

Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday 17 September 2024
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Committee Room 2, Shire Hall

Membership

Councillor Marian Humphreys (Chair)
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi
Councillor Barbara Brown
Councillor Piers Daniell
Councillor Justin Kerridge
Councillor Chris Mills
Councillor Penny-Anne O'Donnell
Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince
Councillor Tim Sinclair
Michael Cowland
Phil Johnson

Items on the agenda: -

1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5 - 16

2. Public Speaking

3. Question Time

(1) Questions to Cabinet Portfolio Holders

Up to 30 minutes of the meeting are available for members of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to put questions to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children & Families.

The work programme attached lists any briefings circulated to the Committee since the last meeting and any items listed in the Council's Forward Plan for decision by Cabinet or individual Cabinet

Portfolio Holders over the coming months.

(2) Updates from Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Directors

Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Directors are invited to provide any updates they have on issues within the remit of the Committee.

4. Corporate Parenting Panel Update

The Portfolio Holder for Children & Families to provide an update on the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

To include an update from the Children in Care Council and other forums.

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| 5. Council Delivery Plan and Performance Q1 | 17 - 40 |
| 6. Childrens OSC Feedback report | 41 - 64 |
| 7. Youth Justice Plan | 65 - 102 |
| 8. Work Programme and items on the Forward Plan | 103 - 106 |

Up to date work programme to be presented to the Committee.

Items from the Forward Plan relevant to the remit of the Committee to be noted.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 26 November 2024 at 10am

Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

Disclaimers

Webcasting and permission to be filmed

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Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election of appointment to the Council. Any changes to matters registered or new matters that require to be registered must be notified to the Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after they arise.

A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless they have a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if they have not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web
<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

Public Speaking

Any member of the public who is resident or working in Warwickshire, or who is in receipt of services from the Council, may speak at the meeting for up to three minutes on any matter within the remit of the Committee. This can be in the form of a statement or a question. If you wish to speak please notify Democratic Services in writing at least two working days before the meeting. You should give your name and address and the subject upon which you wish to speak. Full details of the public speaking scheme are set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Any member or officer of the Council or any person attending this meeting must inform Democratic Services if within a week of the meeting they discover they have COVID-19 or have been in close proximity to anyone found to have COVID-19.

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Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 18 June 2024

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Marian Humphreys (Chair)
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi
Councillor Barbara Brown
Councillor Piers Daniell
Councillor Justin Kerridge
Councillor Chris Mills
Councillor Tim Sinclair
Councillor Dave Humphreys

Officers

Johnny Kyriacou, Assistant Director for Education Services
Nigel Minns, Executive Director for Children and Young People
Dr Shade Agboola, Director of Public Health
Shinderpaul Bhangal, Corporate Parenting (Team Leader - Participation)
John Coleman, Assistant Director - Children and Families
Rachel Jackson, Head of Education Strategy and Transformation
George Shipman, Head of Safeguarding Communities

Others Present

1. General

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and read out a statement relating to the pre-election period, prior to the upcoming General Election.

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Michael Cowland and Phil Johnson, Co-optees, Councillors Kam Kaur, Sue Markham and Penny-Anne O'Donnell.

Councillor Heather Timms attended representing the Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

Councillor Dave Humphreys substituted for Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince.

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on 9 April and 14 May 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to an amendment to the attendance.

2. Public Speaking

Gurpreet Dulay addressed the meeting on his experience of the complaints process.

Mr Dulay stated that he was angry with the process he had experienced over the past 18 months, involving nineteen upheld complaints, across seven different teams. He referred to Safeguarding initially, stating that progress should be clear by the first review meeting if actions were not likely to be met, were too broad, unrealistic and needed to be amended as per Council policy. He referred to six meetings in six months, resulting in the same actions and recommendations being identical to those from meeting one to meeting six. With Early Help he had been promised support multiple times but this was only delivered after he chased and submitted complaints, this help had not been provided earlier but later taking months.

Secondly, Mr Dulay referred to management and the complaints policy which he felt was failing with the Council team regularly telling him they were under-resourced. In his experience, the two-day period to acknowledge a statutory complaint had taken 14 days and none of the nineteen complaints had been acknowledged by the Council. The policy advised that the aim was to provide a remedy that in his experience was rarely provided. A number of broad statements had been made but no specific actions as to what, when or how. He referred to the recent Member investigation as an example.

Finally, Mr Dulay referred to the reports the Committee received and the Child Protection KPI's. He felt that whether numbers were higher or lower the Committee appeared satisfied resulting in the meeting failing to drive real scrutiny. As a father and a CIPFA qualified officer, he recognised good governance and wanted to see a greater impact as he felt the Council had failed in this regard.

Elaine Lamb addressed the meeting as a Director of Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice in response to the SEND community's feelings relating to the investigation outcomes. She advised that Parent Carer Voice had participated in the complaints process following the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024 but the outcomes were not what many had hoped for. These had been met with anger and frustration in the SEND community. She felt that the Council and its Members needed to recognise that the relationship between the Council and parents was damaged and more work was needed to build trust. She had been pleased to be part of the group arranging mandatory SEND training to elected members, thanked all those who had attended the workshops and hoped this would lead to more engagement with Councillors. She

hoped to be able to be part of the process in helping Members to provide effective scrutiny, recognising the barriers that many individuals in the SEND community faced including access to education, disability discrimination and hate crime. She concluded by advising that she would continue to work to help to prevent inequality and stand up for the children of Warwickshire to meet the needs of families.

3. Question Time

(1) Questions to Cabinet Portfolio Holders

Councillor Heather Timms responded to questions and advised that she would speak to officers and provide written responses to anything that could not be answered immediately.

(2) Updates from Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Directors

Councillor Heather Timms addressed the meeting on behalf of Councillors Kaur and Markham.

In relation to the Children and Young People portfolio, Councillor Timms advised that Warwickshire County Council had been selected earlier in the year as a sector led improvement partner by the Department for Education. This meant that the Council would be supporting other authorities to help improve their children's services and were the only sector led improvement partner in the West Midlands.

Councillor Timms went on to speak about Pathfinder, advising that Warwickshire had been selected by the Department for Education for Wave 2 of the Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme. A more detailed update was included later in the agenda. The Council would be at the forefront of reforms, receiving £4.1million to implement the changes. Councillor Timms took the opportunity to congratulate colleagues across the Police, Health and the County Council who had worked hard to apply for this opportunity.

Moving to the Education portfolio, Councillor Timms referred to the figures for Extended Childcare Entitlements and wraparound which were 2% above the national and regional average and highlighted the Education Sufficiency Strategy due to be considered at Cabinet that week. Members noted the new Fair Access Protocol, the Alternative provision Working Group and the partners working together to increase provision and help make the system more sustainable.

Councillor Timms was delighted to advise that Warwickshire Music had been successful in its partnership bid to lead the Music Hub for the sub-region. This would be known as the Heart of England Music and due for launch from 9 August 2024. Further information could be found about this and Elective Home Education on the Council's webpages.

With regard to Early Years, the progress and timeline for development of the strategy was explained for School Effectiveness and Early Years. 89% of schools in Warwickshire were rated good or outstanding, in line with the national data, and 88.8% of children were attending one of these schools.

The continuing pressures experienced by those working in SEND and Inclusion were

highlighted with increased numbers of students and increased costs. Work continued to improved performance against the 20-week deadline and progress on resourced provisions was ahead of schedule with nine due to open in 2024/25. Inclusion Framework trials continued in Rugby and Bedworth with one in Stratford agreed for September. Councillor Timms acknowledged the level of work being put in in SEND and Inclusion and thanked officers for their hard work and commitment.

Councillor Dave Humphreys queried the number of people waiting for a SEND diagnosis, recognising how difficult this could be. Councillor Timms advised that there was a £6000 budget available for schools to access to help support a child within the mainstream setting, prior to them receiving an EHCP.

Officers confirmed after the meeting that 712 new EHC Plans were issued in 2023, 383 had been issued so far in 2024 and 448 were currently in the system being processed. It was forecast that approximately 1074 EHC plans would be issued by the end of 2024. This information was shared with the Committee via email.

4. Corporate Parenting Panel Update

Shinderpaul Bhangal, Service Manager, introduced an update from the Participation – Voice, Influence & Change team and introduced young people from the Children in Care Council, Care Leavers Forum, IMPACT and the Warwickshire Youth Council. Some representatives were attending in person and others via a hybrid link to address the Committee.

Shinderpaul outlined the work that had been taking place, focusing on the breadth and scope of work. The range of events and activities had increased over the past 18 months and the work with children in care and care leavers had been positively received. Other areas included SEND, the youth justice service, Youth Council, with a focus on working directly with children, individually and at a service level. He signposted Members to Appendix 1 which illustrated the events taking place and highlighted the number of gradually increasing contacts being established.

Other areas to note was the work with the cross ministerial board, an update on the brothers and sisters work and attendance of officers and youth representatives at the head teacher conference. Shinderpaul advised that work was ongoing with apprenticeships, in particular, a further four care experienced apprentices had started along with one apprentice completing a six-year legal programme, leaving with a law degree.

Report outlines additional areas of work in main body, worth noting – cross ministerial board, brothers and sisters work – area now enabling more time together, apprenticeships continue & 4 gone on to full time work, further 4 care experiences apprentices started, legal 6 year apprentice come out with law degree, head teacher conference, larger events, youth voice, warks youth conference, feeds us info about priorities about what is important to young people.

Shinderpaul explained that the presentation illustrated the range of work taking place with different age groups and the diverse range of young people involved. Activities included trips to the Bear Grylls Adventure site and the Snowdome in February 2024, Young Parents celebrating Mother's Day, Refuge Celebration Event in June 2023, Wellbeing Walks and the successful Sunday Football team.

Callum and Muhammed addressed the meeting on behalf of the Children in Care Council. Muhammed talked about his experience since arriving in the UK from Sudan, attending college to study science and his ambition to become a pharmacist. He felt the CICC was a safe place to share experiences and wanted to tell Members about what the group was proud of, what needed improving and key messages. The CICC helped to introduce to children to each other and gave them a voice to explain what they felt needed improving, which included:

- Placement stability; better healthcare access; cultural and identity support for children in care; and better communication with professionals before decisions were made about their lives.

In conclusion, Callum and Muhammed outlined their key messages stating the following:

- Placement issues and frequent moves affected a child's education, relationships and wellbeing; work was needed to continue to try and make a difference; and they would like more trips and opportunities to get children in care together.

Ricky and Melissa addressed the meeting on behalf of the Care Leavers Forum (CLF), explaining that this was a group of ten care leavers who met once a month to discuss what had gone well and what needed improving. Ricky's presentation covered the areas to feel good about including the events open to care leavers, wellness days, trips to local parks and opportunities to make friends. Additional agency support and involvement included Barnados and St Basils along with other agencies supporting housing and mental health problems.

Ricky outlined one area of improvement he felt was needed which was more involvement in recruitment, training and future opportunities for care leavers; apprenticeship and employment opportunities.

Melissa addressed the meeting helping to outline the key messages and improvements needed including an improvement of awareness for support for people overall and those with antisocial behaviour; education barriers; and improving support for independent living after leaving care.

She felt that more support was needed for those harder to reach people particularly those with addictions, or in prison. More training for professionals was required to help them understand the difficulties and behaviours being demonstrated, which would help relationship building.

Melissa talked about living independently and the need for support with life skills. She explained that it was often hard to stay in education and continue to do well, with many youngsters leaving a family home setting at the age of 18, losing that grounded feeling and trying to manage the stress of exams which often led to dropping out of education. The CLF felt that having the right staff helped to provide a better experience but progress needed to be revisited to keep up with improvements and adapt accordingly. The final key message was the need for the Council and professionals to keep them in the loop and give feedback from their involvement.

Ray and Ray addressed the meeting on behalf of IMPACT. They explained that the group's aim was to have fun and make friends but also had a serious role, outlining their participation on the Working Together Charter for Warwickshire SEND. They described their different experience of education and explained why the 'one size fits all' approach did not suit everyone. Ray advised that IMPACT had its first opportunity to speak on this subject in Summer 2023, at the Head Teachers Conference. Despite it being daunting, they had felt listened to and in conjunction with

Coventry University had produced a film entitled 'Wrong Size fits All', which had 23,000 online views so far. They hoped that the film inspired more young people to open up with a key message to act now, not later.

Ray recognised that schooling costs had increased but felt that if she had been supported at age 8 or 9, these could have been much lower. Her needs had not been seen and despite giving 110%, she had been seen as lazy. This had resulted in her lacking trust in the system for the past decade. A key message was that if young people did not feel safe, they could not be expected to learn with small things making a difference such as what they could wear and having regular breaks.

Ray and Ray concluded by requesting that young people be given the supported needed as early as possible and highlighted IMPACT's priorities from April 2024. They felt that having an IMPACT apprentice would be helpful to increase the diversity of the group, reaching out through Warwickshire's special schools and school councils. They thanked those Members who had attended training, recognising the clear challenges in the current system. Finally, they reiterated that they were not just a statistic but real people.

George addressed the meeting representing Warwickshire Youth Council. He gave some background about himself and provided a brief summary of the Youth Council, referring to the presentation slides which included further information. The Youth Council gave young people the opportunity to speak with adults who made the big decisions including the police and town planners. They were keen to meet more decision makers and work with other partners.

George explained the Online Elections process, who could take part, the publicity and how voting took place online. The Youth Council had received its highest number of candidates in 2023/24, with 66 young people putting themselves forwards and the first online voting test had worked well. The election process had been co-produced with the help of County Council staff.

George went on to give an overview of the Youth Project Grant funding the Youth Council had, which could be applied for by youth organisations in Warwickshire. There were four main categories for the grant:

- Reducing Crime and Improving Safety;
- Improving Young People's Experience in Schools;
- More Support with Mental Health and Wellbeing; and
- Providing More Things to Do.

In the last round of applications four grants of £5000 had been awarded and the organisations had been invited back to give the Youth Council an update on how the money had been used.

The Youth Council had also been involved in a Transforming Leamington project with town planners. They had input ideas and continued to have involvement throughout. Future plans included visiting schools to speak to young people as well as the establishment of three sub-groups which they hoped to report back on to Members in due course. George concluded by outlining the Youth Council's key messages which were to enable young people to have space, voice, audience and change.

The Chair addressed the young attendees and thanked all of them for delivering their presentations so well. She reminded them that it took courage to come and talk to Members and

they should be proud of themselves. All Members joined in thanking them for a very informative and concise presentation.

Councillor Sinclair queried how the feedback and insights from the young participants was practically used to deliver change. Shinderpaul Bhangal outlined a number of ways this was done, such as increasing the activities, relaxing stipulations and allowing more time for brothers and sisters in care to spend time together. This had come directly from a request by children living through the care system. Other examples included the Baby Box project which had stemmed from an idea by young parents and linking individuals with the right officers, at the right level.

Following comments from Councillor Kerridge, Shinderpaul Bhangal explained that one important factor was who the support worker was as one child's experience could be very different to another. Enabling those meetings whereby feedback could be given and received in a constructive way and building relationships with their support workers. Regarding those harder to reach care leavers and those in the justice system, Shinderpaul acknowledged that this remained a challenge as many were more reluctant to engage.

Councillor Barbara Brown was impressed with the speeches from the young people and asked how the relationship with schools could be managed to enable some students to wear what was comfortable. It was noted that some schools were academies and may work with the Council out of goodwill. Johnny Kyriakou, Director of Education, agreed stating that the Council had a key role to play but the school was ultimately responsible for the experience received, so those communications were important.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse reiterated the importance of the charter and working together. He felt this needed to include wider inclusion of the Health and Wellbeing Board, NHS and Parish and Town Councils. Nigel Mins agreed, reminding Members of the changes that had taken place and progress made over the past year. Nigel Minns advised that an important feature of the SEND and Improvement Board was that it was multi-agency.

Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi thanked all of the officers for their input stating the Councillors learned more from hearing directly from the young people. He hoped to see more presentations from them in the future as they were the experts. He referred to the comments made about anti-social behaviour, stating that it would be useful to help understand those behaviours further.

The Chair thanked all the young representatives for attending and suggested that they be invited back in six to twelve months' time. She also felt it may be beneficial if they spoke at Council to a wider audience, so that all Members could hear about the work taking place at a ground level. She thanked Shinderpaul Bhangal and his team for attending.

5. Year End Integrated Performance Report 2023/24

The Committee received a report outlining the Year End 2023/24 organisational performance, progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan and management of finances and risk.

John Coleman, Director of Children & Families Service, introduced the report and signposted Members to key areas including xxx detailed in paragraph 2.4. He advised that there was an improvement around the number of children in education and employment. John Coleman also brought Members attention to the following performance data:

- The number of maintained schools in budget deficit had risen;
- The percentage of in year applications had improved but needed further progress (see page 39);
- The number of children in need and in child protection had risen to 3700, impacting on caseloads for social workers, highlighting a rise in the number of children requiring support;
- The overspend in the Children & Families service was detailed in Appendix 3;
- The average cost of residential care had risen from £4500 to £6500/£7000 per week, per child.

In relation to the Integrated Delivery Plan detailed at Appendix 2, there had been some progress but some areas had been compromised. For example, Bedworth were the only area with no County Council youth centre but there were plans to bring one forwards in the future. In addition, the Children's Homes project was progressing well with some sites awaiting Ofsted inspections.

Following a query from Councillor Kerridge regarding measures that were static or in decline, John Coleman gave assurance that detailed plans were in place to address this but some areas were more challenging than others.

Members also discussed the percentage of students in mainstream school with an EHCP. Nigel Minns advised that 12 new EHCP's had been issued last year and already figures were expected to increase to 1070 this year, with 448 in the system currently. He reiterated the main driver to keep children with SEND in local communities and schools.

Councillor Piers Daniell asked for the number of schools that would have resourced provision by September and what the process was for providing that once requested. Nigel Minns, Executive Director for Children and Young People, advised that it was key to get as many schools up and running as quickly as possible so as soon as the provision was requested, the need was checked for that area, and funds provided.

Rachel Jackson advised that in 2023, a total of 195 schools had resourced provision available, and the target for 2024/25 was to increase that to 231.

Nigel Minns later responded advising that the number of schools in receipt of resourced provision would be 529 by 2028.

Resolved

That the report is noted.

6. Knife Crime and Child Exploitation

Members received a presentation from George Shipman relating to the areas of development and approach to Knife Crime and Child Exploitation within Warwickshire.

George Shipman highlighted the key points which had been covered in a recent Member development session. The briefing had looked at the current approach and the adoption of new approaches, focusing on partnership working with the police, health colleagues and others.

He advised that a large focus was on development of the exploitation strategy, which was made up of the different approaches required for different ages and groups of people. Part of the culture change was how early work was undertaken with young people initially, understanding their development needs which could include speech, language and emotional development. There was also a need to understand the changes that took place as children got older and the increase in risk taking behaviour. George Shipman explained that some individuals felt they had no choice and the internet and social media had a large impact on young people.

George Shipman outlined the Youth Endowment Fund to Members which was aimed at 13 to 17 year olds, either victims or perpetrators. Many areas of behaviour were linked connecting the police, gangs, social care and attendance issues. The issues affecting victims and perpetrators were often similar and officers were working on understanding and responding to those needs.

The update included the numbers of offences and number of children offending, which had reduced from 147 to 120 on 2023/2024. There was a reduction in weapon related offences, with the data separated further by district and borough. Members noted that all of those incidents had been committed by males ranging between 15 and 16 years of age. Support had developed from a County wide team to a North / South approach and the lead worker was no longer a social worker with the team being multi agency and multi-disciplinary.

The teams were co-located with the Police and Barnados and comprised of different workers with a range of focus. There were also a number of family support workers able to better target support and twenty minute focused sessions could be more effective than an hour long session. The substance abuse service had a drugs worker to support staff and help to increase knowledge, keeping track of new developments.

In response to those youngsters that often went missing, return to home interviews were carried out by specialist missing workers to ensure those relationships were built and maintained. Members were reminded that sleep also had a large impact on mental health.

The prevention work was seeing a reduction in crime in the area and nationally and the ambition was to maintain this focus moving forwards. The Council had also invested in 'Loud Mouth', a theatre company that provided training and education programmes in safeguarding and relationships.

In conclusion, George Shipman explained that the aim was to think about communities, how to drill down into them and taking local issues into account. Colleagues were working to understand the best agencies to respond in differing situations and how to identify concerns early.

In response to a query from Councillor Dave Humphreys, George Shipman confirmed that the re-offending rates were detailed and overall the rate was reducing. It was noted that the figures showed less people offending but those who did, reoffended more.

Clarification was provided on some of the acronyms in the report and Councillor Kerridge asked for further information on the serious violence characteristics. Officers confirmed that the vast majority were male and both perpetrator and victim were often within the same social group, with similar factors such as drug use, involvement in crime and non-attendance at school.

Councillor Sinclair noted that the national picture suggested that understanding the characteristics of offenders and victims should make it possible to identify them and intervene before offences

occurred. George Shipman confirmed results were seen in this area as officers were better equipped to understand those at risk. He explained that many had been present in households where domestic violence had occurred and the Council was focusing on the professional skills needed to help engage with these individuals.

In response to a question from Councillor Barbara Brown, officers confirmed they would get back to her about the gender percentage data in relation to victims. It was noted that female victims were worked with differently as the support and areas of need could be very different to male victims.

The Chair thanked George Shipman for his presentation and update.

Resolved

That the report is noted.

7. Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024-2029

The Committee received a report detailing the progress of the draft Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024-2029, attached at Appendix A to the report.

The draft strategy was endorsed by Cabinet on 11 April and would be submitted for further consideration at Council on 23 July 2024.

Rachel Jackson, Head of Education, Strategy and Transformation introduced the report and signposted Members to Appendix A which included a strategic pipeline outlining the range of support.

Rachel Jackson outlined the four priorities as detailed on page 91 of the document pack, expanding on each in turn. She explained the need to work across the broader system of health and social care, linking in with the Council's corporate approach and highlighted the education disparities, particularly in terms of post 16 provision. The support detailed in the strategic pipeline and the delivery plan would bolster this approach. Members noted the aim to update the Committee on progress in six months' time.

Councillor Justin Kerridge queried the statistics on the number of schools that were achieving good or outstanding status as he would like to see how Warwickshire compared to regional competitors, especially in relation to special education provision. Rachel confirmed that the framework was wide within education and comparisons would be carried out with neighbouring areas in due course.

Johnny Kyriakou, Director for Education, reminded the meeting that in relation to Ofsted judgements, the majority of establishments were academies and officers worked with the regional schools' office and schools on a bespoke basis.

Councillor Tim Sinclair asked for clarity on where young people's views and ideas were included in the strategy. Officers advised that the Delivery Plan assisted with this and could be seen in priority 2. Priorities 1 and 2 dealt with 'Best Start' and SEND considerations, helping to gain an earlier

understanding of a child and their needs. Councillor Sinclair asked if it was possible to make those interventions earlier and whether it could have a beneficial outcome.

Rachel Jackson explained that the Early Years Integrated Plan was designed to identify those children that may need support at an earlier time. She advised that this was due to come online later in the year.

Councillor Piers Daniell noted that only 2% of County owned establishments were Early Years and asked if there were any plans to expand in this area. Officers confirmed that provision was delivered by a range of providers but there were no current plans to expand. The Council would continue to work with its own nurseries.

Resolved

That the progress of the draft Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 is noted.

8. Pathfinder Delivery Plan

George Shipman provided a verbal update and slide presentation on the Pathfinder Delivery Plan.

The presentation included the background to the 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' strategy which had started in May 2022, following the publication of reforms across the children's social care system. In July 2023 over £45 million of funding was made available to design and test the reforms.

