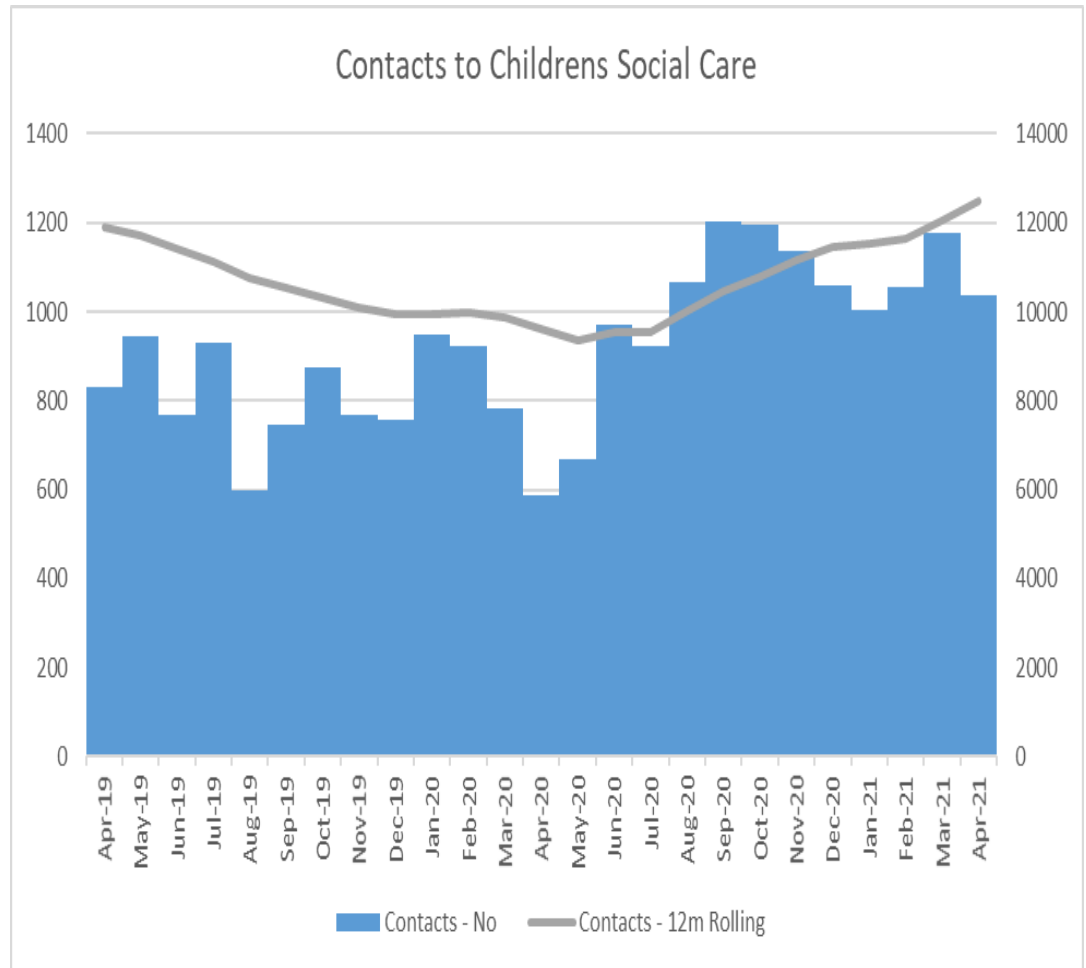
- Prior to Covid demands into the statutory system was on a downward trajectory - Contacts, Referrals, CiN, open cases 2018 - 2020
- This can be tracked against Early Help activity
- The last 8-10 months have seen escalating demands
- Without the work in 2018/19 and our targeted approach during Covid this demand is likely to have been higher

