

Children's Services Performance Report – Children Looked After Quarter 2 2019-20



Executive Summary

What's working well?

- The new '**Wales Safeguarding Procedures**' have been finalised and will be launched in partnership with Welsh Government (WG) and Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Boards place during National Safeguarding week 2019 (18th – 24th November). Assembly Ministers will be in attendance at the launch. An 'app' that will give access to a digitalised version of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures will be released simultaneously.
- A **Think Again ! Tackling Exploitation event** was held whereby young people from schools across Cardiff came together at County Hall to showcase their presentations on Child Exploitation. The event was split into two parts - with the presentations in the morning and the launch of the Cardiff Council funded YMCA Cardiff SHOT *Think Again!* report and accompanying video in the afternoon. The Think Again ! project worked with young people who had experienced child exploitation to gather their thoughts and feelings to evaluate services they had accessed as a result of their experiences. The project culminated with a creative and impactful video that won a Youth Excellence Award.
- The **Adolescent Resource Centre** is becoming a regional service with the Vale following a successful Integrated Care Fund bid, as the Vale are impressed with the provision.

What are we worried about?

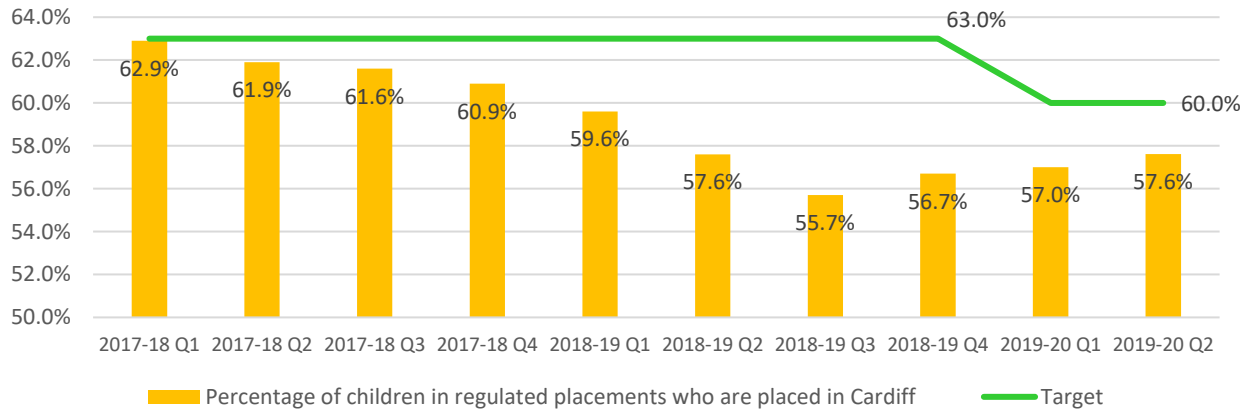
- **Recruitment and retention of social workers** – percentage of social work vacancies are not improving despite low caseloads.

What do we need to do?

- A post to drive forward **recruitment and retention** has been created and the post-holder took up post during the quarter. Work has commenced to centralise and introduce controls around agency workers. Timescales around the recruitment process are improving and a significant number of offers of appointments have been expedited through to offer / start date. A regular Thursday afternoon interview window has been introduced to enable dynamic booking of candidates into interview slots. This has increased throughput of candidates into the time to recruit workflow. During Quarter 2 there have been 11 new starters and 13 leavers with another 14 with start dates next quarter. Next steps include pulling together assets and identifying additional requirements to build a 'Social Work Cardiff' brand, and developing a process for recruiting into hard to fill roles and talent-banking candidates with support from HR. Consideration will also need to be given to the structures within Cardiff social work teams to ensure they reflect the complexity of social work in the city.