The 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' Strategy was built on six pillars, with the government investing funds to address urgent issues and to understand how the reforms could be delivered. This was felt to be the biggest change to child protection in years.

George Shipman went on to explain how the Pathfinder programme worked, supporting social workers and the number of actions the Council was asked to commit to. Ultimately, this was a shared ambition and Members noted the four key reform strands that would be delivered as a whole system transformation.

The presentation concluded with the planned timescales to implement the Pathfinder programme, which would require the Council to work at pace. George Shipman advised that officers hoped to report back to the Committee with more detail in due course.

Councillor Kerridge queried how support was delivered to families who may have differing parental views from each other. John Coleman agreed that this was challenging and the family help team would have a practitioner allocated to the family for the entire time. This was hoped to mitigate the need for families to repeat their story and would enable them to keep hold of the same officer or worker throughout the process. In order to implement this, the Council was going to restructure approximately 500 staff.

The aim was to get families to the right team in their locality much quicker, Currently assessments took 45 days to complete and the ambition was to reduce this to 10 days, whilst also reducing the number of strategy meetings held.

Councillor Sinclair asked for further information on how parents escalated potential failings with their single point of contact and how officers would ensure sufficient handover of information when staff left. John Coleman explained that Warwickshire had struggled to recruit social workers and carried vacancies. The Council was now looking to recruit fifteen family support workers and the change in reforms would help to open up the workforce.

In response to the escalation of failings, there was a process that parents could follow if they did not feel they were getting the support they needed as well as a formal complaints process. The transfer of information would be helped by the use of one recording system being used by everyone, making sure clear transfer summaries were in place and accurate chronologies.

Councillor Dave Humphreys asked if external agencies were used such as community groups, which often added to the support network. John Coleman agreed that use of the voluntary sector and community links were a critical part of the process.

The Chair thanked George Shipman for his presentation and the update was noted.

9. Work Programme and items on the Forward Plan

The Committee noted and agreed the updated work programme and items on the Forward Plan relevant to the remit of the Committee.

Members noted that the Education Strategy Delivery Plan would be reported back on in six months' time.

10. Any Other Business

There was none.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting date is scheduled for 17 September 2024.

The meeting rose at 12:58

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Chair

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

17th September 2024

Council Plan 2022-2027 Integrated Performance Report Quarter 1 2024/25

Recommendations

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on Quarter 1 2024/25 organisational progress against the Council Delivery Plan, performance, management of finances and risk.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the Council's performance at Quarter 1, April 2024 – June 2024, against the strategic priorities and Areas of Focus set out in the Council Plan 2022-2027. The paper sets out a combined picture of the Council's delivery, performance, finance, and risk enabling scrutiny and transparency for the organisation, partners, and the public:
 - progress against the Council Delivery Plan (CDP) is summarised in Section 2 and more fully presented within [Appendix 1](#);
 - performance is assessed against the Key Business Measures (KBM) contained within the agreed Performance Management Framework (PMF) in Section 3 and [Appendix 2](#);
 - management of Financial resources is summarised in Section 4 and the summary dashboard is presented in [Appendix 3](#); and
 - management of Risk is summarised in Section 5 and more detailed information is presented in [Appendix 4](#).
- 1.2 This summary report also enables Overview and Scrutiny Committees to consider performance within their own remits. All Members have access to the CDP and PMF using the [Performance Portal](#) in Power BI to monitor performance.
- 1.3 The approach to strategic performance reporting continues to evolve and reflect the Council's key priorities and pressures. Members will be aware of the wealth of information and data available at both strategic and service levels. In addition, Oflog (Office for Local Government) is developing a suite of metrics for the sector. As such, the Council's performance framework will continue to evolve, and be streamlined to ensure that Members have the most useful performance data, including reference to Oflog metrics.
- 1.4 In April Cabinet agreed the new CDP and PMF which have both been simplified to focus on the key priorities ensuring we grip and improve the drivers of cost pressures to maintain service and financial resilience. This

report is a summary of progress on deliverables and performance measures as detailed in the CDP.

- 1.5 Of the 61 activities listed in the CDP 10 are attributed to Children and Young People OSC. Quarter 1 results show a mixed start to the year with 60% (6) of these on track with 30% (3) at risk and 10% (1) Compromised. [Appendix 1](#) gives more information about progress.
- 1.6 The 2024/25 PMF contains 67 KBMs, 55 of which are available for reporting at Quarter 1. There are 17 KBMs within the remit of this Committee, and 10 are available for reporting this Quarter, the other 7 are new and due for reporting later in the year. Table 1 below indicates the current assessment of performance:

Status	On Track	Not on Track
Quarter 1	70% (7)	30% (3)

Table 1

Positively, considering trend information for measures reported at Quarter 1 as On Track, performance is improving or static for the 5 where enough historic data is available. Conversely, for the 1 KBM (% Education Health Care plans completed within 20 weeks) that has a current status of Not on Track and enough trend data to ascertain a direction of travel, the trend has been declining. The forecast position for the next reporting period is that overall, the position will remain stable however a significant proportion of measures are forecasting improvement in their individual performance.

- 1.7 At Quarter 1 the overall performance against KBMs in the PMF, measuring delivery of the CDP, is currently positive with strong trend and future forecast. This is set against the challenges of the current operating environment, which include a prolonged period of uncertainty including the impact of global instability, market failures, high demand and market pressures in social care, children's and education services leading to significant financial pressures necessitating a mitigation plan, and wider resourcing challenges. [Appendix 2](#) details information for all measures within the PMF. Detailed measure-by-measure performance reporting is accessible through the [Performance Portal](#).
- 1.8 At the end of Quarter 1, the Services are reporting a net service overspend of £10.365m (after the use of earmarked reserves is taken into account) equivalent to 10% of its revenue budget. This is primarily driven by and related to two main areas: children's placements (including WCC Homes) and staffing. Savings targets are forecast to be under-achieved by £2.5m whilst the delivery of current capital schemes remains varied with 5.68% of Children's schemes and 24.07% of Education schemes delayed. Details of the forecast as well as the planned management action are included in the Quarter 1 Finance monitoring Report and annexes.
- 1.9 Of the nine strategic risks, three are rated red or high level. An additional strategic risk more directly relates to Children & Young People Overview &

Scrutiny Committee and this is not exclusive. Further detail is included in Section 5 below.

- 1.10 At Service level there are 9 risks relating to Children and Young People services and one key risks is highlighted which is red (high risk) and the risk level has been higher than the risk target for 3 quarters or more and 3 points or more over target.
- 1.11 The Council continues to operate in a challenging and rapidly changing environment which impacts all aspects of our work. A challenging financial outlook in the short- to medium-term is impacting on the Council's resources, both financial and in terms of recruitment and retention, levels of demand, and uncertainty about medium-term national policy direction in several key areas of our work. Performance reporting will continue to track and highlight our delivery and performance and inform prioritisation of activity and resources.

2. Performance against the Council Delivery Plan

- 2.1 The three strategic priorities set out in the Council Plan 2022 - 2027 are delivered through seven Areas of Focus. In addition, there are three further themes that will help the Council to be known as 'a Great Council and Partner.' The CDP aligns priority activity from across all Service areas against the areas of focus within the Council Plan 2022-27. It shows how activity across Services collectively contributes to delivering these priorities.
- 2.2 Of the 61 activities listed in the CDP 10 are attributed to Children and Young People OSC. Quarter 1 results show a mixed start to the year with 60% (6) of these on track with 30% (3) at risk and 10% (1) Compromised. Appendix 1 gives more information about progress.

3. Performance against the Performance Management Framework

- 3.1 The Council Delivery Plan outlines deliverables under each Area of Focus and KBMs have been assigned to measure impact, a full performance summary against all KBMs is contained in Appendix 2 and more comprehensive performance reporting is enabled through the Power BI Performance Portal as part of the PMF. Where applicable, some performance figures may now have been updated on the Power BI reporting system. The number of reportable measures will change each quarter as the framework considers the availability of new data.
- 3.2 Of the 10 KBMs available for reporting at Quarter 1, 70% (7) are reported as being On Track and 30% (3) being reported as Not on Track.
- 3.3 Notable aspects of positive performance for specific measures include:
 - The number of children open to an Early Help Pathway is at 3,046, against an ambitious target of 3,200, and has been steadily improving over the last four years, more than doubling from 1,469 in Quarter 1 2020/21. The

forecasted trajectory is a further increase in numbers. The aim of Early Help is to offer the right support at the right time so that problems are less likely to escalate to a point where a child becomes vulnerable or in need; this strategic approach to children's services will be further developed by the Council's selection as a Wave 2 pilot in the Department for Education's Families First For Children programme.

- 3.4 There are several performance challenges this Quarter:
- The number of Safe Accommodation units delivered in Quarter 1 is 11, which is behind the minimum number of 18 units expected by this point. Delays are due to reasons including difficulties in sourcing properties and delays with conveyancing. Close monthly monitoring continues with the commissioned provider, and it is expected that performance will improve, with 20 units live across the county forecast by the end of Quarter 2; and
 - The % of Education Health Care plans (EHCP) completed within 20 weeks has been declining over the past year, falling to 16% at Quarter 1. This is due to increasing demand and a backlog of EHCPs to process. A review is underway to assess opportunities to improve current processes, but the fundamental challenge is extremely high levels of demand and lack of capacity within the wider system.
- 3.5 Within the current PMF there are 6 measures of the 10 available for reporting to this Committee where there is enough trend data available to ascertain a direction of travel. 83.3% (5) of measures have a trend that is On Track, all of which are either improving or static. Conversely, 16.7% (1) are Not on Track, and the trend for this measure has been declining over time.
- 3.6 Within the current PMF all 10 reportable KBMs have a forecast projection from the responsible service for the forthcoming period. Of the measures that have a current Quarter 1 status of On Track, 57.1% (4) are forecast to improve and 42.8% (3) are forecast to remain static in that position for the next reporting period. Of the 3 KBMs that are forecast to be Not on Track, 2 measures are forecast to improve at the next reporting period and the other is forecast to remain static.
- 3.7 A set of high-level, cross-cutting, long-term Warwickshire Outcome Measures, which the Council can influence but is not solely responsible for, are reported in a State of Warwickshire reporting [dashboard](#) which includes Creating Opportunities and Cost-of-Living metrics.

4. Management of Finance

- 4.1 The key metrics of financial management are summarised below with further information available in [Appendix 3](#) and in the Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring Report presented to Cabinet on 5th September 2024.

Metric	Target	Performance at Q1 2024/25
Performance against the latest approved revenue budget as measured by forecast under/overspend	On budget or no more than 2% underspent	10.0% overspent

Table 2

4.2 The net revenue forecast reported at the end of Quarter 1 is £10.365m (10.0%). The headline overspend forecast of £12.130m (11.7%) shows the position before funding has been transferred from earmarked reserves.

Performance against the approved savings target as measured by forecast under/overachievement	100%		26%
Performance against the approved capital programme as measured by forecast delays in delivery	No more than 5% delay	Children & Families	-5.68%
		Education	-24.07%

Table 3

5. Management of Risk

5.1 Risks are monitored in risk registers at a strategic level and also at service level. At the strategic level the following red or high level risk, after taking account of current mitigations, is more directly related to Children & Young People (CYP) services:

- *Mismatch between demand and resources.*

5.2 Other strategic risks rated red may also impact on CYP services, in particular the risk relating to *a possible cyber attack being successful*, which has the potential to impact all service areas across the Council. At a service level there are 9 risks recorded in service areas relating to CYP. There is one key risk highlighted, which is red (high risk) and the risk level has been higher than the risk target for 3 quarters or more and 3 points or more over target, a table illustrating this information is provided at [Appendix 4](#). There are no additional red risks.

5.3 Mitigating controls are in place for all risks and includes receipt of £1m funding from the Department for Education (DfE) to ensure the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme is delivered. The programme has now commenced but it has not yet delivered the anticipated impact. Close working has been established between teams e.g. Finance and Education, and teams continue to lobby Government officials as do peers, this being a national issue. The Council has been successful in securing Pathfinder Wave Two funding to support change to Childrens services to focus on early intervention. Monitoring of the demand pressures and how those needs are met continues to be a challenge for all parties.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Other than the content of Section 4, there are none specific to this report.

7. Environmental Implications

7.1 There are none rising directly from this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Progress on the Council Delivery Plan

Appendix 2 – Quarterly Performance Report

Appendix 3 – Management of Finance

Appendix 4 – Management of Risk

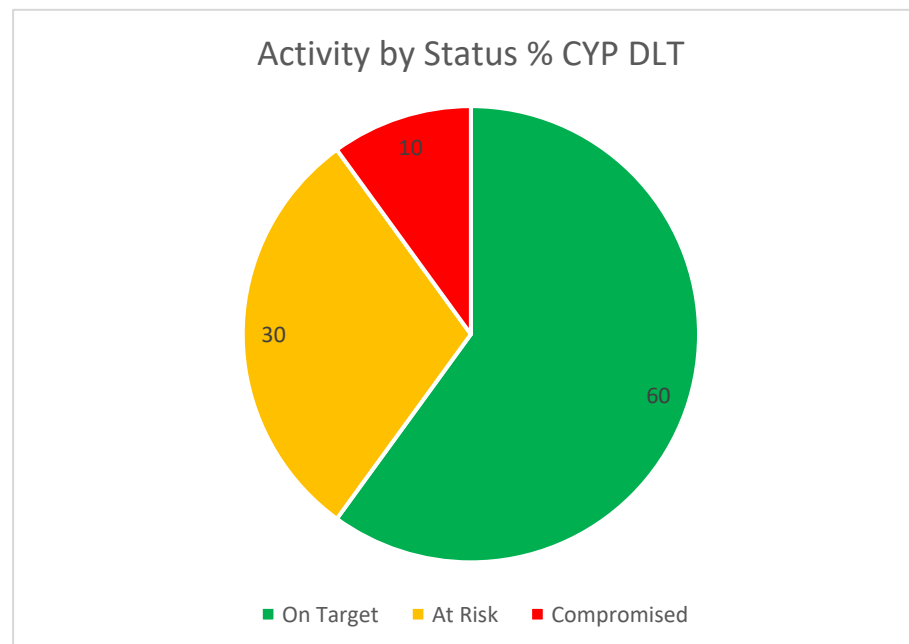
Background Papers

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1. Children & Young People OSC Progress on the Council Delivery Plan Quarter 1

1.1 Key Insights for Quarter 1 2024/25

Of the 61 activities in the Council Delivery Plan 10 are attributable to the Children & Young People Directorate. Of these, 60% of activities are On Track, with 40% At Risk or Compromised. It is these actions which are reported on below on an exception basis.



1.2 Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - heard, safe, healthy, skilled, happy children.

Activity	Status	Commentary
Increase the number of Warwickshire foster carers and open the agreed programme of Children's Homes, enabling us to provide local placements for children whilst stabilising and reducing costs.	At risk	WCC continue to run a very proactive recruitment campaign in what is a very competitive market. 173 children are placed with WCC foster carers and 118 with connected persons carers in comparison to 178 being placed with independent foster carers.
Implement a range of agreed initiatives, to further establish an integrated multi-agency service, following the Government's new children's social care strategy "Stable Homes Built on Love" and enable more children to receive support earlier, particularly for children under the age of five years old.	At Risk	We are reviewing our approach to early help to consider how we can expand more under 5-year-olds.
Deliver agreed additional safe accommodation for victim survivors of domestic abuse	At Risk	Warwickshire County Council in partnership with our commissioned provider (Refuge) have launched 11 units of dispersed refuge accommodation provision across the county. The units are a mixture of flats, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom and 3-bedroom houses. These units are able to provide safe accommodation for those who were previously unable to access refuge provision including males, those with pets, those with larger families, those who identify as LGBT+ and those with disabilities. The number of new units is behind target for this point in the year. The Council are working with the provider to understand the reason for this delay- which currently include delays in conveyancing, and suitable properties. Properties in the pipeline continue to be reviewed at contract review meetings. At this stage the provider needs to identify a further 3 units by the end of the financial year.

1.3 Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs

Activity	Status	Commentary
Support the timely delivery of the new alternative provision academy (Talenton Academy) by the Department for Education to ensure opening in September 2025.	Compromised	This project is being funded, commissioned, and delivered by the Department for Education. We are awaiting notification on progress but have been informed the earliest the school will be delivered will be Spring 2026. WCC Commissioning arrangements will continue to ensure provision is available where required until the school is open.

2 The following activities are On Track

Activity
Implement the new safeguarding arrangements for children set out in the revised statutory guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children.
Implement a new short and long-term support offer for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health issues working in partnership with Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust and Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board.
Agree a business case and implement proposals for the provision of additional school places to ensure we have sufficient capacity in the right locations at the right time, enabling children to be educated in good quality local provision.
Agree a SEND Delivering Better Value Programme to include: Roll-out the Inclusion Framework trial to further families of schools to improve SEN Support in schools.
Agree a SEND Delivering Better Value Programme to include: Deliver a workforce development programme, designed with school leaders, to maintain support and confidence for supporting children with EHC plans in mainstream schools.
Agree a SEND Delivering Better Value Programme to include: Agree a business case and implement proposals for establishing and expanding new and existing SEND Resourced Provision – as an additional level of provision and an alternative to specialist provisions where appropriate.

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1. Children & Young People OSC Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 1

1.1 Detailed measure-by-measure performance reporting is accessible through the [Performance Portal](#).

1.2 The three strategic priorities set out in the Council Plan 2022 - 2027 are delivered through seven Areas of Focus which are supported by one other where the Council is to be known for as 'a Great Council and Partner'. These are detailed in the table below alongside the number of KBMs that will be used to assess delivery, and the number being reported at this Quarter.

Area of Focus	No. of KBMs	No. of KBMs available for reporting at Quarter 1
Create vibrant places with safe and inclusive communities	5	5
Deliver major infrastructure, digital connectivity and major transport options	10	9
Promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth, successful business, good quality jobs and future skills	7	4
Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on our commitment to Net Zero	7	7
Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - Happy, healthy, safe children	9	6
Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs and disabilities	10	6
Support people to live healthy, happy, and independent lives and work with partners to reduce health inequalities	10	9
<i>To make this happen, we will be a great Council and partner</i>	9	9

1.3 Key Insights for Quarter 1 2024/25

There are 17 KBMs in total that are in the remit of this Committee and 10 KBMs are being reported on this Quarter. Chart 1 details the reported status of these KBMs.

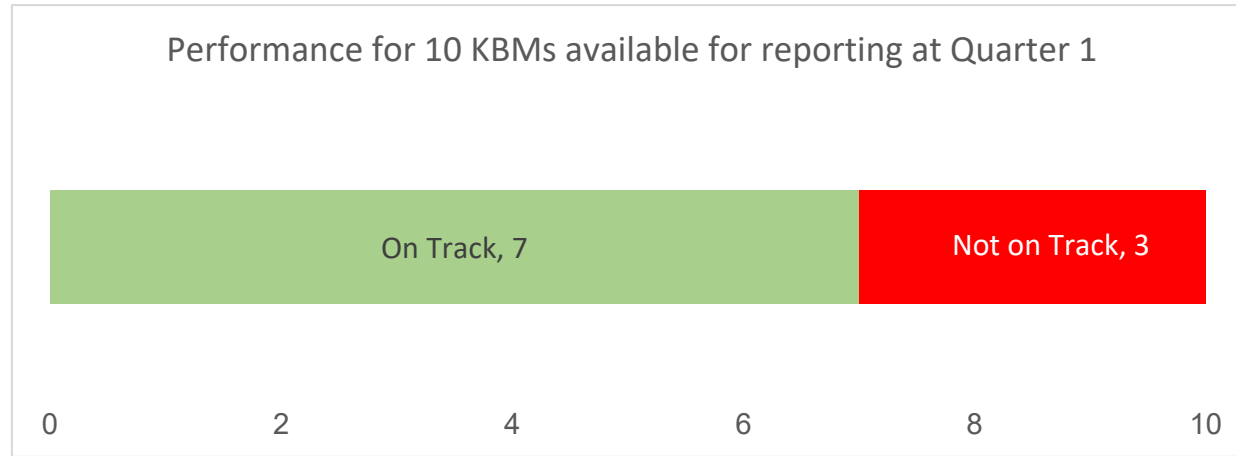


Chart 1

Chart 2 details the overall Direction of Travel for the KBMs being reported this Quarter. There are 6 KBMs where there is sufficient data at this time to determine a Direction of Travel.

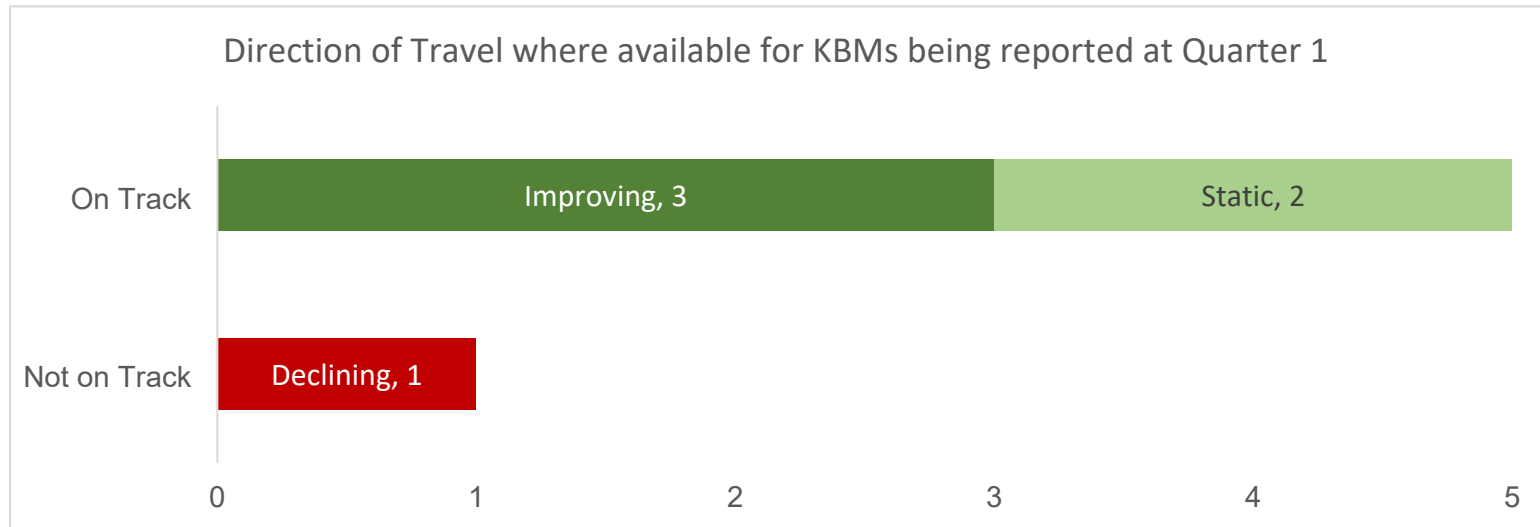


Chart 2

Chart 3 details the projected performance based on the service forecast of the reported KBMs at the next reporting period.