Contact

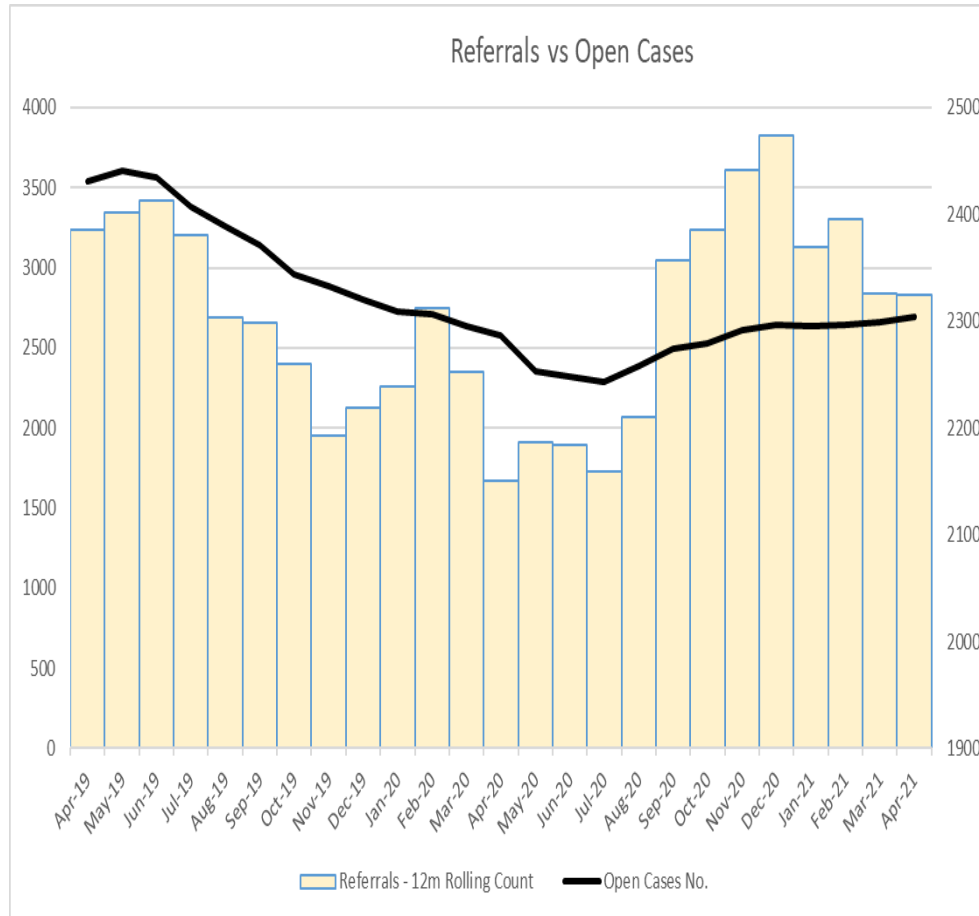
Rolling 12 month contact trends in contact shows continued growth.

12 month count dropped to 9343 in May 2020 rising to 12493 at the end of April – growth of 25%

Contact drops for a short period only at the start of the pandemic increased to above pre-pandemic level by July 2020.

