

Children's Services

Performance Report Quarter One 2019/20



Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes

'Our vision is to improve families' lives by giving them the support they need, when they need it'

Children's Services have shown improvement throughout 2018/19 and it is our intention to improve on this. Inspection reports and performance data evidence improvement in many areas of work which in turn is improving the outcomes for most of our children and young people within Midlothian.

Permanence and Care Excellence Programme (PACE):

Scottish Government and the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children view the level of change and improvement for Midlothian's most vulnerable children as a great achievement and have requested that we continue to be part of the PACE programme; and continue to share our learning with other Councils. We have already identified 4 further aims, which are being taken forward as separate work streams. Interestingly, the number of children in PACE has increased although whether this is due to sibling groups or other factors is still to be determined. The outcomes from this programme will not be fully realised for a few years, when we can then determine if the decisions we made were sustained and improved the outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Mental Health:

We have now completed the 100-day challenge where in partnership with Nesta and Healthcare Improvement, Scotland's Improvement Hub they supported Midlothian to catalyse their efforts to test ideas to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. The challenge involved 19 organisations including Midlothian Council staff, NHS Lothian, 3 schools and colleges, 11 voluntary sector and community groups, Police Scotland and Skills Development Scotland. This included 42 team members and 21 local leaders including elected members but more importantly it also involved 175 children, young people and their families. The final report identified recommendations, evidence and requests to the leadership group around the sustainability of continuing the learning from the tests of change and empowering staff to continue to identify further tests of change to test out new ideas.

Participation:

The Champions board continue to be a big success and recently held a successful care experienced event in Newtongrange, which seen 84 young people and 95 parents/carers/staff in attendance.

Child Protection:

During Q1 reporting we had 42 children (25 families) on our child protection register which equates to 2.4 per 1000 of the population compared with the national rate of 2.9. This figure has decreased from the last quarter and is below the national average. Nationally there has been a 3% increase in the number of child protection registrations from 2017, however within Midlothian there has been 25% decrease since 2017.

The implementation of the Safe and Together model continues with training of all staff being rolled out.

Looked after away from Home:

There are 154 children and young people looked after away from home both in and out-with Midlothian. This number is higher than the previous quarter (139 children & young people). The current rate per 1,000 of young people looked after in Midlothian is 7.7 which remains well below the national of 10.6. Nationally there has been a 1% decrease from 2017 to 2018 in the number of children and young people looked after away from home, within Midlothian there has been a 2% decrease.

Looked after at home:

There are 61 children and young people looked after at home. This is a reduction of 20 children from Q4 which a high percentage can be attributed to being reviewed and the development of a plan which no longer requires them to be on Compulsory Supervision Order at home. They have all been reviewed by the Interim Independent reviewing officer. The current rate per 1,000 of young people looked after at home in Midlothian is 3.1 which is lower than the national rate of 3.7. Nationally there has been a significant reduction of children looked after at home (26% reduction from 2008 - 2018) Within Midlothian this number has also decreased by 26%.

After August 2019, we will no longer have a dedicated reviewing officer for LAC at home. Instead, this work will be absorbed by the existing 2 FTE Independent Reviewing Officers posts.

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry:

The team continues to work hard to ensure that we continue to meet deadlines with our submissions. To date we have had 21 Section 21 requests.

Whole Systems Funding:

We have secured funding from Scottish Government to strengthen our existing early intervention approach to youth offending with a focus on training. The funding will also be used to continue to develop supports and interventions.

Young Carers Service:

Following the decommissioning of Children1st, we are in the process of developing an internal young carer's service in partnership with a number of 3rd Sector providers across the Local Authority.

LAAC Educational Attainment Funding:

We have secured LAC educational funding for another year. This funding will be used to recruit a part time Educational Physiologist with a remit for all looked after children. We are also in the process of recruiting support workers to focus on the LAC at home with a view to increasing attainment. The number of people looked after at home in Midlothian is 3.1 which is lower than the national rate of 3.7. Nationally there has been a significant reduction of children looked after at home (26% reduction from 2008 - 2018) Within Midlothian this number has also decreased by 26%

Challenges and Risks

Young People with complex Needs:

Children's Services budget continues to remain a significant and ongoing challenge. This is as a result of several factors, such as secure care, young people who require a high level of specialised care and who have severe and complex needs and those young people who are 16+ and require somewhere to live. These 3 work streams are complex and difficult to plan for and all of them require significant amounts of funding.

Young people with severe and complex needs often come into care around 14/15 years of age when their parents despite their best intentions can no longer offer them adequate care due to their increased needs. To date we have opened two additional houses to accommodate 5 young people who cannot live independently and shall require ongoing support. We have commissioned two different agencies to provide their package of care and support. As a result of continuing care legislation this means that the 5 young people will have the right to reside in these houses until the age of 21.

Young People in Secure Care:

We currently have one young person in secure care.

Residential Care Homes:

We have our two residential houses in Woodburn and Lady Brae at Gorebridge. We continue to develop our continuing Care policy in line with the duties of the 2014 Act. Trying to accommodate 16-21 year old young people in both residential care and foster care is proving to be an ongoing challenge. As stated previously the impact on resources in terms of meeting the needs of younger children who require to be accommodated whilst making sure our young people are 'staying put' continues to pose a professional dilemma.

Continuing Care: The challenges of Continuing Care are significant and we are liaising with our own housing department, other local authorities and Scottish Government to identify a model that supports young people who are 16+ however as a result of their chaotic lifestyles are unable to continue residing with their foster carer, in their residential house or in homeless accommodation. Whilst legislation through the 2014 Act promotes continuing care the reality is very different. We are looking at various different models.

Suggested changes to priorities in Service Plan

Q1 19/20: No Changes

Children Services

Successes and Challenges

Midlothian 

Corporate Performance Indicators (latest)

● 2 ✓ 11 ? 0 📊 6

Corporate PIs Off Target as at 31st July 2019

PIs ● 2

Percentage of complaints at stage 2 complete within 20 working days

% of Service PIs that are on target/ have reached their target. (does not include Corporate PIs)

Key
PIs

● Off Target
✓ On Target
📊 Data Only Indicator
? Data is not yet available

Service Plan Actions (latest)

▲ 0 ✓ 7 ? 0

Service Plan Actions Off Target as at 31st July 2019

Actions ▲ 0

No Off Target Actions

Key
Actions

▲ Off Target
✓ On Target/Complete
? Data is not yet available

Service Plan PIs (latest)

● 1 ✓ 3 ? 1 📊 6

Service Plan PIs Off Target as at 31st July 2019

PIs ● 1

Measure the increase in number of care experienced young people going to college/university/employment

Key
PIs

● Off Target
✓ On Target
📊 Data Only Indicator
? Data is not yet available

Service Risks (latest)

▲ 3

High Risks as at 31st July 2019

Risks ▲ 0

3 Risks at Medium and 0 Risks are high

Key
Risks

▲ High Risk / Medium Risk
? Data is not yet available