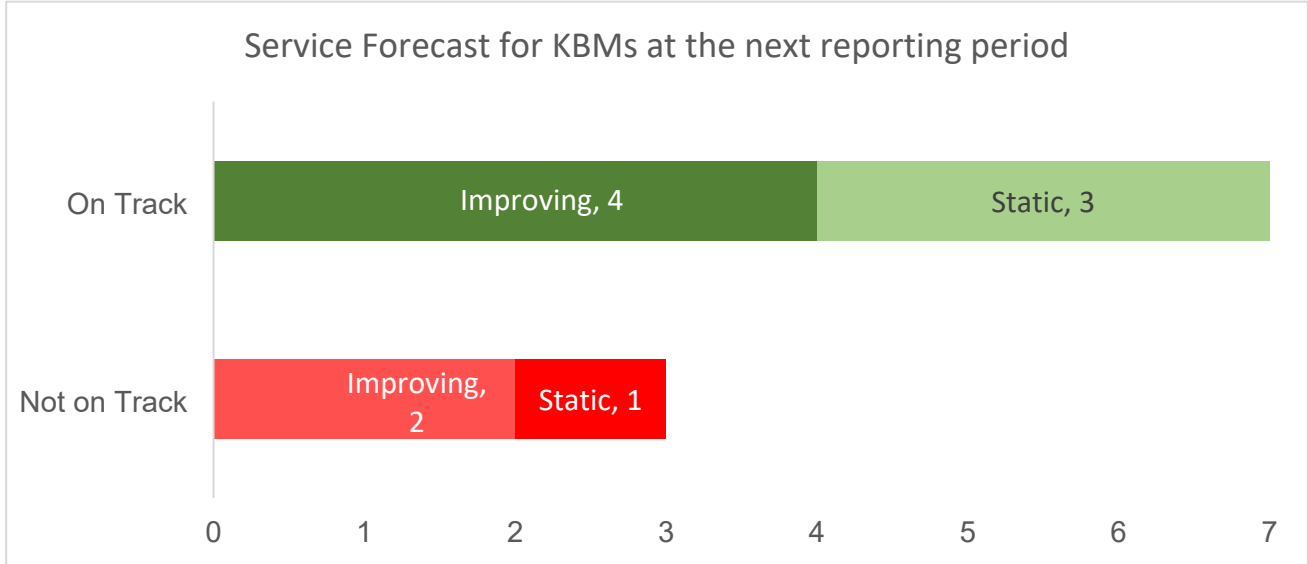


Chart 3

The following sections provide an overview of current performance by Area of Focus. The measure summary tables are a representation of the tables in the full Committee report on Power Bi and are interactive. Please note:

- data is being added into the system as it becomes available so new information may be in the reports since the writing of this Quarterly position report;
- measure names in the summary tables and where highlighted are all links to take the reader directly to the measure report page in Power Bi which provides full detail on the measure including charted data, performance narrative, improvement activity, trends and targets if applicable;
- a measure status is included based on performance either against the target and polarity of measure or where there is no target on improving/ declining performance which can be assessed against many factors such as compared to previous year, trend over time, sector comparison data;
- Services provide a forecast of where performance is heading over the next reporting period, this is informed by local knowledge, improvement activity and trend information;
- where the measure status or projection is Not Applicable, this is due to exceptional circumstances regarding the measure such as it is setting a baseline this year, the Power Bi report will provide the reason by measure;
- the Latest Figure column represents the most current data available including last quarter, previous year or longer if data is lagged, full details are on Power Bi report;
- Direction of Travel is an indication of whether performance is improving based on trend data where available;
- not all measures have targets and the approach now is to have improving performance and targets where appropriate, where there is no target the table is populated with N/A; and,
- as the framework is more responsive there are annual or termly measures included on the tables with no reported data, this will be added as the relevant data becomes available e.g. attainment data from November.

1.4 Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - Happy, healthy, safe children

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
% of Children in Care that are placed with a WCC Foster Carer	37.7%	40%	Not on Track	N/A Insufficient data	Not on Track Performance Remaining Static
No. of new WCC owned children's home placements open and available	New annual measure due for reporting at Quarter 3				
% of WCC owned children's home placements occupied	71%	80%	On Track	N/A Insufficient data	On Track Performance Improving
% uptake of funded early education/childcare places for eligible children aged 9 months plus (working families entitlement)	New measure that will come into effect later in the year and begin reporting at Quarter 3				
% uptake of funded early education/childcare places for less advantaged 2 year olds (2 Help scheme)	81%	85%	On Track	Improving	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% of 3 & 4 year old children accessing funded early education/childcare places (universal entitlement)	94%	96%	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Remaining Static
No. of children open to an Early Help Pathway	3046	3200	On Track	Improving	On Track Performance Improving
No. of additional Safe Accommodation units delivered from the baseline	11	30*	Not on Track	N/A Insufficient data	Not On Track Performance Improving
% increase of referrals into Refuge (based on a 3 year average)	New annual measure due for reporting at Year End				

*Cumulative actual or year end target

Within this Area of Focus two thirds, 4 out of 6, of reported measures are On Track and forecast to remain so for the next reporting period. A further three are not due for reporting until later in the year.

Area of good progress due to steady improvements over the last four years:

- No. of children open to an Early Help Pathway

Improvement activity as progress has been affected by delays this Quarter:

- No. of additional Safe Accommodation units delivered from the baseline

1.5 Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs and disabilities

Measure Name	Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
No. of additional class places created for pupils at reception above Pupil Allocation Number (PAN) based on forecasted requirements	Annual measures due for reporting at Quarter 2				
% of families at reception transfer that are awarded one of their first three choice preferences					
No. of additional class places created for pupils at Year 7 above Pupil Allocation Number (PAN) based on forecasted requirements					
% of families at Year 7 transfer that are awarded one of their first three choice preferences					
% of in year applications that are notified with an outcome within the statutory deadline of 15 school days	91%	94%	On Track	Improving	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% of resourced provision places utilised compared to final target	75%	N/A	On Track	N/A Insufficient Trend Data	On Track Performance Improving
% of children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan attending a mainstream school	36%	N/A	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Improving
% Education Health Care plans completed within 20 weeks	16%	National average (50%)	Not on Track	Declining	Not On Track Performance Improving

Within this Area of Focus 3 of the 5 measures available for reporting are On Track. The remaining 4 measures are annual and will be available for reporting at Quarter 2.

Improvement activity due to declining performance and a backlog to address:

- % Education Health Care plans completed within 20 weeks

1.6 Changes to the PMF

Since the PMF was agreed by Cabinet in April there has been a need to make some changes to some of the measures. The table below outlines the updated measures within the remit of this Committee, and the rationale for the changes.

Area of Focus	Original measure	Reasoning and new measure (if applicable)
Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - heard, safe, healthy, skilled, happy children skilled, happy children	% uptake of places for children aged 9 months	Reword for enhanced definition: % uptake of funded early education/childcare places for eligible children aged 9 months plus (working families entitlement)
	% uptake of places for eligible 2 years olds	Reword for enhanced definition: % uptake of funded early education/childcare places for less advantaged 2 year olds (2 Help scheme)
	% of children accessing 3 & 4 year old universal entitlement	Reword for enhanced definition: % of 3 & 4 years old children accessing funded early education/childcare places (universal entitlement)
	No. of people engaged with Loud Mouth theatre workshops	The deliverable 5.3 was removed from the CDP. The Service agrees that the associated measures should be taken out.
Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs	No. of additional school places created based on forecasted requirements	A request to split this out into two measures to make this more meaningful – one for primary and one for secondary: No. of additional class places created for pupils at Year 7 above Pupil Allocation Number (PAN) based on forecasted requirements No. of additional class places created for pupils at reception above Pupil Allocation Number (PAN) based on forecasted requirements

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Appendix 3 Management of Financial Risk

1.1 The table below details performance against the latest approved revenue budget as measured by forecast overspend, further information and reasons for variances can be found in the Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring report presented to Cabinet on 5th September 2024.

Service Area	Approved Budget	Actual Spend	(Under) /Overspend	% Change from Budget	Represented by:		
					Investment Funds	Impact on Earmarked Reserves	Remaining Service Variance
	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m
Children & Families	103.775	115.905	12.13	11.7%	1.664	0.101	10.365
Education Services - Non-DSG	10.712	11.537	0.825	7.7%	(0.034)	0.278	0.581
Total	114.487	127.442	12.955	11.3%	1.630	0.379	10.946

This large forecasted overspend is primarily driven by and related to the two main budget blocks for Children & Families – Childrens Placements (including WCC Homes) and staffing. Details are provided in the Quarter 1 Finance monitoring report.

A Financial Recovery Strategy has been put in place across the organisation to address the Quarter 1 forecast position with immediate action required to mitigate in-year pressures. This includes the implementation of spending controls, and an individual Financial Recovery Plan is required for the Childrens and Families Service.

1.2 The table below details performance against the approved savings target as measured by forecast delivery.

Saving Proposal	Target £m	Forecast £m	Shortfall/ (Overachievement) £m	Reason for financial variation and any associated management action
Savings on third party spend - Review of services purchased from third parties to ensure value for money.	240	240	0	
Reduce spend on Residential Care - Reduce the cost of care/services including the increased use of WCC homes, boarding schools and residential schools.	2,361	0	2361	This budget is experiencing extreme pressure both from the forecasted increases of children placed on residential (643 more weeks) and to a more extreme extent the increase in average unit cost per week by £844, taking the average weekly cost to £6,604 per week or the equivalent of £0.344m per week. The various initiatives to achieve the saving are continuing but under the pressures faced are not making headway.
External foster care - Reduce the cost of care/services by reducing spend on external foster care through increasing number of internal foster carers.	200	200	0	Although external Foster care is underspending (hence saving on this budget achieved)- the forecasted internal foster care expenditure is less than 23/24.
Grant income - More effective use of grant income to support the core activity of the service and contribute to the service overheads.	100	100	0	Due to decreasing numbers and funding as well as severity of needs increasing it is at this stage unlikely to be achieved. However as a result of this Q1 forecast the strategy and operational spend which triggers this additional grant surplus is being

				urgently reviewed at Director & Head of Service level.
Third-party contributions - Maximise contributions from other agencies for care packages for children in care.	250	250	0	
Saving Proposal	Target £m	Forecast £m	Shortfall/ (Overachievement) £m	Reason for financial variation and any associated management action
House project - Reduce the cost of 16 plus supported accommodation through the expansion of the House project.	100	100	0	
Reduction in staff costs - Reduction in staffing costs flowing from the successful implementation of the Sustainability Plan	91	91	0	
Children & Families	3,342	881	2,461	
Savings on third party spend - Review of services purchased from third parties to ensure value for money.	15	15	0	
Traded income - Increased traded income from Governor and Attendance services as well as a review to modernise music services.	5	5	0	
Education (Excluding Dedicated Schools Grant)	20	20	0	

1.3 The table below details performance against the approved capital programme as measured by delays in delivery.

Service	Approved 2024-25 Capital Programme	New Projects in Year	Net Over / Under Spend	Budget Reprofile	Delays	In Year Capital Spend	% of Delays
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	

Children & Families	2.023	0.000	(0.034)	0.014	(0.113)	1.890	-5.68%
Education	89.068	-0.666	0.012	0.000	(21.278)	67.137	-24.07%

Children & Families - £0.113m:

There are a number of scheme delays all of low value (none greater than £0.041m).

Education Services - £21.278m:

- Oakley School primary phase temporary solutions (£0.428m) - Work has been delayed at St Margaret's due to costs increasing. The project is being value engineered and a requote from the contractor is anticipated. An overspend is now being forecast; member approval will be sought prior to incurring any expenditure over and above the currently approved capital funding for the project;
- Lighthorne Heath Primary School - Relocation (£4.631m) This project is School Led and therefore timescales for delivery are out of our control. Delays will be the result of procurement and planning issues - we will not contribute the S106 funding to the school until works are complete;
- Shottery St Andrews Primary – Relocation (£4.623m) – Construction has been completed apart from final snagging and the project is expected to come in under budget. Funding for final accounts has been moved to 2024-25;
- Stratford Upon Avon Secondary School (£3.873m) - works delayed due to budget / cost issues and project now expected to complete in September 2025;
- Myton Gardens Primary School (£7.523m) - Delays have resulted from the requirement to relocate a badger sett. This is subject to planning. Quotes for the overall scheme have come in higher than the original estimates; and
- There are other schemes with delays of less than £0.250m.

Appendix 4 CYP OSC Management of Risk

Key Service Risks Summary

Children and Young People’s Services

At a service level there are 9 risks recorded against services relating to Children and Young People’s Committee related services. Key risks are highlighted where they are red risks (high risk) and where a risk level has been higher than the risk target for 3 quarters or more and is currently still 3 points or more over target. This is the performance metric used for reporting on the management of risk.

Service Risks	Net risk is currently green or amber	Net risk is currently red
<p>Risk level has not exceeded the target for 3 quarters in a row</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 other risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no associated risks
<p>Risk level has exceeded target for 3 quarters in a row and is currently more than 3 points above target</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Children) Children and young people and vulnerable adults suffer avoidable injury or death. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Education) Increased demand on statutory services within SEND linked to the High Needs Block

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Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17th September 2024

Customer Feedback Annual Report 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Recommendation

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the contents of the report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is the annual customer feedback report for Children and Families and Education Services covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 The report summarises compliments, complaints, comments received by these two services including learning and service improvement. Data, trends, and themes have been compared over the last three years.
- 1.3 A new customer feedback system was implemented on 15 January 2024, part way through the reporting period and consequently information has been taken from both systems for the purposes of this report.
- 1.4 Following a review in 2023/24, Warwickshire County Council's Customer Complaints Policy, including the updated Childrens and Adults Social Care statutory procedures, was approved by Cabinet on 15 February 2024. The revised policy is available on the Council's website [here](#).
- 1.5 At an organisational level, overall feedback received has returned to pre-pandemic levels and in 2023/24 it is at the lowest over the last six years. The number of complaints decreased by 16% from 1809 in 2022/23 to 1520 in 2023/24.
- 1.6 In Children and Families Services, the overall number of complaints have decreased from 246 in 2021/22 to 183 in 2023/24, with an approximate 14% reduction each year. In Education Services, over the last year complaints have decreased by 21% to 105 in 2023/24.
- 1.7 Children and Families worked with 12,969 children during 2023/24 (total for Early Help and Social Care), and the 183 complaints make up 1.4% of the total. In Education, Admissions processed 25,555 transition and in-year applications in the 2023-24 academic year and SENDAR processed 1,621

requests for EHCP needs assessments and worked with 6,588 children with an EHCP.

2. **Complaints Process**

- 2.1 Every local authority with a responsibility for Social Care services is required to provide an annual report, outlining the workings of both their adults and children's complaints and representations procedures.
- 2.2 The procedure for dealing with children's statutory complaints (those raised by or on behalf of children relating to our Social Work Services) and representations is determined by the following legislation:
- The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006,
 - The Children & Adoption Act 2002,
 - Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and
 - the accompanying guidance 'Getting the Best from Complaints' (DfES July 2006).
- 2.3 The requirement contained in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, is that every local authority with a responsibility for Children's Social Care services is obliged to have in post a complaints manager, part of whose role is to provide an annual report into the workings of the complaints and representations procedures.
- 2.4 Complaints relating to Children's Services, which do not fall within the boundaries of the statutory Social Care complaints process, are processed via the council's corporate complaints process.
- 2.5 The statutory complaints and representations procedure serves four main purposes:
- i. To provide a way for a child/young person, or a person acting on their behalf, to give their views of the service they have received.
 - ii. To enable council services to learn from complaints and compliments and to change, review or maintain its services accordingly.
 - iii. To ensure that complaints are properly recorded and acted upon and that where necessary, things that have gone wrong are put right promptly.
 - iv. To ensure that staff and service users understand their rights and responsibilities within the complaints process.

- 2.6 The statutory complaints procedure, used for complaints defined by the relevant legislation and raised by, or on behalf of children receiving a service from Children's Social Work Services, has three stages:
- Stage One - Local resolution.
 - Stage Two - An independent complaint investigation.
 - Stage Three - An independently chaired review panel.
- 2.7 Warwickshire County Council (WCC) takes every submitted feedback case seriously, especially complaints, as it wants to make sure its complainants are dealt with fairly, consistently and within appropriate timescales, and to ensure that learning and improvements can be registered and actioned.
- 2.8 Procedures relating to how WCC deals with and responds to complaints are detailed in [Warwickshire County Council's Complaints Policy](#) and [Warwickshire's County Council Children's Statutory Complaint Procedure](#)
- 2.9 These policies have been developed in line with best practice recommendations and legislation that covers complaints about local authorities' services. In the Complaints Policy, a complaint is defined as:
- "... any expression of dissatisfaction with a service that the Council (or one of its partners or contractors) has provided, and that requires a response."*
- 2.10 The Statutory Complaint Procedure clarifies the types of complaint that are covered by the relevant legislation and subject to the three state statutory complaints process.

3. Analysis of customer feedback received during 2023/24.

- 3.1 During 2023/24 feedback from members of the public was recorded on both the previous 'Contact Us' system and from 15 January 2024, the new customer feedback system.
- 3.2 Feedback can be shared through an online portal, by telephone, by post or via email and it is categorised into complaints, compliments, and comments. Questions from the public are not recorded on the system but are dealt with directly by the appropriate service.
- 3.3 The following analysis covers data, trends and themes compared over the last three years and, where relevant, also before and after the pandemic. This offers a clearer understanding of changes in customer feedback during these periods.

Feedback cases over time – All WCC Services

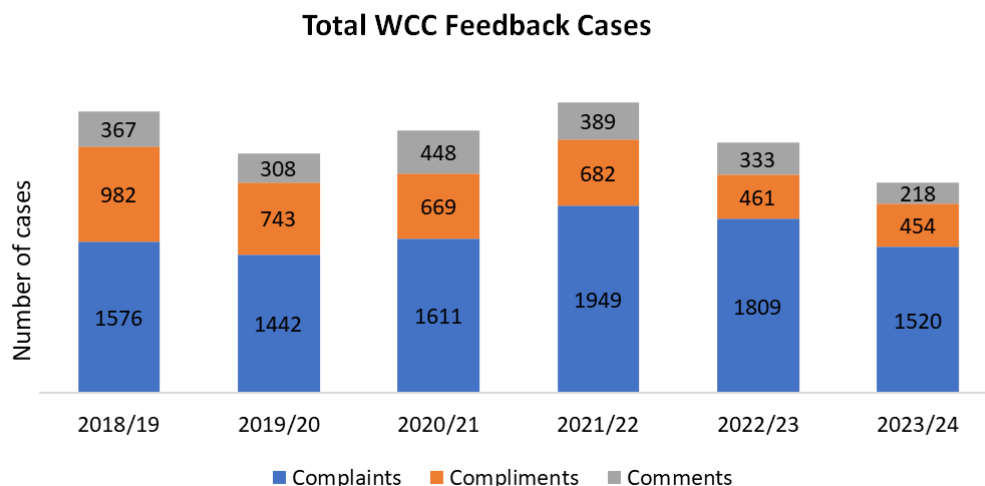


Figure 1: Number of complaints, compliments and comments received from 2018/19 to 2023/24 across all WCC services.

Overall cases:

3.4 The total number of cases raised over the last three years decreased by 27% from 3020 in 2021/22 to 2192 in 2023/24. As figure 1 indicates, overall feedback received has returned to pre-pandemic levels and in 2023/24 it is at the lowest over the last six years.

Complaints:

3.5 Complaint numbers peaked in 2021/22, likely due to increased customer interaction following the end of the lockdown period. The number of complaints decreased by 16% from 1809 in 2022/23 to 1520 in 2023/24.

Compliments:

3.6 The previous reduction in compliments over time has continued with a 33% decrease from 682 in 2021/22 to 454 in 2023/24. As figure 1 indicates, the number of compliments received across all services has reduced by 54% since 2018/19. Previous initiatives to encourage positive feedback have not been undertaken across all services since the pandemic and in addition, this type of feedback is not always shared and recorded in the corporate feedback system but is held locally.

Feedback cases over time – Children and Families and Education Services

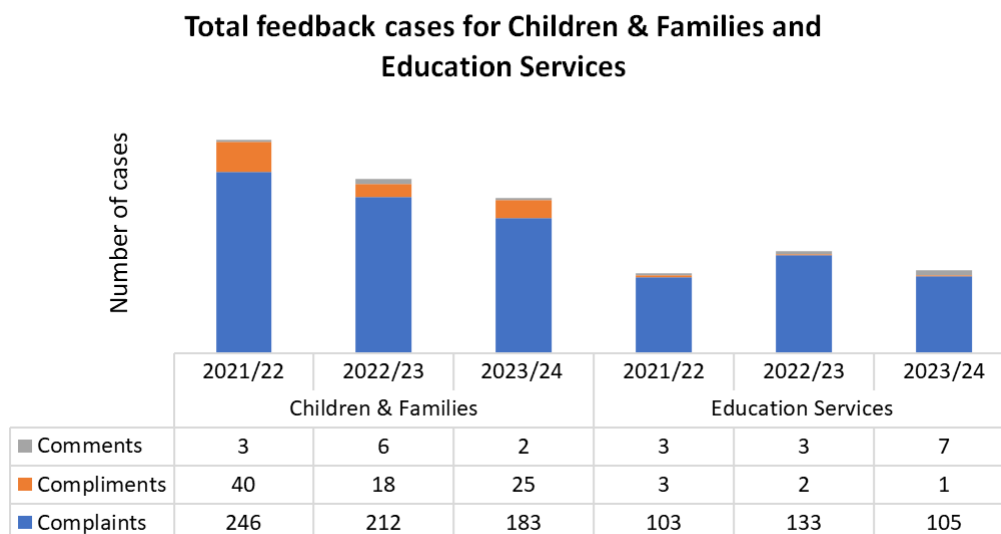


Figure 2: Number of cases assigned to Children & Families and Education Services by type from 2021/22 to 2023/24.

Children and Families:

Complaints:

3.7 The overall number of complaints have decreased from 246 in 2021/22 to 183 in 2023/24, with an approximate 14% reduction each year. The consistent downward trend in complaints suggests potential service improvements or other factors such as the volume and complexity of cases since the pandemic. Examples of service improvements include evaluation of complaints to ensure learning and improvements in communication, a focus on the customer and ensuring apologies are made where appropriate, and a focus on remedying issues at an early stage where possible. Children and Families worked with 12,969 children during the year and the 183 complaints therefore make up 1.41% of the total number of contacts.

Compliments:

3.8 There is a drop in the number of compliments from 40 in 2021/22 to 18 in 2022/23. However, in 2023/24 the number of compliments increased by 39% to 25, indicating a possible improvement in service and customer satisfaction. This aligns with the trend of a decrease in complaints as detailed above.

Education:

Complaints:

3.9 The number of complaints increased from 103 in 2021/22 to 133 in 2022/23 which was the year School Admissions service was added to the portfolio. Since 2022/23, complaints have decreased by 21% to 105 in 2023/24. This would indicate increased improvements in service delivery over the last

year and includes a 66% decrease in the number of School Admissions related complaints. In Education, Admissions processed 25,555 transition and in-year applications in the 2023-24 academic year and SENDAR processed 1,621 requests for EHCP needs assessments and worked with 6,588 children with an EHCP.

Compliments:

3.10 The number of compliments has decreased over the three years from 3 in 2021/22 to 2 in 2022/23, and further to 1 in 2023/24. This follows the organisational trend and may in part be attributed to this type of feedback not being encouraged or recorded centrally.

Initial feedback contact method for Children and Families and Education Services

3.11 The ‘type of initial feedback contact method’ (figure 3) is new data collected since 15 January 2024 due to improvements made when developing the new customer feedback system. There is therefore, no comparative data and the figures below do not include all cases raised in these services in 2023/24. However by using percentages of data held for January to March 2024, trends can still be identified.