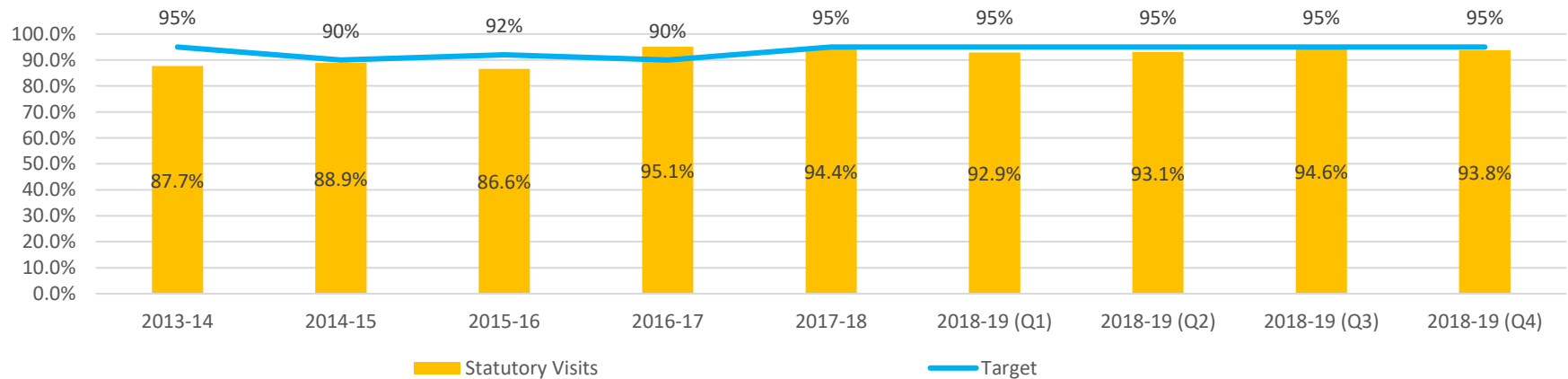
Key Performance Indicators

CS LAC 58 Percentage of children in regulated placements who are placed in Cardiff



CS LAC 58 The **percentage of children in regulated placements who are placed in Cardiff** = 57.6% (386 / 670). The PI counts only children placed within the LA boundaries and excludes children placed in neighbouring authorities close to their home area and attending Cardiff schools. Please see page 7 for a breakdown of placements.

SCC/025 The percentage of statutory visits to children looked after due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations



N.B. Data for Quarters 1 and 2 is pending

Children Looked After

| What's working well? | What are we worried about? | What do we need to do? |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media and online marketing is impacting on the volume of enquiries (28 full assessments ongoing at 30th September 2019). • Meetings have taken place with fostering agencies to discuss ongoing relationships with Cardiff and to consider opportunities for fee discounts based on volume. Quarterly meetings are scheduled going forward. • Steering group established to take forward the development of a new residential children's home for young people aged 16-19. The National Youth Advocacy Service are developing proposals for how best to secure young people's engagement in the process. • Dedicated children's commissioning capacity has been secured on an interim basis to progress priority areas. The Children's Commissioning Strategy has been revised following further input from the Children's Management Team and will be presented to Cabinet in November 2019. • Work commenced with Education to begin the process of Education taking on responsibility for the preparation of Personal Education Plans. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work needs to be progressed with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities in Cardiff in relation to fostering and adoption. • It is important that we have oversight of all the services we are procuring and so we can ensure robust contract management going forward. • There are still a number of children for whom education provision is lacking. • High number of children placed out area experiencing delay in education provision • Delay in implementation of revised Pathway Plan. • Supply of the right type of services for our most vulnerable children, including scarcity of fostering and residential provision for children and young people with more complex needs. • Permanency planning for children and young people is under developed. • Numbers of children waiting for adoption 12 months after Placement Order made (68, 28 of whom are not yet placed). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted campaigns required for Foster Carers to reflect Cardiff's diversity especially Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. • All procurement activity to be undertaken through the Social Services commissioning team. • Continue to work with colleagues in Education to look at how we can more effectively and robustly seek to promote the educational needs of children looked after. • Implement new Pathway Plan document when requirement regarding Pathway Assessments has been confirmed. • Implement the priorities in the Commissioning Strategy, including development of emergency placement options. • Develop robust permanency planning arrangements. • We now have a clearer understanding of the children on Placement Orders where plans need to be reviewed. We also are now more effectively utilising early linking and matching tools to ensure harder to place children can be placed within families earlier. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent representation on residential and resource review panels is working to ensure the children looked after are known to Education and support is shared across all services. • Compliance with Court timescales has improved and we will continue to develop our Care Planning Practice Guidance to support social workers to progress cases through the Court process in a timely manner. • The integration of the Bright Sparks Service into the Into Work Service is an opportunity for education and training opportunities to be expanded for children looked after. The young people have been able to access the Bike Scheme and now use their bike to attend their various work placements. One of the young people will not use public transport due to personal issues so having a bike to get around has really benefitted him. • Dedicated team to review Placements with Parents in place. Potential for Cardiff to be part of a pilot with the Child and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) in relation to expediting discharge of Care Orders where appropriate to be considered early in Quarter. | | |
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Key Stats

936 children looked after.

65 children started to be looked after in the quarter (down from 71 in Quarter 1). These children comprised 9 sibling groups and 33 individuals. The average number of children starting to be looked after was 1.55 (1.54 in Quarter 1 and 1.34 in 2018-19).