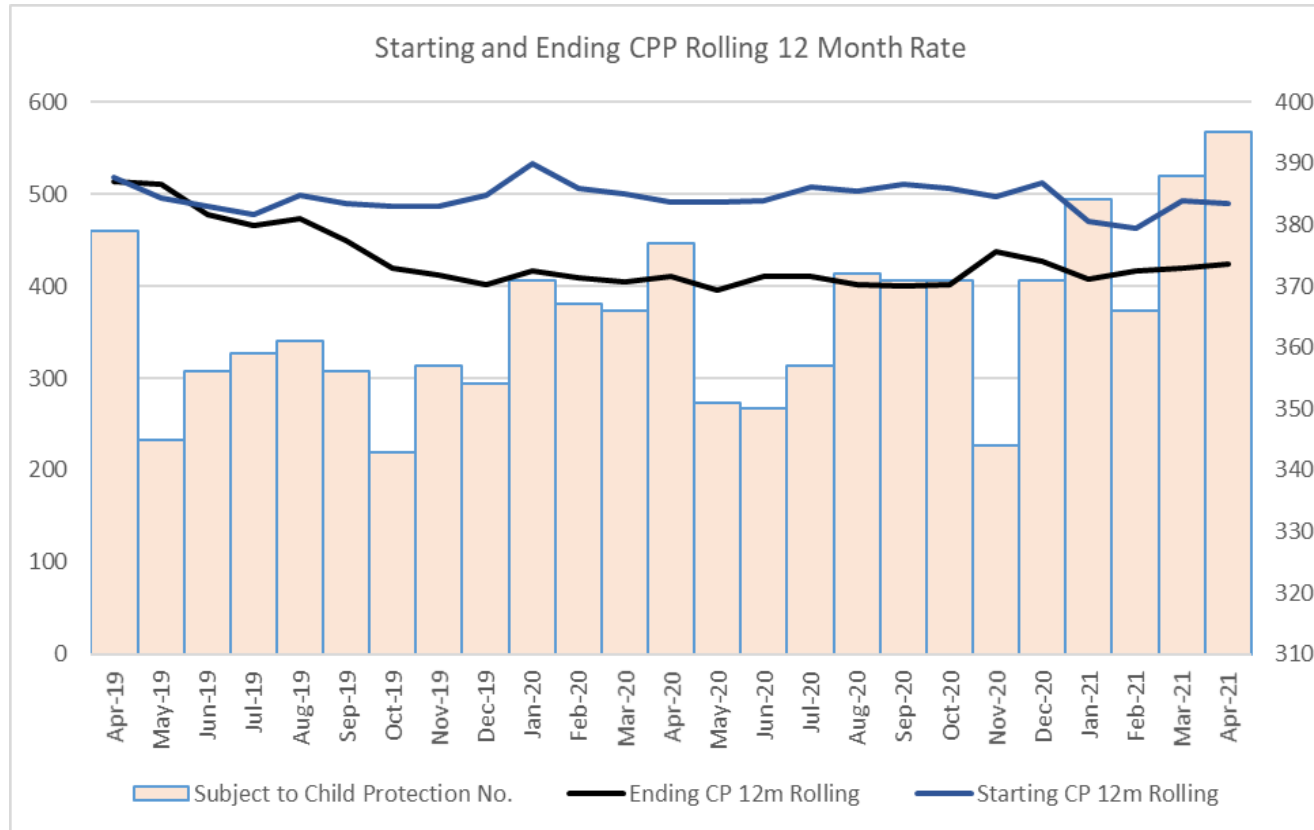


Open Cases



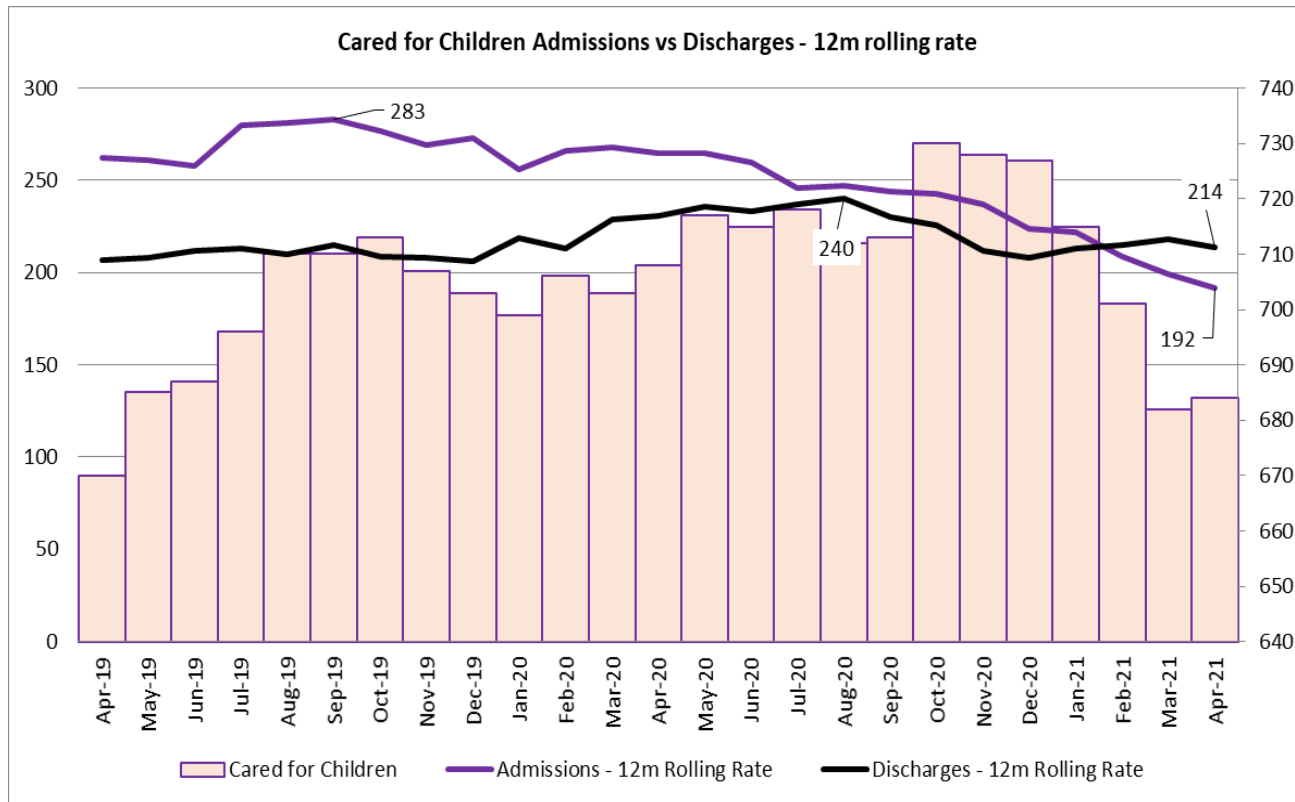
Between July and December 2020 the total number of open cases rose by 11% from 2159 to a peak of 2474 dropping to 2324 by April 2021.