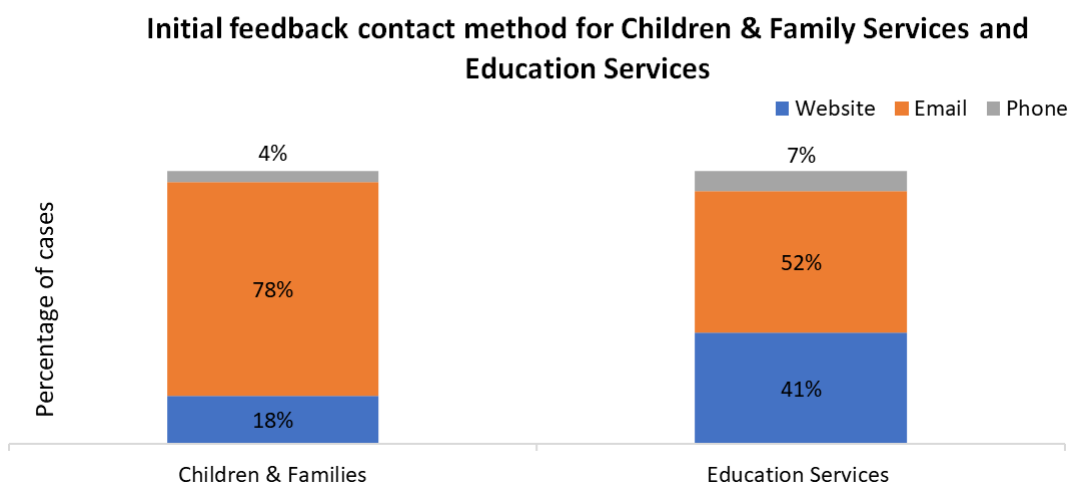


Figure 3: Percentage breakdown of original contact method for complaints, comments and compliments received since 15th January 2024.

3.12 The data shows that whilst submitting feedback by post is an option, no postal feedback was received between 15 January and 31 March 2024 for either service.

3.13 Figure 3 highlights a notable difference in how customers are engaging with Education Services compared to Children and Families Services during this period, with more cases being uploaded directly through the new customer portal. This could indicate a correlation with the ability of Children and

Families Services customers being able to contact social workers directly to try and resolve issues in the first instance.

- 3.14 In 2023/24, the Customer Relations team continued to invest time speaking directly to prospective complainants, regardless of how the initial contact was made or the service that their feedback relates to. This proactive approach provides an important opportunity to build a trusting relationship with the complainant/service user, particularly critical when handling more complex complaints. This allows for a more thorough understanding of the concerns raised and desired outcomes, and in turn supports investigating managers to provide more precise and detailed responses.
- 3.15 Talking directly to complainants also ensures that where it is appropriate and possible concerns are resolved without the need to progress to the formal complaints process. This can prove to be a quicker and more beneficial means of resolution for all concerned.

Complaints data trends by month:

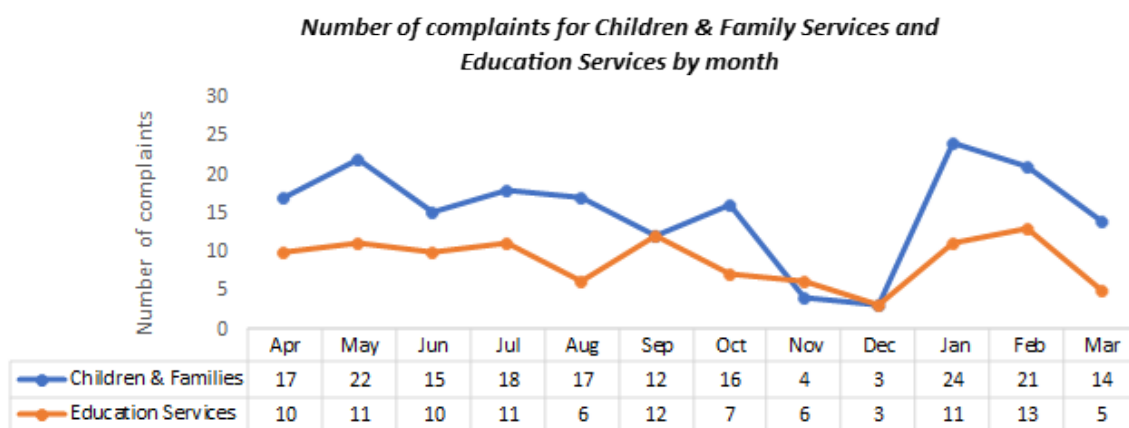


Figure 4: Number of complaints assigned to Children & Family and Education Services by month for 2023/24.

Children and Families Services:

Trend increases:

- 3.16 Data shows the most significant increase in complaints occurred in Children and Families Services in January 2024. This aligns with the introduction of the new customer feedback system, which involved transferring 15 cases from the old system and therefore registered those transfers as “January” complaints. There was also a relaunch of the complaint process and the dissemination of training to teams at that time advising of a change in process to a centralised loading and initial triage of all feedback by Customer Relations team.

Trend decreases:

- 3.17 A decrease in complaint numbers is shown in months June, August, March and December. This trend is consistent with previous years. (see appendix 1). This would align with decreased interaction during the Christmas period and summer holidays.

Education Services:*Trend increases:*

- 3.18 Data shows the most significant increase in complaints for Education Services in January 2024. As with Children and Families Services, this aligns with migrated cases from the old system to the new customer feedback system.
- 3.19 September increases are consistent with previous years' trend (see appendix 1) and is directly related to increased interaction due to the new academic year. This is still an overall decrease in total numbers of complaints over the same period in the previous three years. There was a 57% decrease from complaints in September 2023/24 (12) compared to 2022/23 (28). (See appendix 1)

Trend decreases:

- 3.20 Decreased numbers of complaints in August and December 2023 are consistent with previous years. This is a trend across education and all social care related services due to decreased engagement during holiday periods (see appendix 1).

Complaints data by stage for all WCC services:

Complaint Stage	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Stage 2	97	45	48
Stage 3	6	10	8

Figure 5: Breakdown complaints by stage 2 and 3 for 2021/22, 2022/23 & 2023/24 across all WCC services.

- 3.21 All initial complaints once triaged (and confirmed as being the correct feedback type and complying with the complaints policy's definitions) are then allocated to the appropriate service area at Stage 1 for local resolution.
- 3.22 As per policy if a customer remains dissatisfied, they can then request a Stage 2 investigation of the complaint, which is undertaken by the Customer Relations team. Figure 5 shows a reduction of over 50% of Stage 2's across all WCCs services from 2021/22 (97) to 2023/24 (48). There is a slight increase on the numbers from 2022/23 of 3 cases. The high number in 2021/22 is likely due to increased customer interaction following the end of the lockdown period.

- 3.23 From 2021/22 to 2023/24 Stage 3 reviews increased by 2 cases but have decreased by 2 from 2022/23 to 2023/24. Please note Stage 3 are for complaints in relation to children’s social care that meet the statutory definitions only.
- 3.24 Customer Relations have worked to reduce the number of reviews by liaising with services to seek de-escalations, where it is felt that the issue could be resolved with complainants before a complaint is accepted as a Stage 2.
- 3.25 Customers can at any time in the process, approach the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) for them to consider their complaint. The proportion of customers that complain to the LGSCO compared to the total number of customer contacts is very small. The annual review and summary of upheld complaints issued by LGSCO in the financial year 2023/24 was recently taken to Cabinet on 5 September 2024. Report can be found here.
[Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review and Summary of Upheld Complaints.](#)

Complaint categories by subject

- 3.26 The data in the table below indicates differing trends for service areas in terms of categories of concern, and facilitates more targeted, specific training in each of the services areas.

	Children & Families Services		Education Services	
	Number of complaints	%	Number of complaints	%
Protection of user	44	24%	14	13%
WCC Service Standards	43	23%	39	37%
Staff conduct	41	22%	1	1%
Communication	41	22%	40	38%
Financial Issues	9	5%	2	2%
Policy	2	1%	2	2%
Discrimination	1	1%	0	0%
Not categorised	1	1%	1	1%
Commissioned Service Provision	1	1%	2	2%
Outside Complaints process	0	0%	4	4%
Physical environment issues	0	0%	0	0%

Figure 6: Breakdown of subject categories per service for 2023/24.

Children and Families Services:

3.27 The top categories within this service area are.

- Protection of user (24%): This category is selected when a staff member is specifically named in a complaint.
- WCC Service Standards (23%): This is chosen when the customer believes the council has not provided a service that they feel they are entitled to.
- Staff Conduct (22%): This is selected when a staff member's delivery of a message is being questioned and the staff member is not a manager.
- Communication (22%): This category is used when customers feel they have not had the expected level of contact with a worker.

3.28 This is consistent with previous years, with the protection of user and communication being consistently the highest assigned complaint categories in Children and Families Services. The number of complaints in these categories have reduced compared to previous years, as overall numbers of complaints have decreased (see appendix 1).

Education Services:

3.29 The top categories within this service area are:

- Communication (38%)
- WCC Service Standards (37%)
- Protection of user (13%)

3.30 This is consistent with previous years, with communication and WCC service standards being consistently the highest assigned categories in Education Services. The number of complaints in these categories have reduced compared to previous years, as overall numbers of complaints have decreased (see appendix 1).

Complaints per team

3.31 With the introduction of the new customer feedback system, the opportunity was taken to refine and update teams. This has meant that this analysis is not a direct comparison with previous years e.g. the Children's initial response is now split into three areas etc. The data in figures 7 and 8 below is shown by system and a yearly trend analysis has taken place for those teams with the highest number of complaints in each.

Children and Families Services:

Children & Families Teams – Contact Us (1 Apr 2023 – 14 Jan 2024)	Complaints	%	Children & Families Teams – Customer Feedback System (15 Jan 2024 – 31 Mar 2024)	Complaints	%
Childrens Initial Response	31	25%	Children with Disabilities Team	9	16%
Childrens with Disabilities	19	15%	Warwick Childrens Team	7	12%
Nuneaton Childrens Team	14	11%	Initial Response South	5	9%
Bedworth and North Warwickshire Childrens Team	12	10%	Bedworth & North Warwickshire Children's Team	5	9%
Childrens MASH	8	6%	Rugby Childrens Safeguarding and Support Team	5	9%
Stratford Childrens Team	8	6%	Strengthening Families	4	7%
Warwick Childrens Team	8	6%	Stratford Childrens Team	4	7%
Children in Care 14-18	7	6%	Asylum and Leaving Care	3	5%
Childrens Strengthening Families	5	4%	Initial Response East	3	5%
Childrens Early Help and Targeted Support	4	3%	Initial Response North	3	5%
Rugby Childrens Team	4	3%	Children and Families Front Door	2	4%
Childrens Fostering	3	2%	Early & Targeted Family Support	2	4%
Childrens UASC and Leaving Care 18-25	2	2%	Nuneaton Childrens Team	2	4%
Children in Care Support Team	1	1%	EDT	1	2%
			Refugee Resettlement	1	2%

Figure 7: Breakdown of complaints per team for Children & Families for 2023/24.

- 3.32 For most of the year (April 23 to Jan 24) the team with the highest number of cases was Children’s Initial Response (25%) followed by Children with Disabilities (15%) and Nuneaton Children’s team (11%). The numbers by teams do correlate with teams that deal with the largest number of children and families.
- 3.33 Yearly trend analysis indicates Initial Response to be consistently the team with highest numbers in 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 (see appendix 1). The introduction of teams by area in the new feedback system will allow for further analysis to enable targeted support for teams with the highest cases.

Education Services:

Education Services Teams – Contact Us (1 Apr 2023 – 14 Jan 2024)	Complaints	%	Education Services Teams – Customer Feedback System (15 Jan 2024 – 31 Mar 2024)	Complaints	%
SENDAR	47	61%	SEND and Inclusion	27	96%
School Admissions	23	30%	Children Missing Education and Elective Home Education	1	4%

Figure 8: Breakdown of complaints per team for Education Services for 2023/24.

- 3.34 In 2023/24, the team with the highest number of complaints in both systems is Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This is in line with national trends and is consistent with previous years' (see appendix 1).
- 3.35 School admissions data shows a significant reduction from the highest number of complaints in 2022/23 at 68 (51% of all educations complaints) reducing to 23 in 2023/24, a 66% decrease.

Remedies:

- 3.36 A remedy can be required by the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) where they consider someone has suffered injustice, and in those cases the LGSCO will require that the Council should aim to try to put the complainant back in the position they would have been had the error not occurred. More information on remedy guidance can be found here: [LGSCO Guidance on remedies](#)
- 3.37 Remedies can take many forms, including apologising, taking corrective action to put things right such as the service provided, a change in process or policy, or a quantifiable financial remedy.

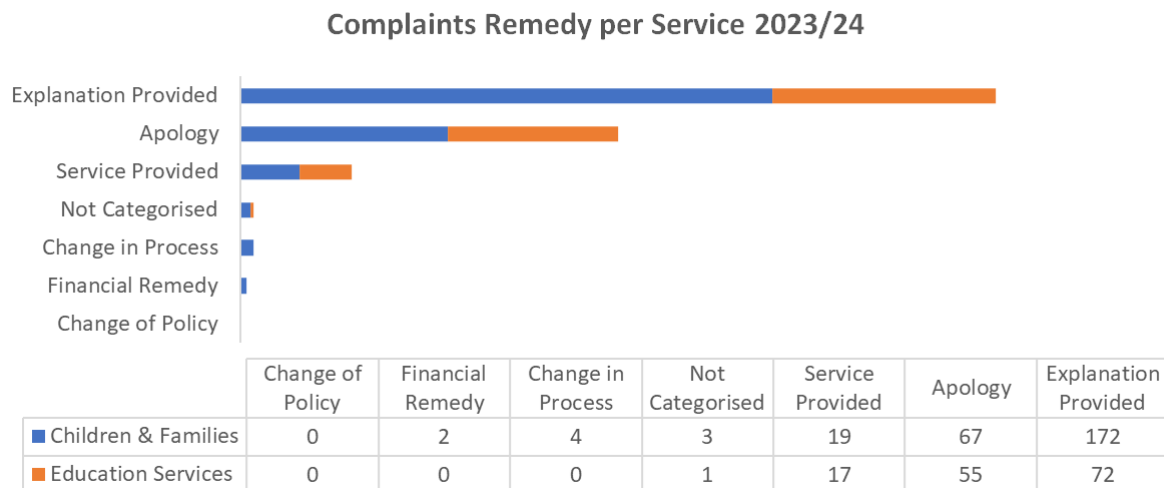


Figure 9: Closed complaint remedies for Children & Families and Education Services in 2023/34.

- 3.38 Data analysis indicates the top 3 remedies are consistent for both Children and Families and Education Services.
- 3.39 The most impactful remedy was an “explanation provided”. This would usually take the form of a fuller, more person-centred explanation, which may include clarifying of the process or language being used. This has remained the top remedy for all previous years (see appendix 1).
- 3.40 An apology ranked second as the most used remedy. Recently, the Customer Relations team provided training to services emphasising that apologies should be a "matter of course" for all upheld complaints.
- 3.41 “Service provided” is the third ranked remedy selected by services and is again consistent with previous years. This would be entered when the original service requested via the complaint, has been delivered or granted following the complaint e.g. The service that was late has now been provided (see appendix 1).
- 3.42 To note, the new Customer Feedback system allows multiple remedies for different stages of the complaint, so there may have different remedies applied at different points e.g. Stage 1 ends an apology, Stage 2 may end up with financial remedy.

Outcomes:

- 3.43 Categories of outcomes have changed in the new feedback system to improve data accuracy. For example previously a case may have initially been recorded as a complaint but later closed as a “question answered” once clarification was received from the member of public. However, it would have remained recorded as a complaint as this is what it was initially categorised as. The new feedback system allows for a reallocation if the wrong feedback type was initially selected, and outcomes are only recorded against complaints.

- 3.44 The categories have been analysed in respect of the three statutory reportable categories “upheld, not upheld and partially upheld” and excludes complaints in the old system that were closed as “questions answered” and any withdrawn complaints. This data has been analysed from both systems.

Children and Families Services:

Outcomes	Complaints	% of Stage 1 Complaints
Upheld	14	10%
Partially Upheld	52	37%
Not Upheld	53	37%

Figure 10: Complaints closed by outcome (excluding withdrawn complaints).

- 3.45 During 2023/24 the highest category was “not upheld”, and this indicates that 37% of complaints (52) had no failings identified following an investigation. However, the second highest outcome was “partially upheld”, and accounts for a similar percentage of complaints at 37% (51), which shows after investigation some failings have been identified and a recommendation in the form of remedy and/or service improvement is likely to have been implemented.
- 3.46 This is consistent with the trend in 2022/23 (See appendix 1).

Education Services:

Outcomes	Complaints	% of Stage 1 Complaints
Upheld	26	29%
Partially Upheld	8	9%
Not Upheld	18	20%

Figure 11: Complaints closed by outcome (excluding withdrawn complaints).

- 3.47 During 2023/24, “upheld” was the highest category used. This would indicate following investigation that failings were proven to be found. This is again in line with last year’s trend. (See appendix 1) Specific examples are given under lessons learned at paragraph 3.50.
- 3.48 The second highest outcome was partially upheld; this would indicate a complaint has more than one issue and after investigation “some” failings have been identified but not all on all the issues and therefore some remedies should be undertaken. This is again in line with last year’s trend (See appendix 1).

Timescale compliance:

- 3.49 Timescales are different and dependent on the type of complaint type and process followed. The relevant timescales for each type of complaint are covered in the Council's Complaints Policy and associated Procedures.

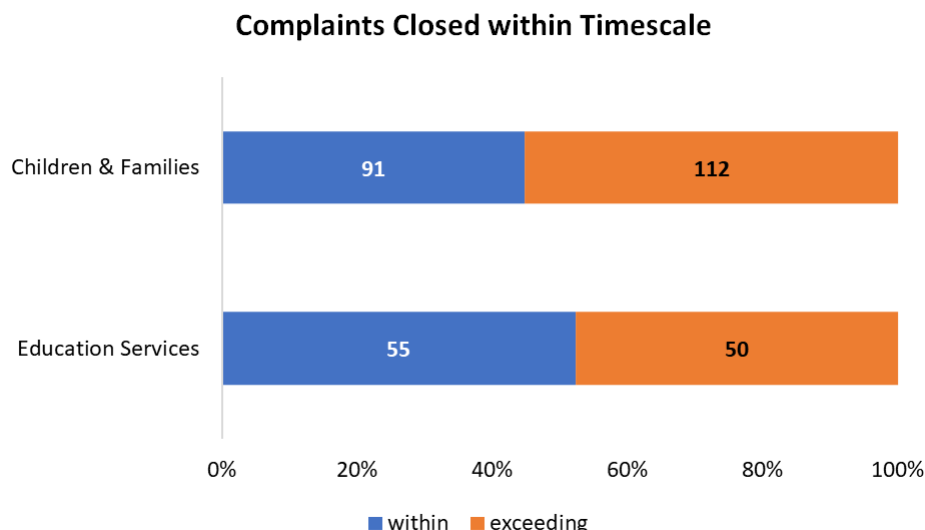


Figure 12: Timescales for closed complaints for Children & Families and Education Services for 2023/24. The graph does not include the 14 closed migrated cases for Children's and Families and 6 for Education Services as they span two systems and timescale reporting data is incorrect.

Children and Families Services:

- 3.50 The above data shows that a high proportion of complaints are completed outside of timescales. This is not consistent with previous years (See appendix 1). More targeted work is required with services on the importance of closing complaints within timescales.
- 3.51 To note, the system and internal policy timescales on which the figure 12 is based, allows for 10 working days to complete a Stage 1 investigation, however national guidance "[Getting the best from complaints](#)" does allow a further 10 days if the case is complex. This will be considered by services when completing an investigation.
- 3.52 As well as the increased complexity of complaints, the services have also advised other factors:
- The front door in Children and Families has seen a 30% rise in contact and referrals (requests for support).
 - The service has had the highest proportion of agency social workers and experienced unusually high staff turnover in some teams.

Education Services:

- 3.53 The above data shows that over 50% of complaints are closed within timescale. This is consistent with previous years. Since September 2023, the emphasis in the service has been on improving communication. In addition, at the beginning of the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process a contact point with families is put in place, where families receive a call, when requested, to talk them through the process.

Lessons learned and actions taken to improve services.

- 3.55 Identifying, actioning, recording, and sharing of 'lessons learned' is critical in improving customer experience with council services. It is an opportunity for staff to reflect on how that case could have been prevented/gone better and how, as a council, it can improve with future cases. This is then used for learning and training purposes for not only the team who have handled the case, but also for the wider council.
- 3.56 Examples of lessons learned, and actions taken from past cases within Children and Families and Education Services include:
- Clear and timely communication throughout the edge of care process.
 - Consider parental responsibility before request for outcome letters is made.
 - When workers are off sick, Team Leads ensure that things are still being progressed to prevent delays.
 - Addressing capacity issues with ongoing recruitment.
 - Identifying specific training e.g. neurodiversity training undertaken by the customer relations team.
 - Updated training for Children and Families staff on specific areas like Special Guardianship Order.
 - Training and briefings for managers about responding to and investigating complaints.

Specifically:

- A complaint to the LGSCO identified online learning as inappropriate interim education provision whilst a school placement for a child with SEND was being identified. Since then, when interim education provision is required, professionals consider whether online learning is appropriate.
- A stage two review highlighted that because a stage one complaint had responded on a point regarding NHS provision, this would now be part of the stage two review. As a result, items for other complaints processes are now redirected within stage one responses.

- 3.57 The Customer Relations Team have also implemented several actions throughout both Children and Families and Education Services following feedback from customers and local services, which include:
- Updated policies and procedures to make it easier for both services and complainants to understand the complaints process.
 - Updated letter templates for service use.
 - Day to day guidance for services on process and system-based issues.
 - Additional training on how to handle complaints and use the new customer feedback system.

4. **Financial Implications:**

- 4.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

5. **Environmental Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: C&YP OSC Feedback data

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact information
Report Authors	Ruth Rollings Service Manager – Customer Relations (Complaints Manager)	ruthrollings@warwickshire.gov.uk
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Councillors Yousef Dahmash, Sue Markham and Kam Kaur.