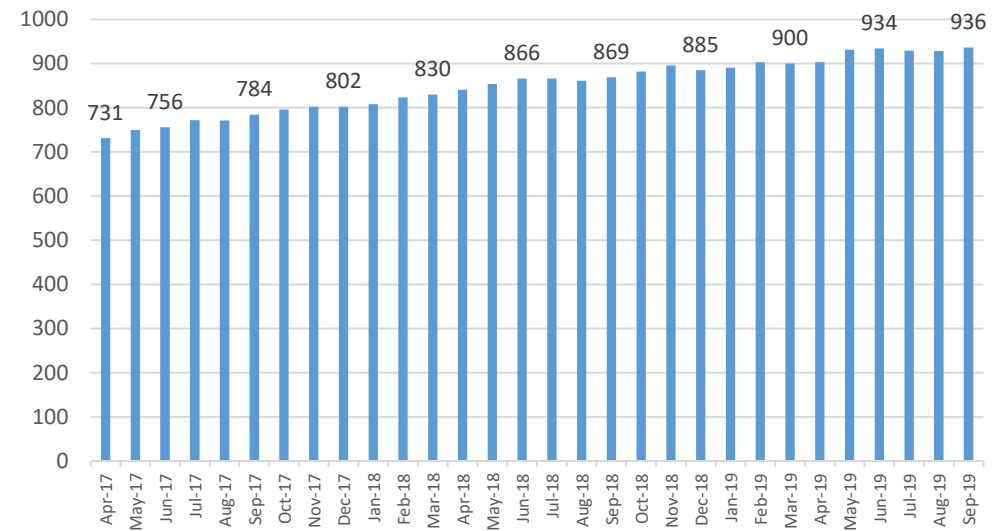
64 ends of being looked after this quarter.

386/ 670 (57.6%) children looked after in regulated placements are placed within Cardiff, increasing to 77.8% when taking neighbouring authorities into consideration.

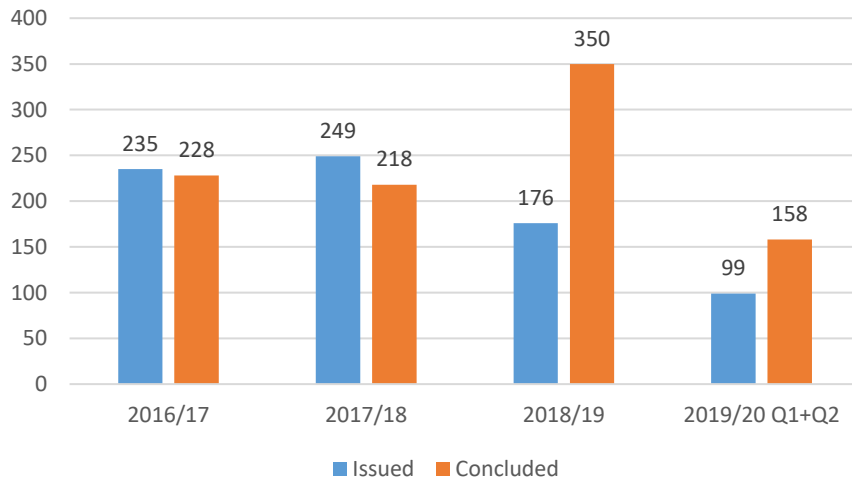
100% of children looked after allocated to a social worker.

Permanence secured for 19 children through adoption since 1st April 2019.