Subject to Child Protection



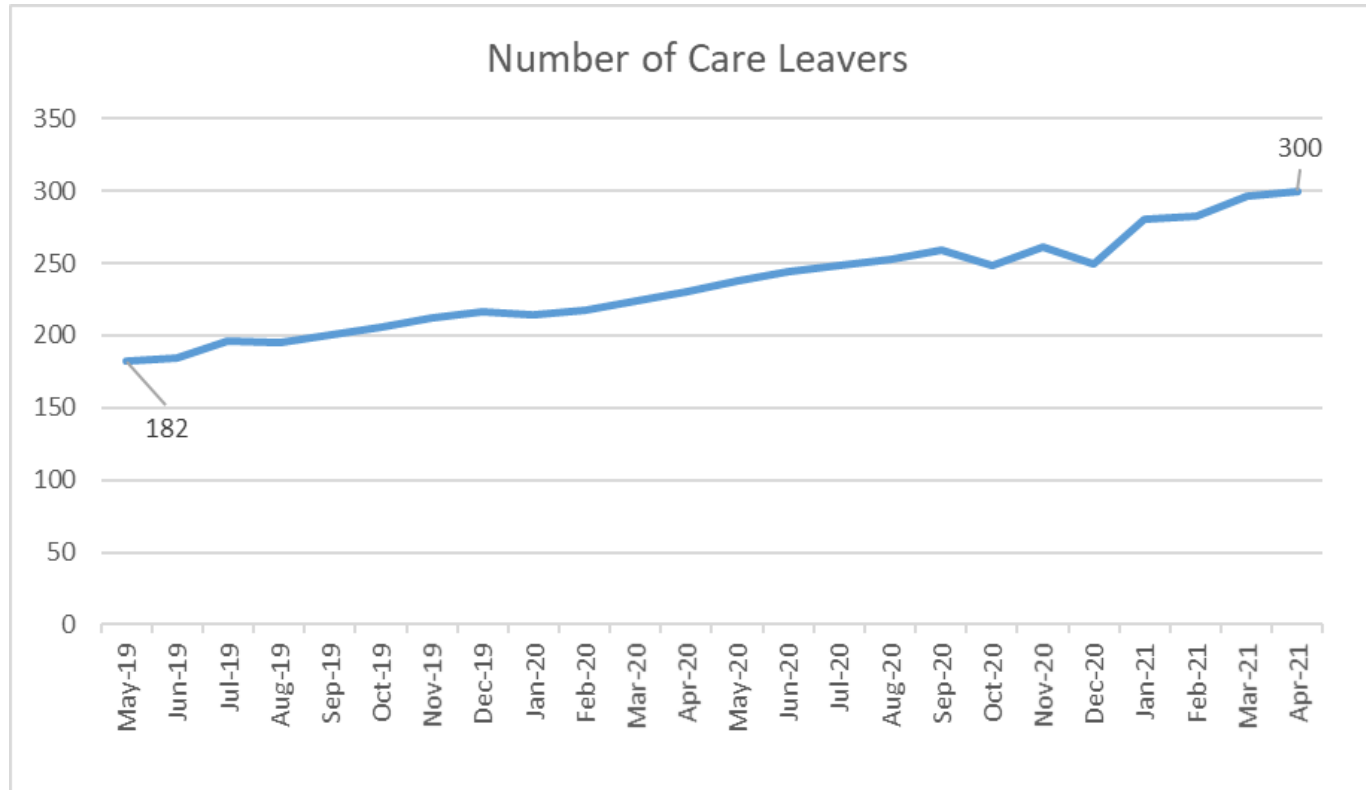
Between Nov 20 and April 21 the number of Children Subject to Child Protection has grown by 5% to from 377 to 395 compared to 1.4% growth between 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Cared for Children



Rolling numbers of Admissions for cared for children peaked in Sept 2019 have followed a broadly downward trend since this point which has compensated for a drop in discharges in the early part of the pandemic. Numbers of Cared for Children peaked at 730 in October 2020 and have reduced by 6% to 684 at the end of April

Care Leavers



Between May 2019 and April 2021 the number of care leavers increased by 39% from 182 to 300

Our Activity During Covid

- Targeted support - **400 families on a CIN plan**
- Humanitarian Hub/Early Help **60+ families supported**
- Links with schools identified **964 children only 2 escalated to CSC**
- Early Years virtual Offer **1,200 children supported through Children Centre pathways and 3,000 attendees on virtual groups**
- Early Help Strategy & Webpage Launched **over 9,000 hits**
- Virtual group, online and 1-1 parenting support - Over **200 families**
- **Family Group Conference** supporting **320 children**
- 7 day working: 8-8 Mon -Fri and 9-4 Sat and Sun

Activity During Covid 2

- Link strengthened between EH and CSC
- Individual child level risk assessments
- Safer at school/safer at home
- Visits virtual and face/face continued.
- Oversight from Independent Reviewing Officer and Child Protection Conference Chairs.
- Virtual Conferences and Reviews.
- Impact on stability of placements/outbreak management.

Children's services - feedback comments

Since Martin became Kalels social worker the communication between ourselves and the local authority has greatly increased not only does martin keep us in the loop of what's going on, we have also progressed further into the whole process

Thanks Mr & Mrs T

Support from staff at home.
Support from Cass going on weekly walks. Melissa my PA has also been checking in regularly.

My support worker has always been there for me when I have needed her. We have a wonderful relationship and I feel like I can trust her with anything

Aisha has been really helpful to us we can ask advice n she gives us helpful tips regarding the kids also she's helped us a lot with skip and gas and electric.