Children & Families and Education Services Feedback Data

Financial Years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24

Warwickshire County Council Total Feedback Cases

WCC Feedback	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Complaints	1949	1809	1520
Compliments	682	461	454
Comments	389	333	218

Cases by Service

Children & Families	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Complaints	246	212	183
Compliments	40	18	25
Comments	3	6	2

Education Services	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Complaints	103	133	105
Compliments	3	2	1
Comments	3	3	7

Complaints data trends by month

Children & Families	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2021/2022	16	8	26	18	23	23	29	27	23	13	24	16
	7%	3%	11%	7%	9%	9%	12%	11%	9%	5%	10%	7%
2022/2023	14	22	25	15	11	16	13	20	14	27	15	20
	7%	10%	12%	7%	5%	8%	6%	9%	7%	13%	7%	9%
2023/2024	17	22	15	18	17	12	16	4	3	24	21	14
	9%	12%	8%	10%	9%	7%	9%	2%	2%	13%	12%	8%

Education Services	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2021/2022	11	15	7	11	9	16	6	10	2	5	2	9
	11%	15%	7%	11%	9%	16%	6%	10%	2%	5%	2%	9%
2022/2023	8	3	13	11	15	28	13	5	10	9	6	12
	6%	2%	10%	8%	11%	21%	10%	4%	8%	7%	5%	9%
2023/2024	10	11	10	11	6	12	7	6	3	11	13	5
	10%	11%	10%	11%	6%	11%	7%	6%	3%	11%	12%	5%

WCC Complaints data by stage 2 and 3

Complaint Stage	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Stage 2	97	45	48
Stage 3	6	10	8

Complaint categories by subject

Children & Families	2021/2022	%	2022/2023	%	2023/2024	%
Protection of user	68	28%	83	39%	44	24%
Communication	133	54%	70	33%	41	22%
Staff conduct	17	7%	28	13%	41	22%
WCC Service standards	10	4%	17	8%	43	23%
Financial Issues	10	4%	10	5%	9	5%
Physical environment issues	5	2%	3	1%	0	0%
Discrimination	1	0%	1	0%	1	1%
Policy	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
Commissioned Service Provision	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Outside Complaints process	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Categorised	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%

Education Services	2021/2022	%	2022/2023	%	2023/2024	%
Communication	62	60%	68	51%	40	38%
WCC Service standards	5	45%	26	20%	39	37%
Protection of user	21	20%	22	17%	14	13%
Staff conduct	6	6%	4	3%	1	1%
Discrimination	0	0%	3	2%	0	0%
Policy	3	3%	3	2%	2	2%
Commissioned Service Provision	0	0%	2	2%	2	2%
Financial Issues	4	4%	2	2%	2	2%
Physical environment issues	2	2%	2	2%	0	0%
Outside contact us process	0	0%	1	1%	4	4%
Not Categorised					1	1%

Complaints per Team

Children & Families - teams with highest number of complaints

2021/2022		%	2022/2023		%
Childrens Initial Response	48	20%	Childrens Initial Response	56	26%
Bedworth and North Warwickshire Children's Team	30	12%	Bedworth and North Warwickshire Children's Team	23	11%
Children with Disabilities	27	11%	Children in Care 14-18	18	9%

			Nuneaton Children's Team	18	9%
			Warwick Children's Team	18	9%

2023/2024 (Contact Us)		%	2023/2024 (Customer Feedback System)		%
Childrens Initial Response	31	25%	Children with Disabilities Team	9	16%
Childrens with Disabilities	19	15%	Warwick Childrens Team	7	12%
Nuneaton Childrens Team	14	11%	Initial Response South	5	9%
			Bedworth & North Warwickshire Children's Team	5	9%
			Rugby Childrens Safeguarding and Support Team	5	9%

Education Services - teams with highest number of complaints

2021/2022		%	2022/2023		%
Education Services	77	75%	School Admissions	68	51%
SENDAR	12	12%	SENDAR	47	41%
School Admissions	7	7%	School Transport	7	5%

2023/2024 (Contact Us)		%	2023/2024 (Customer Feedback System)		%
SENDAR	47	61%	SEND and Inclusion	27	96%
School Admissions	23	30%	Children Missing Education	1	4%
Education Services	3	4%			

Complaints by Remedy

Children & Families

	2021/ 2022 *	%	2022/ 2023 *	%	2023/2024 (Contact Us)*	%	2023/2024 (Customer Feedback System)	%
Explanation Provided	196	83%	140	80%	134	62%	38	78%
Service Provided	29	12%	72	13%	19	9%	0	0%
Apology	70	30%	22	41%	59	27%	8	14%
Change in Process	7	3%	6	3%	2	1%	2	4%
Financial Remedy	0	0%	5	1%	1	0%	2	2%
Change of Policy	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Categorised							3	4%

* Please note more than one remedy can be selected for an individual case

Education Services

	2021/ 2022 *	%	2022/ 2023 *	%	2023/2024 (Contact Us)*	%	2023/2024 (Customer Feedback System)	%
Explanation Provided	49	51%	56	46%	58	50%	14	50%
Service Provided	41	42%	13	11%	9	8%	8	29%
Apology	33	34%	93	76%	50	43%	5	18%
Change in Process	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Financial Remedy	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Change of Policy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not Categorised							1	4%

* Please note more than one remedy can be selected for an individual case

Complaint Outcomes

Children & Families

Complaint Outcomes*	2021/2022	% of Stage 1 Complaints	2022/2023	% of Stage 1 Complaints	2023/2024	% of Stage 1 Complaints
Upheld	30	13%	23	11%	14	10%
Partially Upheld	59	25%	55	26%	52	37%
Not Upheld	96	40%	54	26%	53	37%

* Please note excludes questions and withdrawn complaints

Education Services

Complaint Outcomes*	2021/2022	% of Stage 1 Complaints	2022/2023	% of Stage 1 Complaints	2023/2024	% of Stage 1 Complaints
Upheld	18	18%	65	52%	26	29%
Partially Upheld	13	13%	16	13%	8	9%
Not Upheld	18	18%	15	12%	18	20%

* Please note excludes questions and withdrawn complaints

Complaints Closed within Timescale

Children & Families

Timescale	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
within	155	120	91
exceeding	88	92	112

Education Services

Timescale	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
within	85	84	55
exceeding	15	47	50

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Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17 September 2024

Youth Justice Plan

Recommendation(s)

That the Committee comment upon the Warwickshire Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan 2023/24

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The annual Youth Justice Strategic Plan and its submission to the national Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) is a statutory requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Grant funding from the YJB to Youth Offending Teams (YOT) (Locally called the Youth Justice Service) is reliant on the submission of an acceptable plan within the required template/format.
- 1.2 Youth Justice Plans are required to be signed off by the full council in accordance with Regulation 4 of the 'Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000'. 1.3 The Youth Justice Chief Officer Board is a multi-agency group chaired by the Warwickshire County Council Executive Director for Children & Young People. This Board is responsible to the YJB for the overview and implementation of the Youth Justice Plan. The Plan was agreed by the Board and submitted to the Youth Justice Board.
- 1.3 The Youth Justice Plan covers performance for the period 2023/24 and provides service budgets, operational and strategic developments within the service and partnership, service structure and the Service Improvement Plan for 2024/25.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications for the County Council arising from this report. The Plan will be delivered within existing budgeted resources from the County Council, partners and grant funding from the Government, as set out in the Plan.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 None

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval by the Council for the 2024/25 Youth Justice Plan
- 4.2 Warwickshire is a high performing Youth Justice Service which continues to develop and utilise its funding to best meet the needs of children. This will include a clear focus on delivering high quality interventions with children and families through a holistic lens.
- 4.3 The actions associated with the Plan will be tracked and monitored by the Warwickshire Youth Justice Chief Officer Board in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 The objectives within the plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Warwickshire Youth Justice Chief Officers' Board

6. Appendices

Appendix 1- Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

	Name	Contact Information
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Executive Director	Nigel Minns Executive Director for Children and Young People	nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication: None

Warwickshire Youth Justice Service

Strategic Plan 2024 / 25



"Working in partnership to support young people, families and victims to prevent offending and reduce re-offending to build a safer and stronger community."



Probation Service



1. Introduction, vision and strategy

1.1. Foreword

I am delighted to publish the Youth Justice Plan 2024-25 for Warwickshire. This Plan has been developed in collaboration with our Youth Justice workforce and key partners, including members of Warwickshire's Youth Justice Chief Officer Board. It provides an overview of Warwickshire's Youth Justice Service, sets out details of performance over the past year and outlines our priorities for 2024-25.

In Warwickshire, we put children and families at the heart of everything we do, and our overall ambition is to be a child friendly county ensuring every child is heard, safe, healthy, skilled and happy. We focus on relationships with children and their families, which drives our practice forward across all our services for children and families across a diverse spectrum of need.

We have continued to maintain low figures for children in custody and have seen reoffending (Binary) rates steadily declining. This reflects the strong relationships the youth justice service has with the court service and high local confidence in alternatives to custody. The number of offences and number of children offending has also shown a decrease since last year.

The Board is committed to embracing the 'Child First' principles. We are committed to this approach and ensuring that the guiding principle of recognising the potential of all children is reflected across all the work that we do. We need to hear and understand more about the lived experiences of children and young people in Warwickshire. We have seen significant progress over the last year with a real focus on improving the voice and impact of children who have been supported by the youth justice system and use this to improve the provision of support.

The partnership has been successful in improving key performance areas including a reduction in offences involving a weapon, a priority from our 23/24 plan and a significant increase in Prevention and Diversion work led by the Service. Our Partners are committed to working together to ensure both risk and safeguarding is appropriately addressed and that all children are supported to meet these shared outcomes.

Warwickshire Youth Justice Chief Officer Board is pleased to share its Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25.

Nigel Minns
Executive Director – Children and Young People
Warwickshire County Council
Chair of Warwickshire Youth Justice Chief Officer Board

1.2. Executive summary



This Youth Justice Plan sets our vision for Warwickshire Youth Justice Partnership to deliver great services. The plan has been delivered with partners and board members through a development session to consider the priorities moving forward and to ensure we are meeting our commitments to delivering a Child Friendly County and delivering a Child First approach. Staff have also been consulted through a development session and are provided with updates post Chief Office Board meetings to ensure that there is a strong connection and shared vision and priorities for the service.

The plan builds on the progress made in 2023/24 which set our key local priorities including an increased focus on prevention, the embedding of the ARC Trauma Informed Model and a focus on core good practice.

The plan sets out the Partnership's key local priorities:

- Serious Youth Violence Interventions
- Children's Physical Health
- Victims

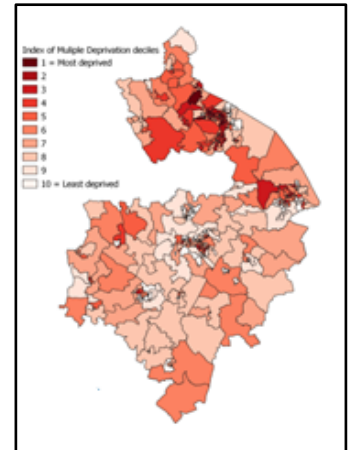
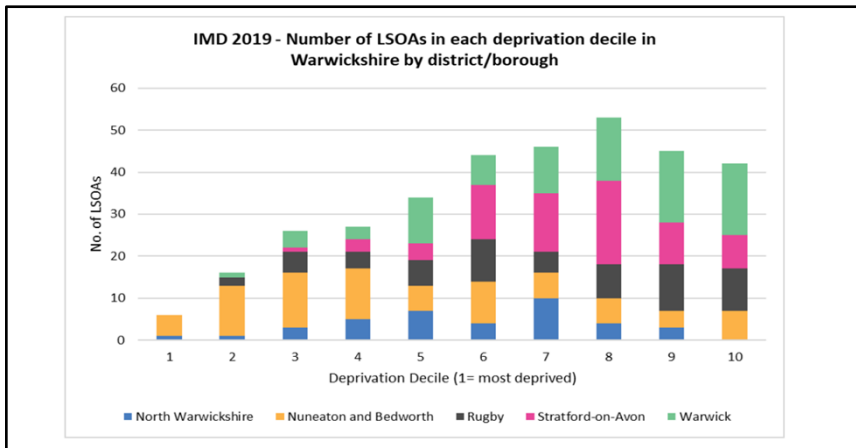
1.3. Local context

Warwickshire is an average sized English County covering an area of almost 2000km², its boundaries running some 100km north to south. Warwickshire has a population of 607,604 (ONS 2022) with approximately 54,314 children between the ages of 10-17 years. The population of Warwickshire is predicted to increase by 14.7% by 2043, taking the projected population to 684,310.

Despite the majority of the population within the main towns of the county, a third of Warwickshire is rural in nature (19% classed as rural town/fringe and 14% rural village/dispersed).

Warwickshire is a two-tier local authority and comprises five Districts and Boroughs: North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Stratford on Avon and Warwick. The county lies to the south and east of the West Midlands region and established links with Coventry, Birmingham and Solihull within the region.

Warwickshire is comprised of 339 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of which 6 are in the most deprived decile; 5 in Nuneaton and Bedworth and 1 in North Warwickshire. A further 16 LSOAs are in the second most deprived decile.



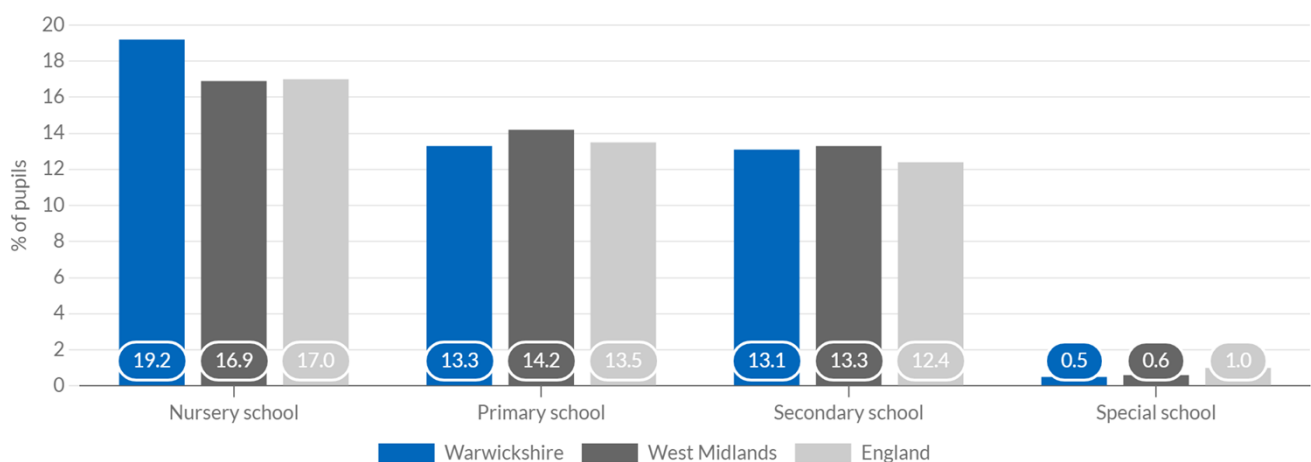
The largest ethnic group of children in Warwickshire is the “White” category and this accounts for 84.9% of the 10–17 population. The 10-17 population is more diverse than the rest of the Warwickshire population where 92.6% of those aged 18+ are recorded as white.

The “Asian or Asian British” ethnic group is the second largest at 6.89% of the 10–17 population. Other low level ethnic groups selected by more than 1% of the 10-17 population were within the “Mixed or Multiple: ethnic groups” at 5.4%, “Black, Black British, Caribbean or African” at 1.64% and “Chinese or other ethnic groups” at 1.12%.

There has been significant growth in global majority groups in Warwickshire in the last twenty years. In the 2001 census, 8.3% reported an ethnic group other than white, compared with 20% in the most recent 2021 census.

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. For school age children in Warwickshire the percentage of Primary and Secondary School age children is below the West Midlands Average, although for Nursery age pupils is significantly above both the England and West Midlands Averages.

Percentage of pupils getting SEN Support (2023)



Department for Education figures show 18,113 pupils were eligible for free school meals in Warwickshire, as of January 2024, up from 16,181 the year before. The number of eligible children across England has increased every year since January 2018 and currently stands at 23.8%.

In 2023-24, Warwickshire Children and Families Services noted an increase of 12.5% (18,754 in 2023/24 compared to 16,412 in 2022/23) in all contacts into Children's Social Care and an increase in children subject to child protection plans of 11.1%. There was also an increase of 12 children in care.

Warwickshire Youth Justice Service (WYJS) and its partnership board understand the critical importance of understanding the different contexts across the county and how these should inform and shape services and interventions to children. Our response works in collaborating with wider partners, focused on the county's creating opportunities agenda, so that we look to address sometimes inter-generational need to impact on some of the underlying causes of children's offending.

1.4. Vision

Our collective vision for children in Warwickshire is to be truly a Child Friendly County. As a county we have a collective mission to create opportunities, lasting and positive changes for children, through our Child Friendly Warwickshire Strategy. This can be seen through the commitment of numerous partners from Warwickshire Police, Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (who deliver the RISE CYP Mental Health Service), District and Borough Councils, South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust to local businesses and community organisations.

Children in Warwickshire told us their views and aspirations and both as a Service and as a partnership we want to be a county where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are ingrained across the county. Our aim for children is for them to:

- Be Heard – have a voice to shape where they live
- Be Safe – have secure, safe and stable home lives
- Be Healthy – have access to the health services they need
- Be Skilled – enjoy the learning they need to achieve their goals
- Be Happy – enjoy growing up in a county full of opportunities.



Our approach has four strands:

Restorative and Relational Practice

Those working with children and families are encouraged to focus their time on building quality relationships that inspire positive change. This extends to how we support one another in our teams and how we connect with colleagues across our organisation and beyond. We believe in high support and high challenge in equal measure. This means ensuring children and parents receive timely and helpful support but that we remain inquisitive, keeping children at the centre of all we do. Ultimately, working with and alongside people improves the outcomes we can achieve together and is more likely to achieve sustainable change.

Utilising the power and strength of family

We value family and recognise that they can be our most underutilised resource.

Within a context of safe uncertainty approach to risk

We recognise that there is an individual, team and organisational approach to risk. Risk is managed within the organisation and across agencies where there can be multiple hypothesis and multiple types of intervention.

Trauma informed Practice

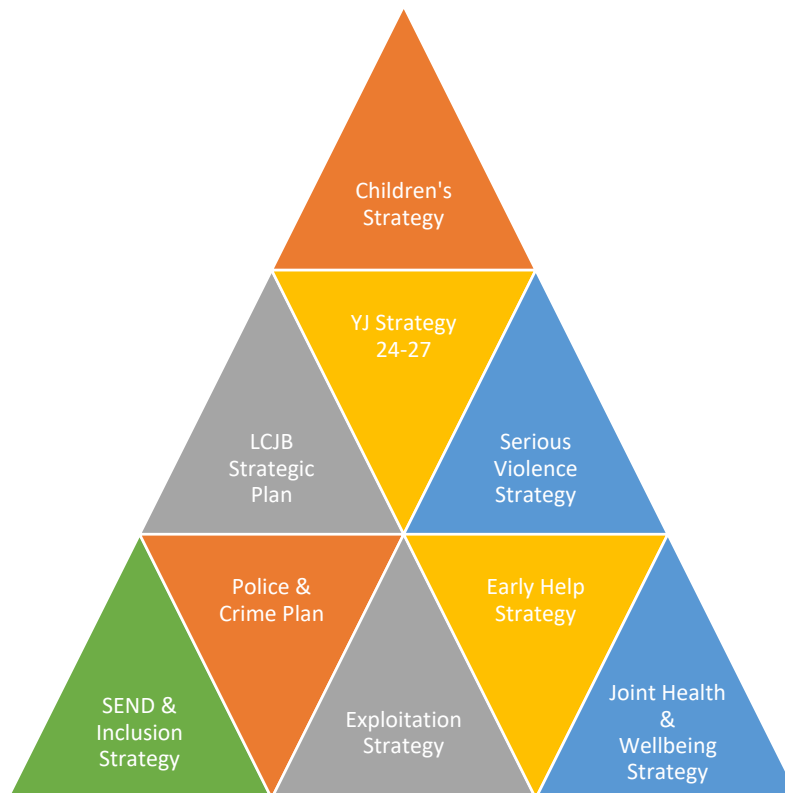
We recognise the importance of delivering services through a trauma informed lens. Utilising the 4 R's as outlined below, we continue to be a trauma informed and restorative organisation and aim to embed this model of practice across our multi-agency partnership.

- Realises the widespread impact of trauma, stress and adversity and understands potential pathways for recovery.
- Recognises the signs and impact of trauma in staff, and children and families.
- Resists re-traumatisation.
- Responds by embedding knowledge about trauma into policies and procedures, language, culture and practices.

1.5. Strategy

The Youth Justice Service sits under the current Children and Young People Strategy 2021-30 which focuses on our Child Friendly Warwickshire aims noted above. The Strategy incorporates the focus on increased participation and engagement with children and young people and on reducing offending.

Warwickshire Children and Families Service, alongside its Lead Safeguarding Partners, are delivering the Families First for Children Pathfinder on behalf of the Department of Education. This is a significant opportunity to implement and influence national reforms in focusing services to support children and families earlier and preventing escalation to costlier and more investigative intervention. The Youth Justice Service will play an active part of these developments to ensure that the development of multi-agency and multi-disciplinary support, through Family Help, works to deliver improved outcomes for children involved or at risk of involvement in the criminal justice system.



The triangle details the main strategies across the County Council and partner agencies particularly relevant to the Youth Justice Partnership.

2. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

2.1. Introduction

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 set out the establishment of Youth Offending Teams and the duties on some key agencies for both the delivery and governance of the service, through often termed Youth Justice Management or Partnership Boards.

Section 38 (1, 2) identifies the statutory partners and places a duty on them to co-operate to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are:

- The local authority (this includes children’s social care and education).
- The police.
- The probation service.
- Health.

The Youth Justice Chief Officer Board undertakes this role in Warwickshire and has oversight of the effectiveness of the service and its strategic direction whilst providing effective challenge.

2.2. Chief Officer Board

Warwickshire Youth Justice Chief Officer Board meets on a quarterly basis in addition to an annual development day. The Board benefits from active membership from all statutory partners at an appropriate grade of strategic responsibility. The Chair of the Board is the

Executive Director of Children and Young People at Warwickshire County Council who holds the statutory role of Director of Children's Services.

In addition to the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, (Social Care, Probation, Police, Health and Education) our Chief Officer Board benefits from attendance from a range of further partners including our Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, the local Chair of the Magistrates Youth Panel, and Associate Chief Nurse. Full Board membership is outlined in Appendix One. The Board maintains Practice Spotlights at the beginning of each board where a child facing Worker or on occasion a Manager share an area of practice within the service so the board can hear about this work including the quality, impact and outcomes as well as being sighted on some of the challenges and complexities. In 2023/24 Practice Spotlights have included the work of the Service's Prevention Team, Reparation, and the role of the Education Worker.

Chief Officer Board members are also invited to participate in the regular cycle of file auditing by shadowing a senior manager in the moderation process. This provides a snapshot view of a detailed approach and Board members can understand the challenges and diligence in the work in a time efficient way.

The Chief Officer Board receives a detailed performance report each quarter which provides information in respect of trends including location, type and severity of offences, gender, ethnicity, sentencing, use of Secure, Risk and Protective factors, Safeguarding and Need and all Key Performance Indicators. This information is actively discussed and provides lessons about the future prioritisation of resources and approach.

2.3. Strategic partnerships

The Head of Safeguarding Communities is a member on:

- Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board
- Warwickshire Violence against Women and Girls Board
- Warwickshire Local Criminal Justice Board
- Warwickshire MAPPA Board
- Warwickshire Prevent Board
- Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- Warwickshire Safeguarding Exploitation Subgroup
- Warwickshire Serious Organised Crime Partnership Delivery Group
- Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Strategic Partnership
- West Midlands Youth Justice Heads of Service Meeting

The Service is also engaged in a number of other Strategic and Operational Meetings including:

- Warwickshire Serious Organised Crime Joint Action Group – Tactical
- Warwickshire MAPPA Panel
- Warwickshire CHANNEL Panel



- Warwickshire Victims and Witnesses Forum
- Warwickshire Reducing Reoffending Board
- District Anti-Social Behaviour Forums
- District and Borough Community Safety Partnership Meetings
- Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Meeting
- Warwickshire SEND Board

2.4. Operational delivery

The Youth Justice Service sits within the Children and Families Service, in the Safeguarding Communities Service Area. The Head of Safeguarding Communities is the Head of Youth Justice, who reports the Director of Children and Families, and oversees the:

- Children and Families Front Door
- Initial Response Service (Assessment)
- Warwickshire Youth Justice Service
- Family and Adolescent Support Service
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Caring Dads (Father's Domestic Abuse Intervention Programme)

Under the Head of Safeguarding Communities are two Youth Justice Service Managers who line manage three Team Managers each, with one Service Manager leading on Harmful Sexual Behaviours and the other Caring Dads which are services available across Children and Family Services.