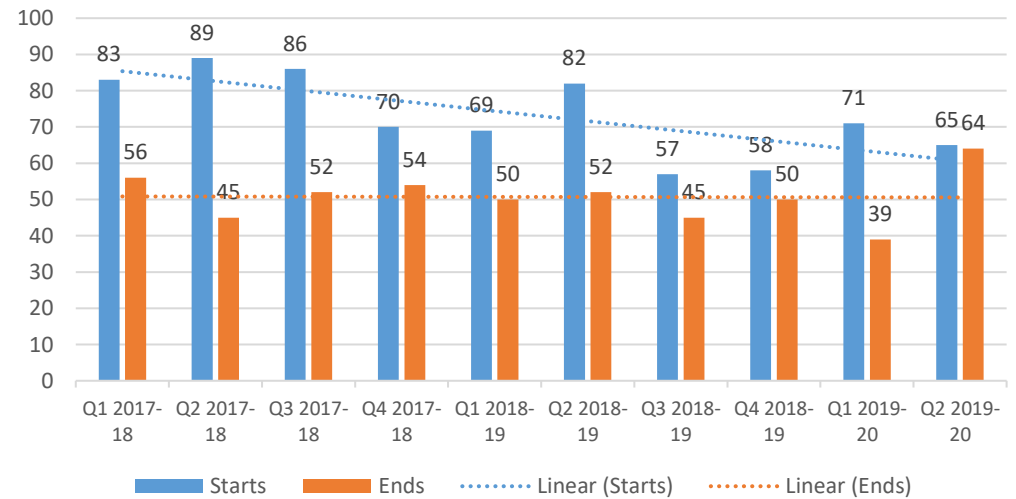
Number of children looked after



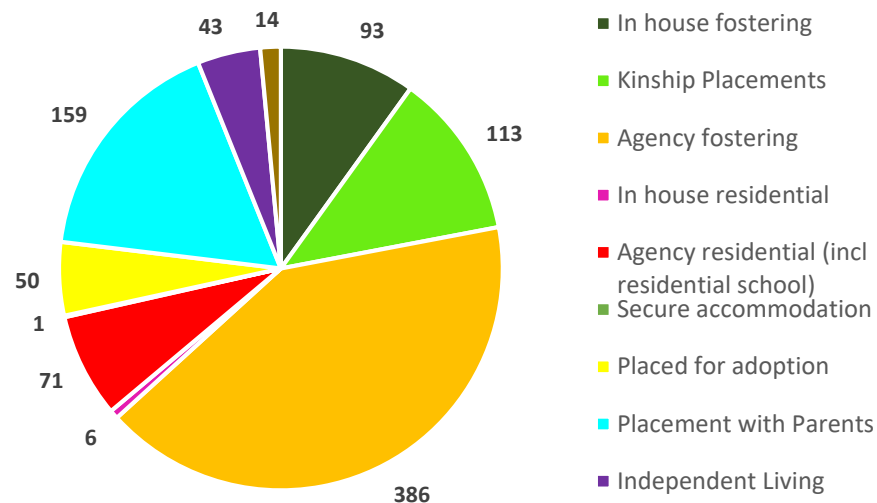
Care Proceedings issued and concluded during year



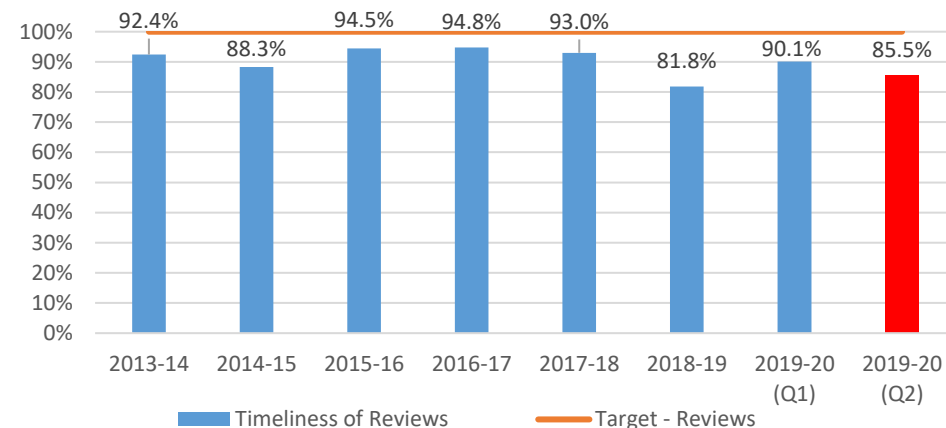
Starts and ends of being looked after



Breakdown of placements by type – as at 30.09.19

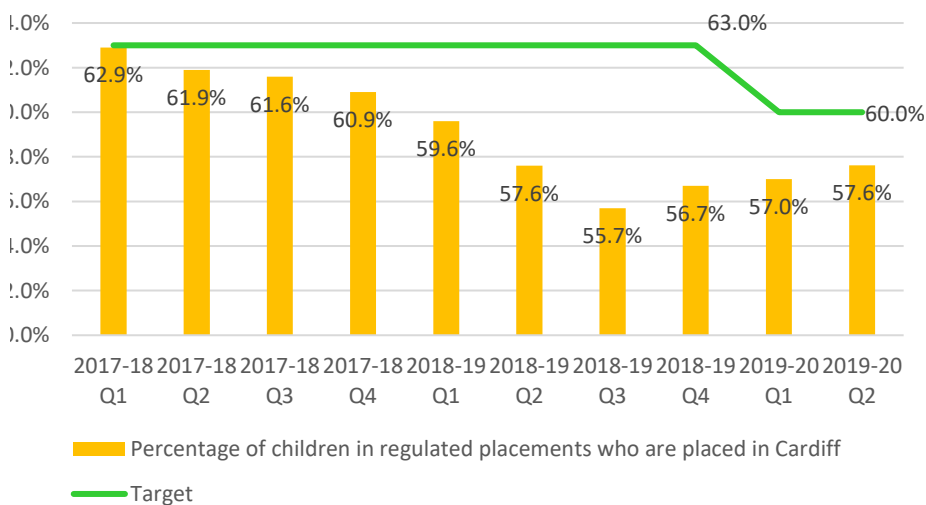


Timeliness of Children Looked After Reviews



N.B. Quarter 1 and 2 2019/20 data is provisional

Percentage of children in regulated placements who are placed in Cardiff



Breakdown of all children in regulated placements – as at 30.09.19