My support worker is the best

Great social worker- shout out to Regan!!
The best you could ask for

Social services have got it right by employing such a good n dedicated person she needs a award for getting us through.

I sent you a message today on WhatsApp I cannot say how much I appreciate what you have done for us !
Your the best star Sauls guardian angel as he said ! I am so thankful to you to bring my little big boy back to where he should be X your the best he's had the best day today with his friends he's soooo happy  Thank you

So caring and open to talk to

My PA has kept in touch with me a lot I've lockdown. She's also been to see me outside the flat and kept social distancing.

They are the kindest people I have ever known

You've changed my life. Simple. You had hope for me when I didn't have any and now I see it. I needed someone to be consistent and you have been.

Emily has been there 4 years! Now I rely on her more than I ever would my family.

When Aisha knocks at the door I gladly welcome her an feel really comfortable letting her in she's the best social worker ever n I've had a few she's also really good with the kids they smile when she comes round.
Natalie & Craig B
thanx

My Personal Advisor is very friendly and approachable

My pa has been amazing with getting in touch to make sure I have everything and if I need any help with anything.

Thank Laura for being so supportive and present and contactable and working with them, replying timely to emails and phone calls. Laura has been brilliant, she has really been there for Ben and Josh and she 100% believes that Laura has the boys' best interests at heart and goes above and beyond in everything she does. They really appreciate her and what she's done.

National Messages

National Messages

Independent Review of Childrens Social Care

“The Case for Change” - 2021

- “Improving children’s social care is not something that national government, local authorities or other partners can achieve on their own. **The statutory children’s social care “system” is only the tip of the iceberg: promoting and protecting children’s welfare and rights must be a priority that goes beyond any single agency”**

Independent Review of Childrens Social Care

“The Case for Change” - 2021

- **“Investing in family help matters”**
- “Court proceedings are by their nature adversarial and have high human and economic costs - **more work is needed to promote solution finding and non-adversarial approaches before children and families are taken to court.”**

Independent Review of Childrens Social Care

“The Case for Change” - 2021

- “There is no situation in the current system where we will not need to spend more - the choice is whether this investment is spent on reform which achieves long term sustainability and better outcomes, or propping up an increasingly expensive and inadequate existing system.”.
- “The “placement market” is broken: we need a pragmatic re-think with all options considered”.

Profit making and Risk in Independent Children's Social Care Placement Providers. LGA - 2nd Update Report: May 2021

- “Total reported **spending on residential care and fostering with the independent sector** across the period of this study **has grown to £2,035 million (an increase of 21% between 2017/18 and 2019/20)**, led by residential care spending growth of 29% and lower fostering growth of 13%. In addition, councils spend around a further £900 million on placements in SEN/Special schools in the non-maintained and independent sectors”

LGA - 2nd June 2021

- **“Soaring demand to help safeguard children and funding pressures meant councils in England had to overspend on children’s social care budgets by £832 million in 2019/20, Local Government Association analysis shows”.**
- **“More than eight in 10 councils in England responsible for children’s social care overspent in the year to 2019/20. This comes despite councils increasing their budgets by £535 million that year and by £1.1 billion in the past two years”.**
- **“In the past decade, the number of Section 47 enquiries, carried out when councils have reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or at risk of, significant harm has increased from 89,300 in 2010 to 201,000 in 2020 - a rise of 125 per cent”.**
- **“The number of children in care in England has increased from 64,470 in 2010 to 80,080 in 2020 – a 24 per cent rise”.**

Ofsted Focused visit May 2021

Positives reported included:

- Child-focused decision-making and support ensure that many disabled children have their needs met - clear and responsive decision-making.
- Foster carers felt well supported and action was taken quickly if cared for children needed extra help or resources.
- Children in care were supported creatively to see their families, and their wishes and feelings are taken into consideration.
- Effective systems established and strong communication between the local authority and school leaders that supported a positive response to many children.