The Service currently has the following specialist workers from partner agencies:

- Police Officers x 2
- Probation Officer
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Substance Misuse Officers x 2
- Specialist Mental Health Practitioners x 2

To assure effective partnership working, Service Level Agreements (SLA) exist between the Youth Justice Partnerships and key partner agencies, including Warwickshire Police, Probation Service, Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust and Children's Social Care with emphasis on Children in Care, Substance Misuse and Speech and Language. All SLAs were fully reviewed in 2023/24 and annual reviews will now take place moving forward. All SLAs will cover the designated roles, accountabilities, recruitment processes, supervision, practice and delivery of services, and management of performance.

3. Progress on Previous Plan

3.1. 2023/24 priorities progress

Focusing on Core Good Practice – including reviewing all policies, procedures and agreements

WYJS strives to ensure that when children are working with their practitioner, there is a wide range of options for intervention available. Whilst WYJS practitioners focus on engagement and the child first approach, there are also various options available to support practitioners in using interventions with their children to ensure they maintain a focus on reducing reoffending, and therefore risk. All WYJS policies are currently undergoing a rigorous review process which ensure they are reflective of the child first, trauma aware approach of the service. Alongside policies, all joint protocols and agency agreements are being updated to reflect the strong relationship between partner agencies.

Quarterly thematic audits form part of WYJS core practice to ensure the work we do is to the highest standard. These audits scrutinise different areas of work to ensure practice is at the highest standard possible, and reflective of the work we are doing with children. Within the last 12 months, WYJS have undertaken themed audits focussing on different areas, such as custody and resettlement, risk, bail and remand and a case management focus. Whilst audit findings are fed back to staff, WYJS also share audit finding with management boards, highlighting any service level actions to address any learning. This allows for ongoing responsibility and accountability and ensures the board understands the service on a case management level.

Embedding the ARC Trauma Informed Model and improving the interventions offer for children

To strengthen our trauma approach, WYJS have employed an ARC Lead Practitioner to embed the ARC framework. This will allow the service to move from a trauma aware approach to a trauma informed approach. The ARC framework allows the practitioner to understand the trauma journey of the child and family and work with the family to understand intergenerational trauma. This offer extends not only to WYJS but to the wider service within Children and Families, this ensures that joint working with children and families follows a trauma led approach.

Current working groups within WYJS are looking at the resources available for practitioners when working with children to ensure they are research led and current. WYJS have commissioned Red Snapper to have access to a hub of interventions focussed on children. These include knife crime and identity.

Current agreements with local gyms, mean that children are able to access this positive activity to improve health and wellbeing. The WYJS Intensive Surveillance and Support (ISS) Coordinator has sourced various projects around Warwickshire which have strengthened the offer with regards to reparation. Projects in places such as football grounds, allotments and woodwork allow children to give back to the community whilst learning valuable skills.

Prevention of serious violence

In January 2024 WYJS brought together the existing diversion offer, which included the Turnaround scheme and a new primary prevention offer under one umbrella team, Pathways. Pathways was a name chosen by children and young people who were open to Youth Justice and included qualified youth workers and an additional WYJS practitioner to work solely with children who had not entered the formal criminal justice system. Both the name and ethos of the service although embedded within WYJS encapsulates the child first approach of diverting children from stigma. The criteria for the Pathways service was formulated using learning from the Serious Violence Needs analysis and focuses on those children most at risk of offending. Particularly those who have experience domestic abuse, parental offending and substance misuse and those who have been excluded from school. Work around the chronologies of children who have been involved in serious violence also indicated the need to continually recognise and support children with contextual safeguarding concerns at the earliest opportunity.

WYJS, with Home Office serious violence funding and with the support of community safety, have commissioned a Serious Violence Reduction Specialist to continue to develop a group programme of intervention that can take place within schools or community youth group settings. The Practitioner, alongside the WYJS Pathways Team, have developed criteria for school referrals and appropriate programme content, to ensure those children most at risk of becoming involved in group based serious violence receive the right intervention, at the right time. The programme seeks to support children to understand how their identity and behaviour in groups can be influenced by multiple factors including cognitive, emotional, social, moral and cultural.

WYJS is a key partner within the multi-agency local contextual safeguarding meetings which are placed based in the North, South and East and enable both individual and groups of children to be discussed, where there are contextual safeguarding concerns and/or there is potential for serious violence to escalate. Partner resources and knowledge are utilised to support reduction of concerns and seek positive outcomes.

Warwickshire County Council were previously successful in a bid to be a pilot area, for delegated responsibility for the National Referral Mechanism for children. This has seen an increase in the knowledge of this process across the county, which has led to an increase in referrals. This has also seen a substantial reduction in decision making times, from over a year nationally, to an average of 29 days for a reasonable grounds decision and an average of 44 days for a conclusive grounds decision.

Prevention of and improved intervention for children who present with harmful sexualised behaviours

The remit of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) service has been extended to include support being available to all children open to children and families services where there are HSB concerns. Recruitment of an additional female Social Worker and Lead Practitioner to the service, has ensured appropriate support is available to all. Investment in training has enabled the AIM3 assessment to be available for children who are supported via both a criminal justice and social care pathway.

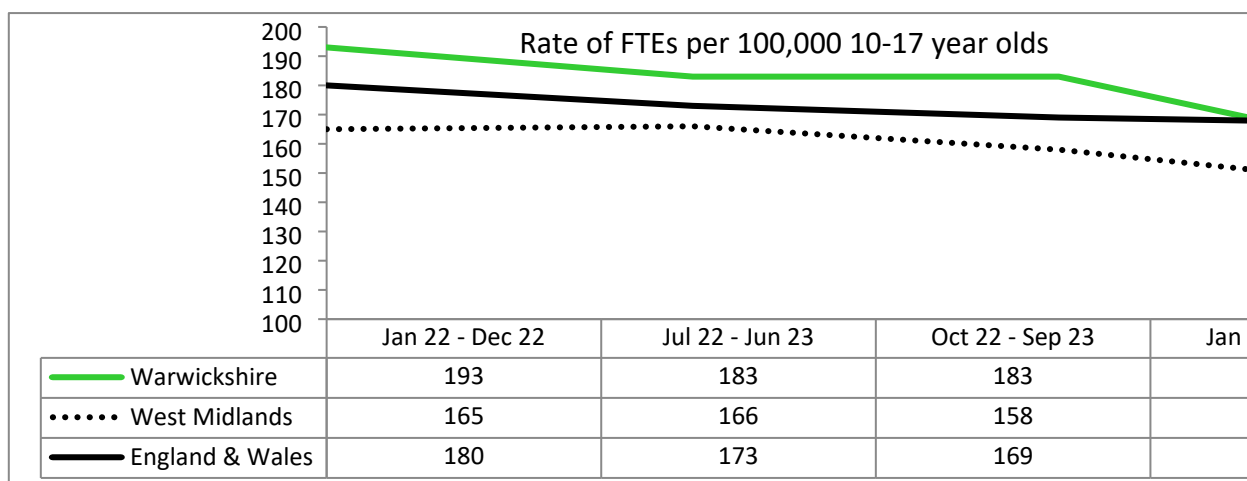
WYJS have continued to be an active member of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Steering group (RASSO) and currently chair a working group alongside this on the prevention of HSB and the system responses to children. This supports enabling a child first approach remaining central to system responses to children who display HSB.

WYJS are working alongside Education Safeguarding and WCC Learning Hub colleagues, to implement partnership training, particularly for education colleagues, on the Brook Traffic Light model. The model will be utilised across the children and families system, to support appropriate identification, responses and interventions are in place for children. The model and continued partnership work seeks to contain professional anxiety and support colleagues understanding of this area of practice.

4. Performance

First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTE)

The first-time entrant's indicator is expressed as the number of first-time entrants per 100,000 of 10–17-year-olds. The latest national data for first time entrants (January 2023 – December 2022) shows a 18.8% reduction in first time entrants in Warwickshire, with the Service below the national average.

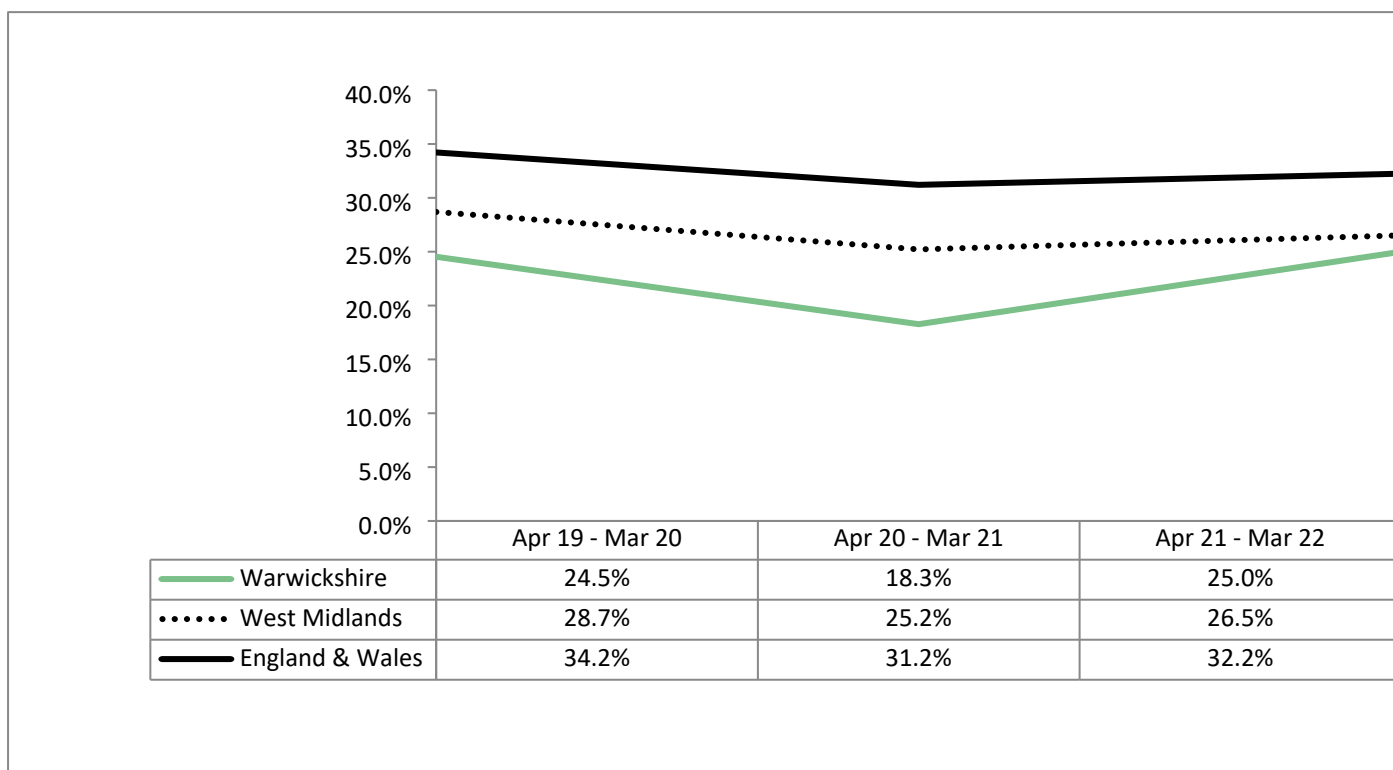


FTE PNC Rate per 100,000 of 10-17 population	Warwickshire	West Midlands	YOT Family	National
January 2023 - December 2023	156	145	134	167
January 2022 - December 2022	193	165	135	180
% change from selected baseline	-18.80%	-12.20%	-0.90%	-7.20%



Reducing reoffending

This binary reoffending rate measures in its simplest format, whether the children in the cohort have reoffended. In the latest available national data, Warwickshire’s rate (25.0) is lower than the West Midlands binary rate (26.5) and remains lower than the national rate (32.2).



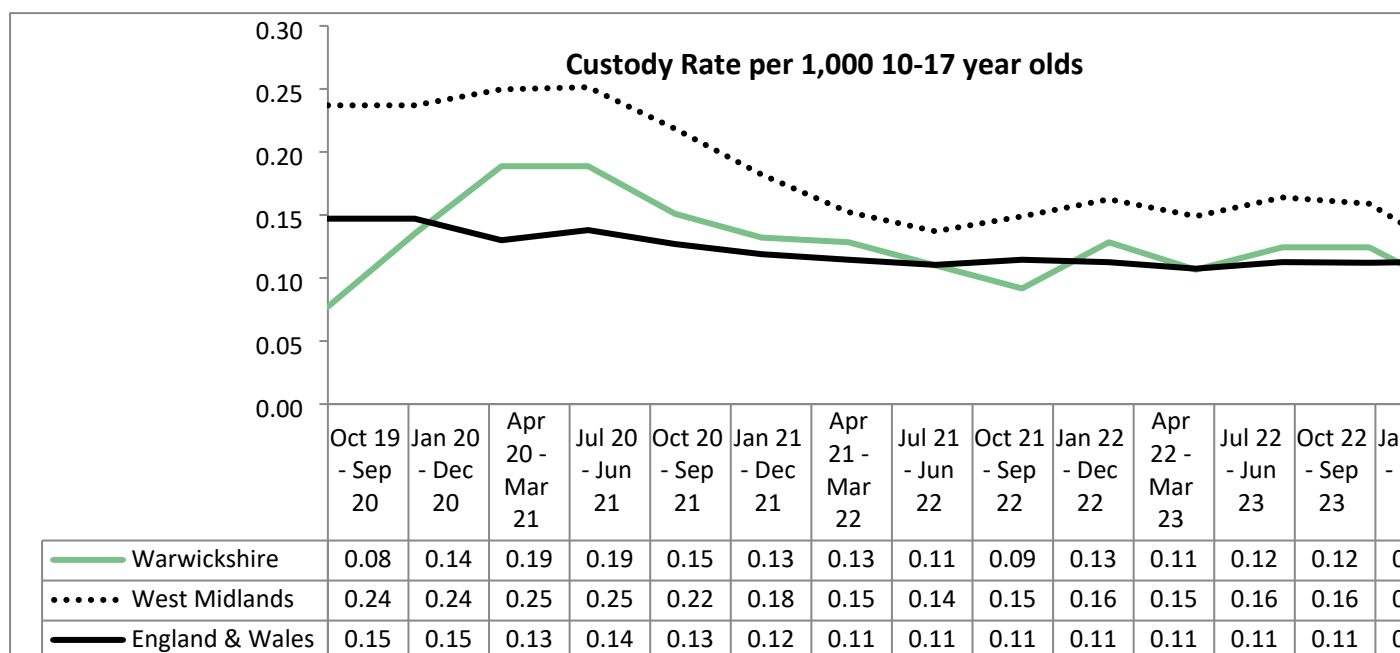
	Warwickshire	West Midlands	YOT Family	National
Percentage of offenders who reoffended: Apr 21 - Mar 22	25.0%	26.5%	30.3%	32.1%
Percentage of offenders who reoffended: Apr 20 – Mar 21	18.3%	25.2%	27.9%	1.0
Change from Baseline	6.73	1.3	2.33	1.11

Reducing the use of the Secure Estate

This indicator compares the number of custodial sentences against the 10–17 year-old population. Children in Warwickshire in the secure estate is very small and therefore there is sometimes complexity when understanding percentage comparators. The data below shows that



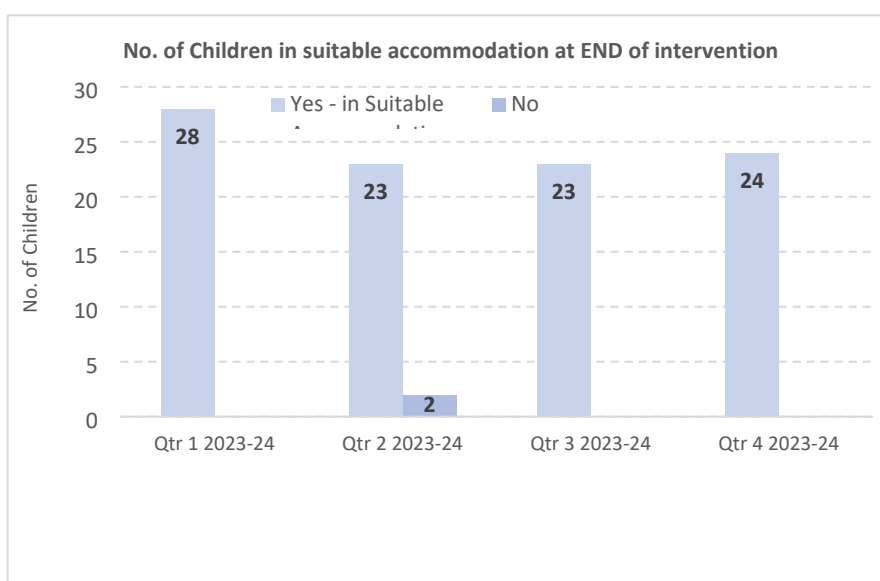
the rate in Warwickshire (Jan 23 – Dec 23) is 0.04 per 1000 below the previous cohort rate. The Service remains below the West Midlands average and the national average.



4.1. Key performance indicators

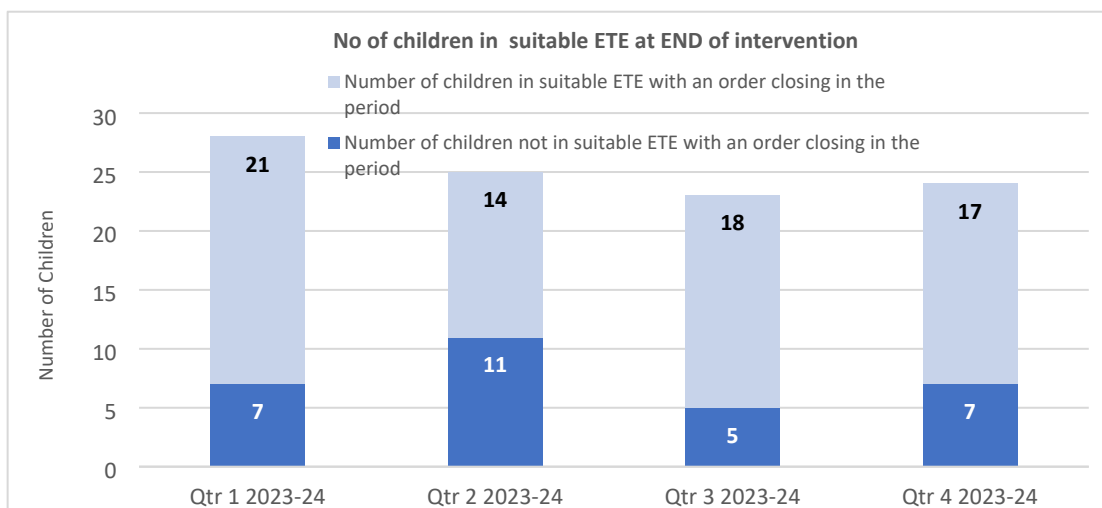
Suitable accommodation

The proportion of children in suitable accommodation at the end of intervention for 23/24 was 98% (98 out of 100 children). WYJS will continue to monitor and evaluate the accommodation status of children through quality assurance activity and closure checklists. The service has started holding monthly custody and resettlement meetings which are supporting early identification of accommodation and resettlement needs and ensuring robust partnership working and escalation where required.



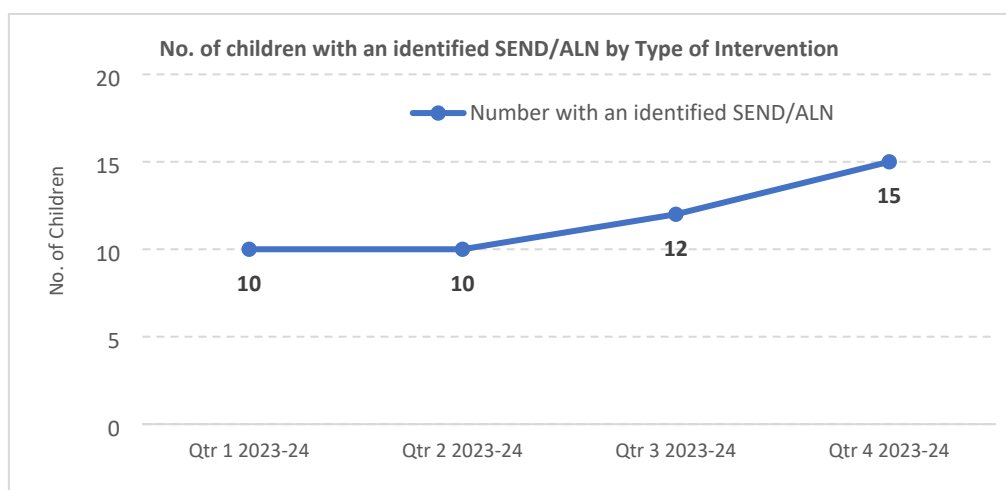
Education, training and employment (ETE)

Of the 100 children with an intervention in 23/24, 70% were classed as being in suitable education, training and employment. Consistently over the year it is the 16-18 cohort with additional complexities that remain not in ETE at the point of closure to WYJS. Monthly solution focused meetings have been established to review the post 16 cohort who are due to transition and do not have a confirmed destination or who are NEET. The meeting included the WYJS Education Lead, Prospects (IAG) and 16 plus WCC Education Leads.



Special educational needs and disabilities/additional learning needs

For interventions ending in 23/24, 47% of children had an identified special educational need (SEND)/additional learning need. SEND children were no more likely to be out of ETE than the overall figure for all children, with 70% of children with SEND being in suitable ETE.

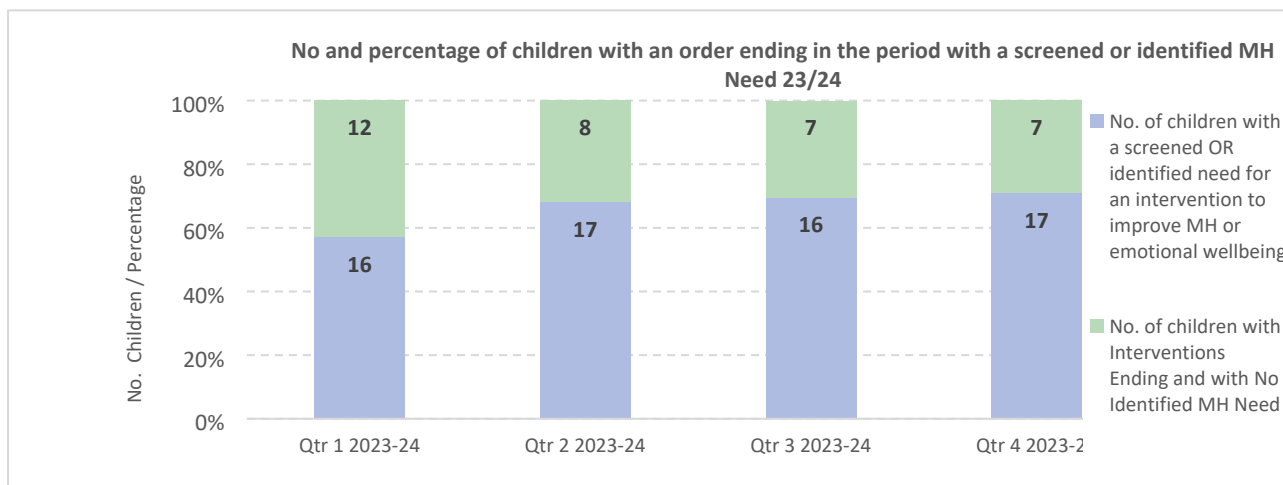


There has been a focus on correct recording and ensuring the latest EHCP is obtained for children open to WYJS. WYJS have had email confirmation of achievement of the SEND lead quality mark which is a positive recognition of the system changes which support screening and responses to children with SEND needs. WYJS practitioners and managers will take part in a workshop as part of the SEND workforce development programme to share views on inclusion for children with EHCP in mainstream settings.



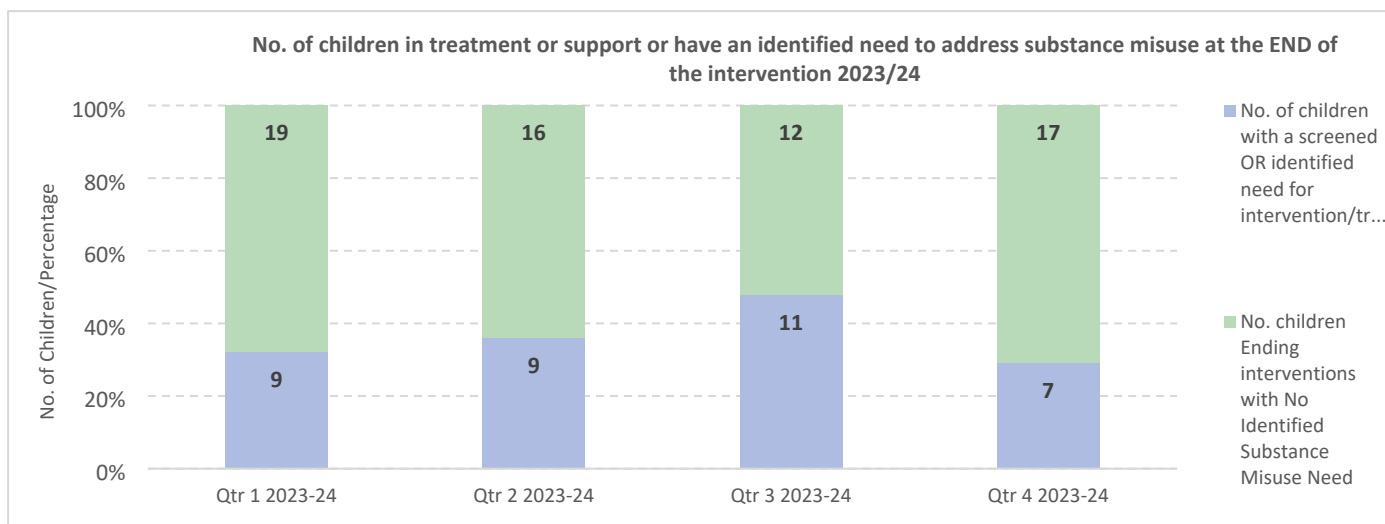
Mental health care and emotional wellbeing

Of the 100 children with an intervention ending in 23/24, 66% (66) had a referral for mental health support at some point either before or during their intervention. There continues to be proactive screening in place for all children who come into the service and a high level of need for children in the YJS cohort.



Substance Misuse

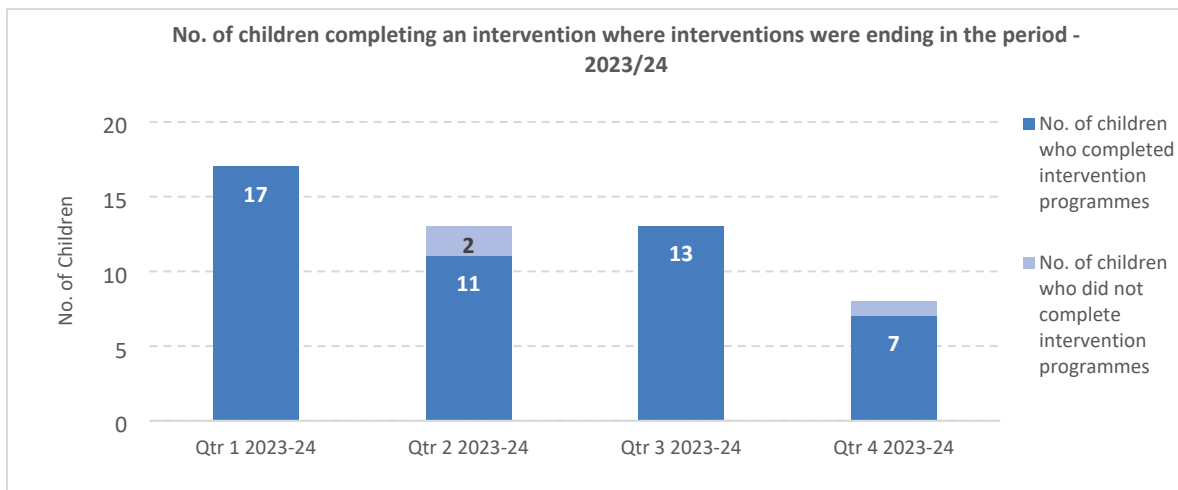
Over one third (36%, 36) of the 100 interventions ending in 23/24 had a referral for substance misuse support at some point either before or during their intervention. It is anticipated the level of children identified as having a Substance Misuse need will continue to increase with a universal screening approach being embedded across the service.



Out-of-court disposals

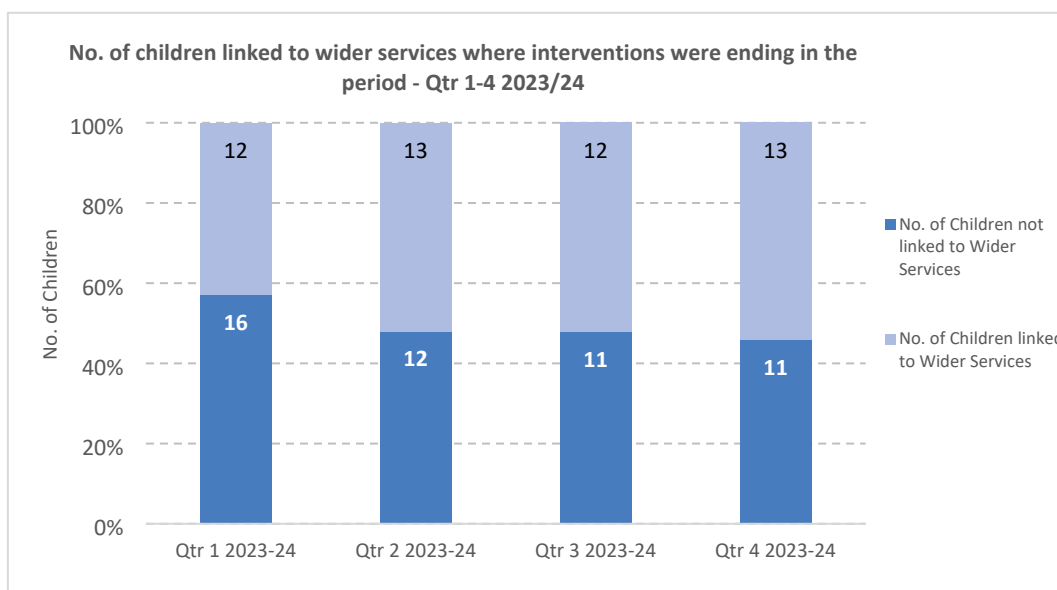
There continues to be a high rate of successful completions within the out of court arena. 51 children had an out of court disposal or diversionary intervention end during the period and 94% (48) of these were completed successfully.





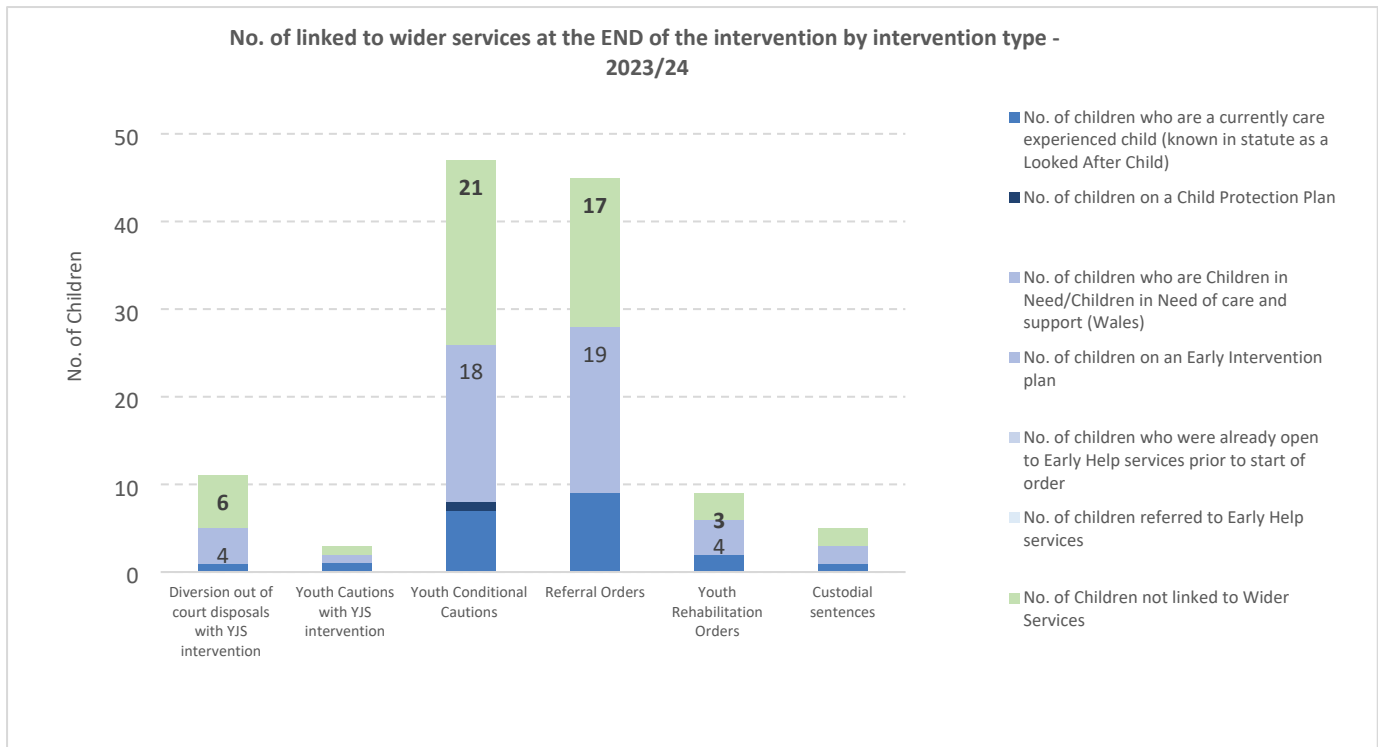
Links to wider services

The Service works very closely with colleagues across Children’s Services strengthened by its new position alongside services such as the Front Door (inc MASH), Initial Response and the Family and Adolescent Support Service. The service reports on those children previously known and currently open to Children’s Services as part of its quarterly data, and all practitioners have access to the Children’s Social Care System.



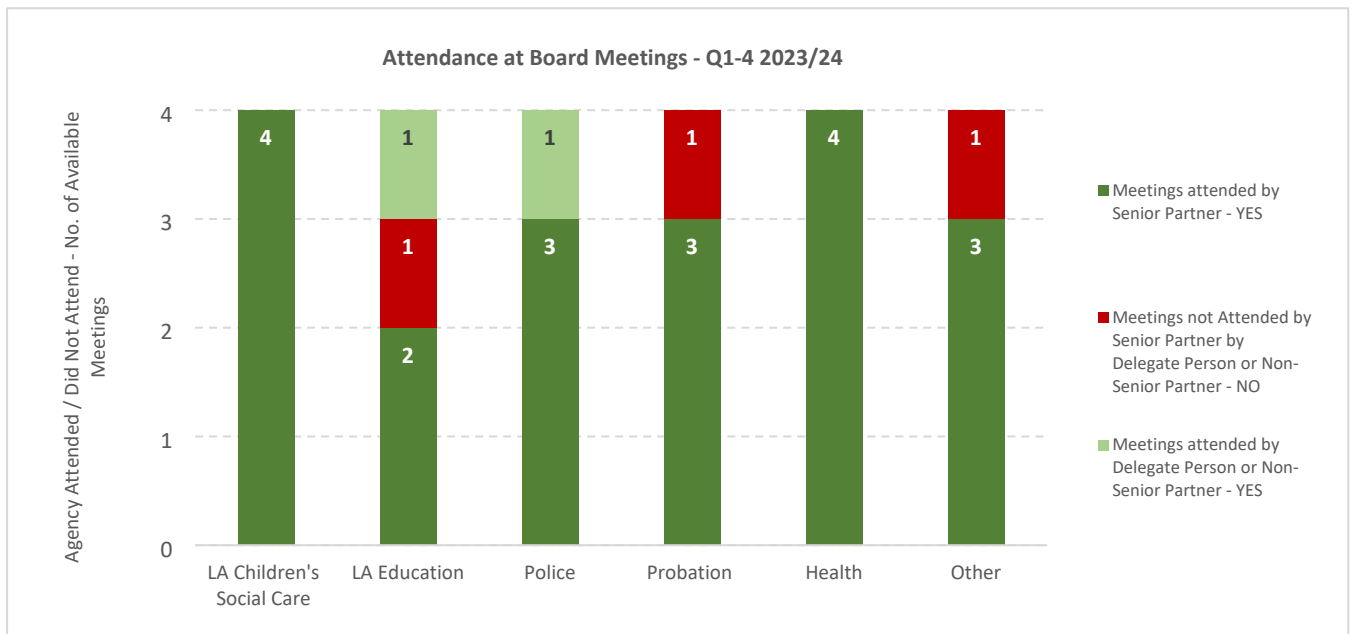
Half of children (50%, 50) were linked to wider services, where 49% (37) were classified as ‘Child in Need’ and 21% (21) as care experienced.





Management board attendance

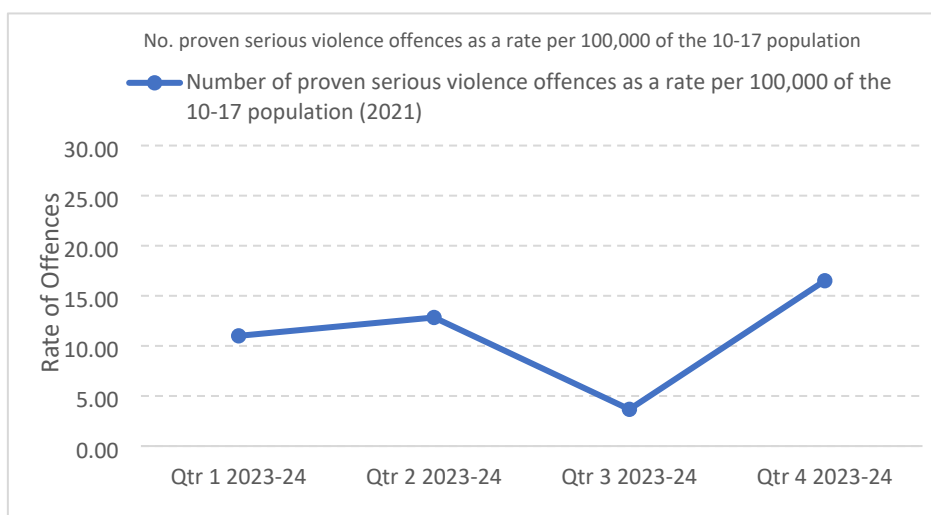
Management Board attendance is fully monitored. The Service sees good attendance from its Board members and action is taken as required where appropriate engagement is not in place.



Serious violence

Serious Violence is recorded in line with the YJB definition as any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of five or more resulting in a caution or court sentence.

Serious Violence Offences	NW	N&B	R	S	W	TOTAL	% Variance 2023/24 over 2022/23
Drugs	0	1	0	4	3	8	-38.5%
Robbery	1	2	0	1	1	5	-66.7%
Violence Against the Person	1	5	1	3	1	11	120.0%
Total	2	8	1	8	5	24	-27.3%



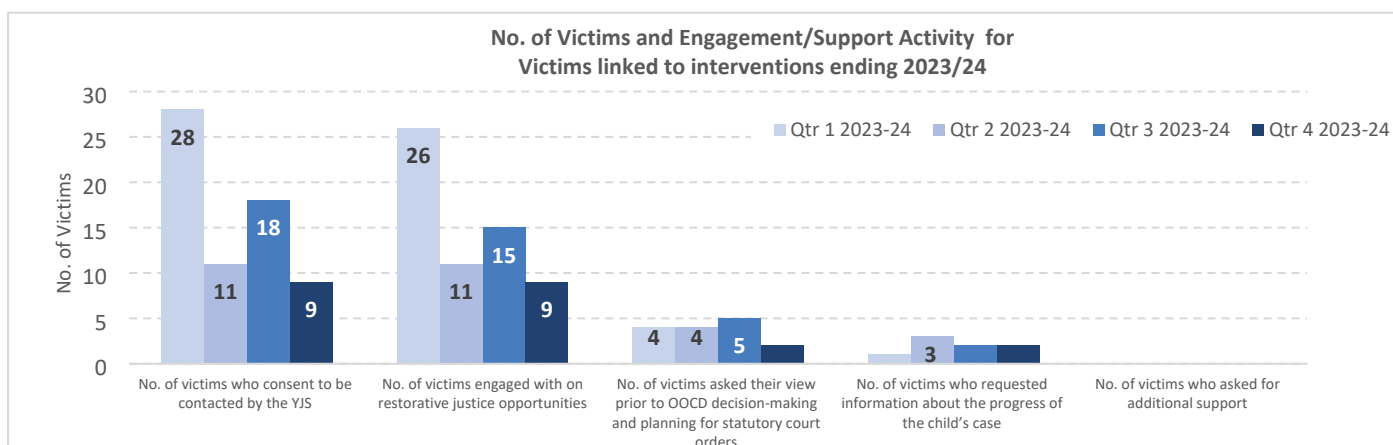
Overall, there has been a decrease in serious violence offences compared to the previous year. There is however a comparatively high number of serious violent offences compared to previous years. Three of these relate to three individual children involved in the same incident.

Victims

98 victims were identified as being linked to offences for interventions ending in 2023/24. Of the 66 victims that gave consent to be contacted by the Service, 92% (61) were engaged with on Restorative Justice opportunities.

This area of work continues to be further developed and there are a number of areas which be built upon over the next year, including clear guidance of the WYJS approach to victim contact and integration of victim’s voice, further links made with victim support to increase awareness of additional support that can be offered, ensuring proactive consent is routinely sought and recorded for all victims. The goal is to move beyond the KPI and provide a routine

detail of not just the number of RJ opportunities but a consistent breakdown of the type of Restorative Justice the victim has been engaged with.



5. Challenges, Risks and Issues

Warwickshire is one of the safest places to live in England and Wales but feeling safe is one of the areas that children tell us as part of our Child Friendly Warwickshire approach is one of the issues most important to them. The Partnership Board and Service are committed to delivering great services but inevitably there are certain risks and challenges that may present themselves over the next year.

Key challenges within the delivery of Youth Justice Services are:

- to ensure that delivery of our Youth Justice Service continues to be well resourced to meet the needs of the children and young people and enable service growth and development.
- to strengthen our governance and partnership work in the context of the Board
- to maintain inspection readiness and resilience whilst focusing on business as usual
- availability of local authority placements and impact on remand of young people and their outcomes.

The Chief Officer Board maintains a risk log for Youth Justice Services. The Chair of the Board is the owner of the risk log, ensuring there is an effective strategy in place, co-produced and owned by the Board and its partners. When necessary, key Management Board representatives are requested to meet to address issues effecting operational delivery or to look at a specific case to deal with emerging matters requiring swift attention.

The main area of risk in 2024/25 is funding. The YJB grant remains unannounced at the time of writing the plan and while assurances have been given on the maintenance of last year's core grant, this impacts on longevity planning. The impact of a new election and spending review, also offers less clarity on current and future funding. Turnaround funding, from the Ministry of Justice, will end at the end of March 25 and there are other grants which support elements of the service that currently do not have extensions beyond the end of the 2024/25 financial period. Budgets are therefore very carefully monitored to ensure that any potential risks are anticipated

and managed. The Chief Officer Board are aware of the risks within this area, and other funding sources and opportunities for sustainability are being explored.

6. Child First

The Service is committed to the principle of child first and whole family working as part of its service delivery, ensuring the Youth Justice Board's (YJB) Child First four tenet's principles are at the heart of service delivery:

- **See children as children:** Prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights, and potential. All work is child-focused and developmentally informed.
- **Develop pro-social identity for positive child outcomes:** Promote children's individual strengths and capacities as a means of developing their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.
- **Collaboration with children:** Encourage children's active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.
- **Promote diversion:** Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion, and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

The work of the Youth Justice Service is underpinned by a relational and restorative practice model not just with how we work with children and families but as our approach to working across the partnership and with each other. The commitment to this approach is seen not just across Children and Family Services but across the whole council and with our partner agencies.

The Service's practice model is underpinned by 3 areas:

- Restorative Practice
- Motivational Interviewing
- ARC Trauma Informed Model

Warwickshire Youth Justice Service has long been a champion of these three areas; however, the most notable change has been the introduction of a model for our trauma informed practice in March 2023 and is now being embedded across both our Youth Justice Service and co-located Family and Adolescent Support Service. Warwickshire were previously the first Youth Justice Service in this Youth Justice Board region to pilot the ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) research to assist in an understanding of serious offending behaviour and this led to a roll out across the wider West Midlands region. The new ARC model is supporting staff to really embed their Trauma Informed Practice in all areas of work and will shortly be supported by a Trauma Lead Practitioner who will work across both Service areas to really drive this approach and then support it being embedded across all of Children and Family Services over the coming years.

As an area of focus within the Service Continuous Improvement Plan has been the continued development of the Service Participation Offer. Despite external funding ending for a Participation Worker, the service has been able to continue the funding for this role. The role sits with our Voice, Influence and Change Team which is seen a particular strength with the current engagement it completes with children, including Children in Care, Children with SEND and leading on areas such as the Youth Council programme.

Over the last 12 months, the Service has welcomed Leaders Unlocked, who facilitated an in-person workshop with young advocates and the WYJS Service to explore its participation offer. As part of this the Service has developed a Participation Strategy and a number of developments have started to improve the opportunities to hear from children supported by the Service and to ensure their voice is used to co-develop and improve the offer from the service or as part of the wider partnership. Initiatives that have started and will be embedded in to 2024/25 include:

Start and End of Order Engagement

A Children's Participation Offer is shared with all children at the start of an order. This also includes a link to the Child Friendly Warwickshire Website, which includes a profile of the role of the Participation Worker. At the end of order, children will be offered the opportunity to meet the Participation Worker to complete an end of order survey.

Youth Room

Over the last year, the Bloxham Young People's Centre (Youth Justice Building) has been re-decorated. As part of this work has been the development of a dedicated Youth Room to support with engagement with children and as a better place for children to be if there was a more of an escalating issue which may take time to address, such as homelessness. The space was developed in consultation with several children that were using the centre. The rooms are also available to the Adolescent Service, and as a space used for Group Participation Sessions.

Regional YJ Participation Group

The WYJS Participation Worker has initiated a Regional Youth Justice Participation Group. The purpose being an opportunity to network with other professionals and to share learning and good practice. The group has progressed to engagement from ten neighbouring local authorities and has explored areas such as self-assessments and end of order reviews.

Stop and Search Scrutiny Panels & Police Engagement

A Panel takes place quarterly, and now have representation from young people, and this has been received well. This has progressed to having young people who have been open to the Youth Justice Service and the aim is to continue to engage more children with experience of the Youth Justice System in the panels.