Positives reported included:

- Early help services which were already being redeveloped were further enhanced, and provided a focus for coordination of appropriate support for an increasing number of families.
- The Multi-agency safeguarding hub undertake timely initial screening of children who are referred to children's social care. They identify those at immediate risk and refer them immediately for social work assessment.
- For most children, decision-making about next steps is appropriate, with thresholds well applied
- Children in need and those subject to child protection plans have been visited regularly, with appropriate consideration of whether visits should be remote or face to face.

Areas for Improvement and Phase Two developments

‘The workloads of social workers and of personal assistants in all teams to enable them to build meaningful relationships with children and young people and deliver effective support to them.’

- ALL children’s social work services have been reviewed re capacity to provide a child centre approach. WE are enhancing Social Work and PA capacity within all of the teams, and for additional wider targeted capacity to be created within key services that support frontline delivery including Signs of Safety and Quality Assurance.
- This additional capacity was agreed by Executive Cabinet on 23rd June and will be rolled out over the coming months as we recruit into these positions.
- WE are currently reviewing the flexible ways of working that we achieved due to the COVID pandemic, and how these models of working can assist us to working smarter and more efficiently moving forward.
- WE are redesigning our offer to Social Work and other staff, in respect of career development and pathway; Upgrading our ASYE support; and our training offer to social workers.

Access to sufficient and suitable placements to ensure children are able to live in places that meet their needs.

- WE are accelerating the 7 Strands/ CLA work – Including our Fostering Offer, two new children's home (respite and assessment).
- WE have revised and launched our three year Foster Carer recruitment strategy.
- We will be increasing capacity in our Commissioning and Brokerage service.
- A review of our residential provision is now underway and we will then be looking to consult on this and implement the results of this review, creating a renewed Residential Offer to our young people.
- We are working closely with Housing and Property colleagues, who now have a corporate wide lead on securing increased access to supported accommodation and tenancies for our care leavers.
- WE are working to ensure that more Tameside Cared for Children remain within Tameside and that we have placements and independent accommodation that are able to support and meet the needs of our Care Leavers.

The quality and timeliness of the decision-making for children who are subject to pre-proceedings within the public law outline.

- **What we are doing....**
- WE have been working on upgrading in line with 'Signs of Safety our Pre-proceeding and Public Law Outline work. This is now ready to be rolled out. This has been designed to ensure that children's needs are at the centre of what we are looking to achieve within pre-proceedings.
- WE have implement parts of the Public Law Outline review and we are well into our planning to fully implement the recommendation of this review. This will again improve what we are looking to achieve when we are planning legal action.

Support for care leavers to access education, employment and training and to develop skills to enable them to live independently.

- WE are increasing the number of PAs and SW's within the in Leaving Care Service so that they can work more closely with young people in preparation for independence.
- We are looking corporately at our accommodation and transition.
- THE Virtual College has been launched to support Care Leavers into further education and training.
- The Economy, Employment and Skills team are working with Leaving Care and Virtual College to support training and job opportunities
- WE are re-invigorating the Supported Lodging programme for care leavers in Tameside.

The oversight of social work practice by all managers and the scrutiny undertaken by senior leaders to ensure that there is a focus on the experiences and outcomes for children and young people.

- WE are extending the training offer via the Toolbox to include Signs of Safety; refreshers on the basics with a focus on the child's lived experience and the impact this has on their lives.
- WE are looking to increase the capacity within the Quality Assurance service to assist with quality assurance and performance improvement.
- WE are rolling out training for managers and IROs in respect of reflective supervision and lines of sight.
- WE are refocusing our compliance and reporting work to centre on performance/quality assurance of a Child's Daily Lived Experience and the impact this has on their outcomes.

Senior leaders work with health partners to improve attendance at multi-agency meetings and the timeliness of health assessments for children in care.

- WE have undertaken a review of attendance at Multi Agency Meetings and are working closely with our Health Partners, reviewing systems and processes to ensure attendance at multi agency meetings as appropriate.
- WE are working with health partners on the timeliness of health assessments for Cared for Children

Thank You