Police have engaged in wider engagement forums over the last year including with the Care Leaver Council and the Youth Council. The Youth Council are also nominating two representatives to support with Police and Crime Commissioner and their office. The Council are also setting up a Crime and Safety Campaign in 2024/25.

7. Resources and services

The Chief Officer Board is committed to making sure that the service delivers effective services for children whilst ensuring value for money as a publicly funded body. How the service utilises its resources have changed over time, with a greater focus on prevention and diversion activity with a reduced cohort of children on community or custodial disposals.

The Local Authority investment alongside the Youth Justice Board Grant see the biggest investment in the service supported by commitments from a range of partners including Warwickshire Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Health and the Probation Service.

The outline of partnership contributions, Appendix Three, confirms that the service is well resourced and has the ability to respond the needs of the county. At the time of this plan the Youth Justice Board Grant for 2024/25 has not yet been confirmed.

Examples of how investment and innovation has been influenced in 2023-24 by the Service direction of travel include:

- An extended weekend offer has been implemented, with a more individualised intervention taking place.
- A Prevention Team, Pathways, has been developed and launched which has included the recruitment of two youth workers and a Serious Violence Mentor.
- An Intervention programme has been bought in for a two-year period to support practitioners to have access to a range of tools to work with children open to the service.

The Service is still waiting for confirmation of its grant funding for 24/25. However, its ambition for 24/25 is to:

- Invest in additional support to children in respect of their physical health needs.
- Look to consolidate the investment made to Prevention, and to access further funding streams to ensure a sustainable offer.

The Chief Officer Board is satisfied and has visible evidence that all statutory partners are committed to the support of our service and that resources utilised to develop a multi-agency approach.

8. Board development

The Board continues to evolve as the partnership looks to focus on particular areas and as the needs and offer of the Service changes. In 2024/25 there are a number of changes to the Board's make up, including a new seconded Head of Service (Youth Justice), as well as changes to long standing members of the board. This includes a new Police, Mental Health and Community Safety Representatives to due to moves/retirements for the current incumbents of those roles. The Service has a Board Induction Pack which is updated annually and an offer of an induction with parts of the Service. Opportunities to undertake shadowing or request specific workshops are also promoted.

The Service includes to have a Practice Focused element in each meeting, where the Board will presentation on a specific element of the service. These presentations are delivered often by practitioners or Team Managers to share current delivery, as well as highlight current opportunities, and areas of development or challenges.

9. Workforce Development

The Youth Justice Service is diverse with a variety of different professional backgrounds and experiences. All staff benefit from training hosted by Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership and through the Children and Families Learning and Development Offer. Volunteers also have access to this support, alongside other training that is regularly commissioned for the Service or wider Adolescent Services.

In 2023/24 a specific focus has been on improving the offer of adolescent focused training both for the Youth Justice Service and Adolescent Service but also for partner agencies. This has seen funding for training on Contextual Safeguarding, Safety Planning, Extra Familial Harm, Disrupting Exploitation and Neurodiversity. Training is also delivered by seconded colleagues to the Service which has included on Speech and Language, as well as jointly developed training with a neighbouring Youth Justice Service on Court Duty Officer Training,

The Youth Justice Service Management team is also able to access specific management training including coaching from within the Children and Family Services. Managers have recently enrolled on the Aspiring Future Leaders course with the Association of YOT Manager, and other training has been offered through both Research in Practice and Frontline.

The workforce has all been trained in the ARC Trauma Model in 2023 and embedding this approach remains a focus. To support this approach a Lead Practitioner with a focus on embedding and developing the ARC approach is employed. The Service have also developed ARC Champions which have regular access to the ARC Training Consultant through a monthly practice forum.

HSB social workers in the service, who work solely with children exhibit HSB behaviours, are provided with both external facilitated clinical supervision by a HSB specialist alongside case management line manager supervision through a lead practitioner. Practitioners within WYJS who hold a mixed caseload that includes some children with HSB offences also take part in quarterly group supervision meetings.

All members of the service can access additional counselling sessions dedicated for child facing roles. These can be accessed confidentially on a one-to-one basis, either in person or virtually as requested.

As well as receiving training, the service also engages in delivering workshops to wider colleagues about the role of the Youth Justice Service, this includes an element for all newly qualified Social Workers that start in Warwickshire.

There are weekly team meetings within WYJS to maintain good connections between practitioner and managers. Once a month there is a team manager led face to face meeting at

both local justice centre bases where local issues and resources are discussed. A monthly whole service meeting lead by Service Managers, where county wide matters are discussed, updates to policies and procedures are communicated, this allows for cross area connections to be maintained. There are also 2 more informal service restorative-based check ins during the month with practitioners, to support working relationships and maintain good connections across the service.

10. Evidence-based practice, innovation and evaluation

The service remains focussed on delivering consistently outstanding services for children. The opportunities that present themselves in a county with strong partnership working and a commitment to invest in services that support children and their families. This can be seen in both the Local Authorities commitment to Early Help Services and Youth Work and in the commissioning of services by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The service introduced the ARC Trauma Model across the service last year, building on the strong trauma informed knowledge within the service and strengthens the direct intervention being delivered by the service. The whole service has been trained, and continued support is offered to a group of Champions to help the service further embed this across all areas of practice. Opportunities to embed this include ARC being the focus of a Practice Week, staff developed ARC Board in all Service Offices and a dedicated role to support the service embed the approach across initially Adolescent Services within the Children and Families Directorate.

Following feedback from the Service's staff team, the Service commissioned an Intervention Hub for a two-year period. The Intervention Hub has been developed by subject matter experts to support children with a variety of areas. Initial feedback after year one has been that there has been some positive work through the Hub, many of the areas feel aimed at the older ages open to the service. Initial feedback has been shared with the provider and a decision will be made in 2025 whether to further extend our use of the Hub.

The Service, through additional investment from the County Council subsidised schools to access a theatre in education programme. 139 sessions were run and reached over 13,000 children and young people across 2023/24. The key messages taught including staying safe on and offline and where to go for support. The programmes also covered the difficult topics around child exploitation and abuse, domestic abuse and harassment and violence against women and girls, which the pupils handled with great maturity.

11. Standards for children in the justice system

The Service's most recent standards for children in justice self-assessment looked at court. The review found that WYJS has a robust out of court procedure, with weekly panels to divert children away from Court. The Out of Court policy, which is an agreement between the Police and Youth Justice ensures all YOT 1 forms received are scrutinised by a multi-agency panel to ensure the best outcomes for children are delivered.

In respect of remand, the Service has a clear remand strategy which details the remand process, and how to divert away from remands. WYJS is one of the few authorities who commissions a Bail and Remand Intensive Fostering Scheme (BRICS). This scheme consists of three foster carers who hold placements for children at risk of remand. The scheme ensures that when a

child is at risk of remand, court officers can make a proposal at court that a child is placed in one of these specialised placements, thus diverting them away from potential secure estate placements.

In respect of Court Reports, 90% of reports within the sample were judged to be of high quality, with a strong focus on ensuring that reports are child focussed and of a high standard. All reports are written by trained Court officers, who are Social Work or Probation qualified. WYJS seeks feedback from the Court with regards to the quality of report, and feedback is consistently good, citing reports are of a high standard. Feedback from youth panel magistrates has been consistently positive both for individual children and within youth panel meeting forums as an overall judgement and perception of the bench that Warwickshire PSRs are of a high quality and support their ability to make appropriate sentencing decisions.

The Service has a Quality Assurance policy and regular auditing is completed with feedback shared with the Chief Officer Board and actions tracked in the Service Improvement Plan. Key themes explored in 2023/24 included into custody and risk.

The WYJS themed audit on risk took place in September 2023. This highlighted some excellent practice around risk judgement, and some areas for improvement. The audit found that although accuracy of risk judgements was deemed to be good in the majority of the children's files, the justifications for those assessments sometimes lacked clarity and justification. Furthermore, whilst most Asset Plus were reviewed regularly, the audit found that some assessments were not reviewed when a significant change occurred. It was felt that staff required further input and training with regards to the triggers for review, such as significant change, and to ensure that risk is assessed correctly and proportionately. Direct work completed with children matching the plan was a strength for WYJS staff, with the majority of files demonstrating the links between the plan and the work with the child. WYJS presented these findings to Chief Officers Board and agreed to address the areas for improvement by conducting risk workshops, and regular discussions around situational risk.

Whilst WYJS custody rates remain low, WYJS understands the importance of ensuring that children in custody receive the best care possible and that resettlement plans are robust taking into account the needs of the child. WYJS completed a custody and resettlement audit in January 2024.

The audit found that all files demonstrated the voice of the parent carer, and whilst in all the files, the final release meeting took place, transport arrangements for release were only evident in 80%. This led to implementation of custody meetings to ensure that staff are discussing children in custody and planning their release. Positively, all children had accommodation secured at least 14 days prior to release. WYJS will continue to work closely with staff and partners to ensure the best outcomes for children in the secure estate.

12. Priorities for the coming year

The overarching priorities for the Service in 2024/25 are:

- Serious Youth Violence Interventions

The service will have a focus on exploring the interventions and approach of working with children who are engaged in Serious Youth Violence or are more entrenched repeat offenders.

- **Physical Health**
The Service, with its partners, will develop a clear response to the physical health needs of children supported by the Service. WYJS has a strong offer for children in respect of their emotional wellbeing, mental health and substance misuse needs. However, the support around other areas such as access to Universal Health Services, challenges with sleep, sexual health and oral health are not as well responded to.
- **Victims and Restorative Justice**
The service has plans to deliver further training to the workforce on Restorative Justice and to achieve the Restorative Justice Quality Assurance Mark. As part of this, the Service will undertake a review of the needs of victims and the support that is available to them, working towards an outcome of right support at the right time for every victim.

13. Service development plan

The Service maintains a Continuous Improvement Plan which is a live document which is regularly discussed at Chief Officer Boards to monitor progress. WYJS are committed to delivering outstanding services which improve outcomes for our children and their families in Warwickshire and the Service works hard to continuously improve the quality of services provided.



The Continuous Improvement Plan covers the following areas:

- Organisational Delivery
- Workforce
- Participation
- Prevention and Diversion
- Restorative Justice
- Performance and Quality Assurance
- Remand and Resettlement
- Harmful Sexual Behaviours
- Disproportionality



Some of the area in the continuous improvement plan include:

- Improved focus on local performance data on young people who re-offend, their demographics and understanding the narrative around this. Then utilising this information to deliver more focused and bespoke intervention to young people.
- Enhanced Restorative Justice training to be delivered across the service, and to enhance services in this area including bespoke support to victims of Crime and Restorative Conferences.
- Utilising service resources on sport and physical activity to engage and improve the outcomes for global majority heritage children who are a risk of, or already involved with the Youth Justice Service.
- Explore how we learn from people with lived experienced of the Service, including consideration for a Criminal Justice Experienced Apprentice.
- To ensure the service and board have a shared understanding of what the new HMIP Inspection framework means in practice, and to consider service planning or changes required to be prepared for this.

14. National Priority Areas

Children from groups which are over-represented

Addressing disproportionality is a priority both for the Youth Justice Board and locally for the Chief Officer Board. The service has a Disproportionality Action Plan within its Continuous Improvement Plan.

Warwickshire as a county is becoming more diverse, however just 15% of the county are from these communities. The table below shows the distribution of the Warwickshire population taken from the Office for National Statistics 2021 Census data using a custom dataset to identify the Warwickshire 10–17-year-old population.

	White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	Unknown	Total
Male	43.30%	2.75%	3.57%	0.84%	0.58%	0.00%	51.04%
Female	41.65%	2.65%	3.33%	0.80%	0.53%	0.00%	48.96%
Total	84.95%	5.40%	6.89%	1.64%	1.12%	0.00%	100.00%

2021 Census for Warwickshire children aged 10-17 years



	White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	Unknown	Total
Male	61.67%	6.67%	3.33%	5.83%	0.00%	0.00%	77.50%
Female	20.83%	0.00%	0.00%	1.67%	0.00%	0.00%	22.50%
Total	82.50%	6.67%	3.33%	7.50%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Distribution of Children offending by Gender and Ethnicity

The offending population of individual children who have received a substantive outcome in 2023/24 shows White males are over-represented, as well as males of Mixed and Black ethnic origin. 74 of the 120 children (60%) were males of white ethnic origin, 8 (7%) were males of mixed ethnic origin and 7 (6%) were males of black ethnic origin. Although these are small numbers all three groups show an overrepresentation compared to the general population of Warwickshire as measured in the 2021 Census.

Policing

The relationship between the Service and Warwickshire Police is a strength and further progress has been made in 2023/34 in several areas:

Custody

The Youth Justice Service has worked closely with the Police Custody Inspector to make improvements for children that enter Police Cells. The developments have included dedicated cells for children with targets on the walls for children to use with the balls available from Police Staff. A full range of other items are available for children in custody including distraction packs, fidgets, pens/crayons etc. The Youth Justice Service has provided two iPads which are used to show videos to children on their rights and relevant information when in custody.

Information has been updated in respect of all other information in custody for children. This has included re-covering and having age-appropriate language and information for children at the Custody Sergeants Desk. These developments have been done in consultation with the Service's Speech and Language Therapist so that the information can be more easily understood.

Information Sharing

Warwickshire Police have enabled the Service access to its Athena system to enable a live picture of children in custody. This has enabled a much clearer and more live perspective for Duty Youth Justice Workers about the situation of children in Police custody. The Police have also provided space in the custody for the Service to use, which has further improved the relationship between wider Police Staff and the Service.

Diversion

Working closely with WYJS, Warwickshire Police has where appropriate encouraged flexible outcomes to deliver bespoke diversion that is meaningful and effective without criminalising children.

Appropriate Adults / Detention

The Appropriate Adults Service is offered by the Youth Justice Service during core hours, Monday to Friday, and by the Emergency Duty Service outside of the hours. The Head of Service for Youth Justice is also responsible for the Emergency Duty Service which ensures a focus on this as a whole service offer. Quarterly meetings take place with Managers across both Teams with Police colleagues to continue to review and develop this offer. This meeting also reviews the cases of all children eligible for transfer to local authority accommodation under PACE regulations and discuss other safeguarding issues in police custody.

Diversion

Diversion is a partnership approach within Warwickshire, notably the Youth Justice Service, Children's Social Care, Early Help, Youth Work and Warwickshire Police. The Service triages with the Police opportunities for diversion and holds a fortnightly Out of Court Resolutions Panel. This process went through a significant change in early 2023, and there has been some a more recent revision to be clearer on the use of Outcome 22. The panel is attended by colleagues from across Children and Families and the Police to ensure that decisions are made with full knowledge and understanding of the child's journey and other support that is available across our wider services.

Quarterly Scrutiny Panels are held in the county of which the Service is a core member. These are chaired by Magistrates and are an arena in which to scrutinise panel decision making and review any good practice or learning for Out of Court Panel members. The Service consistently receives high scores in respect of the formal feedback from the Panel, and feedback is shared and reviewed by the Chief Officer Board.

Education

The Chief Officer Board has two representatives from Education, a Head of Service from the County Council Education Directorate and the Service Manager for Prospects (Careers Guidance). The Service has a dedicated post for an Education Worker who plays a pivotal role with links to wider Education Meetings and relationships in respect of areas such as SEND, Education Entitlement and Attendance. The Service Manager, with a lead for Education also engages in a number of strategic level meetings including on the SEND Board.

The Children and Families Service also employ a Headteacher Coach. This is a former Headteacher from within Warwickshire who works with schools to support with safeguarding issues, and this can be a useful conduit for the service. This has included discussions with one school where there had been a number of issues with a small group of children and the wider impact that this was having.

The Service has had a real focus on SEND in 2023/24 and has been successful in receiving the SEND YJ Quality Mark, demonstrating the Service's commitment in this area.

Restorative approaches and victims

WYJS is provided with victim contact details through police notification process for all children who are charged with an offence. Police colleagues proactively seek consent from victims to be contacted by the Service. The benefits from a dedicated Restorative Practitioner and seconded police officers who are highly skilled in talking to victims about the processes around Youth Crime both within the out of court area and court. They can listen to the victim's concern and the impact the offence has had whilst also describing what options are available to victims to engage in restorative processes. The first contact with a victim is always made through a personal telephone call where possible. This personal approach ensures victims can fully understand and can interact well with the process. WYJS are aware of diverse needs and can adapt processes to meet individual needs such as translating written communication into a victim's first language. This first part of the process ensures victims' right under the victim's code to be able to understand and be understood is consistently upheld.

Throughout the intervention the Restorative Justice Practitioner can keep victims informed of the child's progress and there is close collaboration between a child's allocated Practitioner and the restorative justice practitioner. The Restorative Justice Practitioner prepares victims for their engagement in Restorative processes and can support referrals to victim support and other voluntary organisations to support with additional needs and support the victim may require as a result of their experience. This ensures victims right to have information about the offender following conviction and the right to be referred to services which support victims and have services and support tailored to their needs.

In-depth, trauma informed work is completed with the child to understand the victim's perspective and support building a pro social identity. Children are supported by their practitioners to engage with different forms of restorative practice-from writing letters of apology, shuttle mediation and restorative meetings.

WYJS ensures through gatekeeping processes that Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) authors appropriately include victim impact in all PSRs where relevant and the potential for Restorative Processes is considered. In the absence of a victim personal impact statement, the Restorative Justice Practitioner will contact the victim at the PSR stage or liaise with victim liaison officers and Independent Sexual Violence Adviser's to ensure personal impact is known and not assumed.

WYJS are an active part of the victim and witness forum which is led by the OPCC which ensures WYJS are aware of systemic issues which impact victims and are kept abreast of any changes to law, policy and practice that impact on victims.

Remands

As noted earlier in respect of remand, the Service has a clear remand strategy which details the remand process, and how to divert away from remands. WYJS is also one of the few authorities nationally who commissions a Bail and Remand Intensive Fostering Scheme (BRICS) and have

engaged in conversations with the Ministry of Justice, and other Youth Justice Services who have been keen to learn more about the approach.

The Chief Officer Board is provided quarterly information in respect of children who are remanded, including the financial impact to the Service.

In November 2023, HMI Probation published a thematic inspection report on work with children subject to remand in youth detention. Recommendations from this report will be included in the Service's Continuous Improvement plan for 2024-25

Secure Remands 2023/24 Youth Detention Accommodation	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Bed Nights Q1-4 2023/24	Bed Nights Q1-4 2022/23
Total Number of young people subject to a YDA	3	3	2	3	11	0
Youth Offending Institute (YOI) bed nights	153	98	91	26	368	167
Secure Training Centre (STC) bed nights	0	0	0	76	76	154
Secure Children's Home (SCH) bed nights	0	11	92	91	194	50
Technical Remand bed nights	0	0	0	0	0	21
Total	153	109	183	193	638	392

Use of custody and constructive resettlement

The number of children serving sentences in the Secure Estate in Warwickshire is very small. This can result in notable spikes within any set of statistics. In 2022/23 Warwickshire has 6 children receiving a custodial sentence, and in 2023/24 this number has remained at 6.

The Youth Justice Service works to ensure that it offers credible alternatives to the Courts to the use of custody where risk is diligently managed in the community. We can offer a full Intensive Surveillance and Supervision programme offering a maximum of 25 hours oversight with the added provision of an electronic curfew as required.

The Service has a Resettlement Worker, funded from funding as part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Trauma Vanguard. This enables and enhanced offer to children in custody, in particular re contact, planning and links to the community all key area for successful resettlement.

Positive feedback from the Courts indicates that there is confidence in our Service to manage high risk children. The service has also reviewed its Intervention offer, and plans are in place to improve the interventions that take place at weekends through a more diverse group of interventions to consider.

Working with families


The Service's Parenting Worker provides support to the parents and carers of children open to the service. The worker alongside delivering one to one focused intervention, works collaboratively with Parenting Workers within the Council's Early Help Service and delivers



group work for parents and carers open to both the Youth Justice Service and Adolescent Service.

The Parenting Worker attends court hearings and is there to engage with parents and carers about the process and to consider the support needs of the family moving forward. The Service can also access Family Group Conferences and is an area for development, based on the Families First agenda across Warwickshire.

15. Sign off, submission and approval

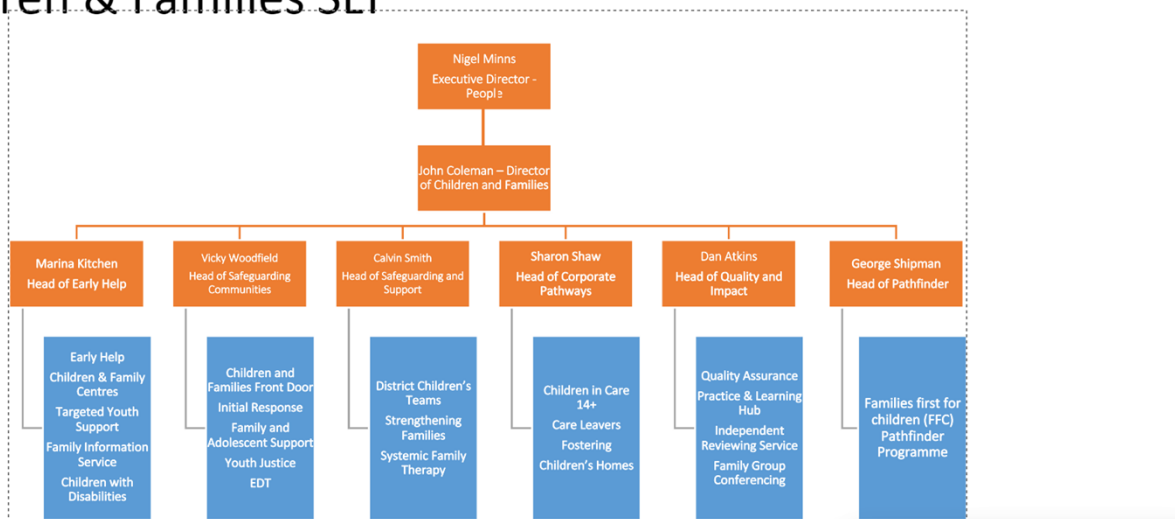
Chair of Youth Justice Chief Officer Board <i>Approved on behalf of the Youth Justice Chief Officer Board</i>	 Nigel Minns
Date	28th June 2024

AppendicesAppendix One – Youth Justice Chief Officer Board – 24/25

Nigel Minns	Executive Director	CYP (DCS) – COB Chair
John Coleman	Director	Children and Families – COB Vice Chair
Vicky Woodfield	Head of Service	Safeguarding Communities (Head of YJ)
Rachel Watt	Service Manager	Youth Justice
Becky Sumner	Service Manager	Youth Justice
TBC	Head of Service	Community Safety and Trading Standards
Shin Bhangal	Service Manager	Voice, Influence and Change
Jill Fowler	Det. Superintendent	Warwickshire Police
Ben Smith	Assistant Chief Constable	Warwickshire Police
Emma Daniell	Deputy PCC	Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
Andy Wade	Head of Service	Warwickshire Probation Service
TBC	Director of Operations	MH Service for Children and Young People
Paul Heathfield	Chair	Warwickshire Youth Court Bench
Sarah Tregaskis	Head of Service	Education
Vicky Bartholomew	Data Analyst	Youth Justice
Jackie Channel	Associate Chief Nurse	Coventry and Warwickshire ICB
Jas Madahar	Operations Manager	Coventry & Warwickshire Prospects Service
Anita Lekhi	Service Manager	Quality & Impact
Shade Agboola	Director	Public Health
David McNally	Oversight Manager	Youth Justice Board
Grace Boughton	Policy Officer	LCJB – Office of Police and Crime Commissioner



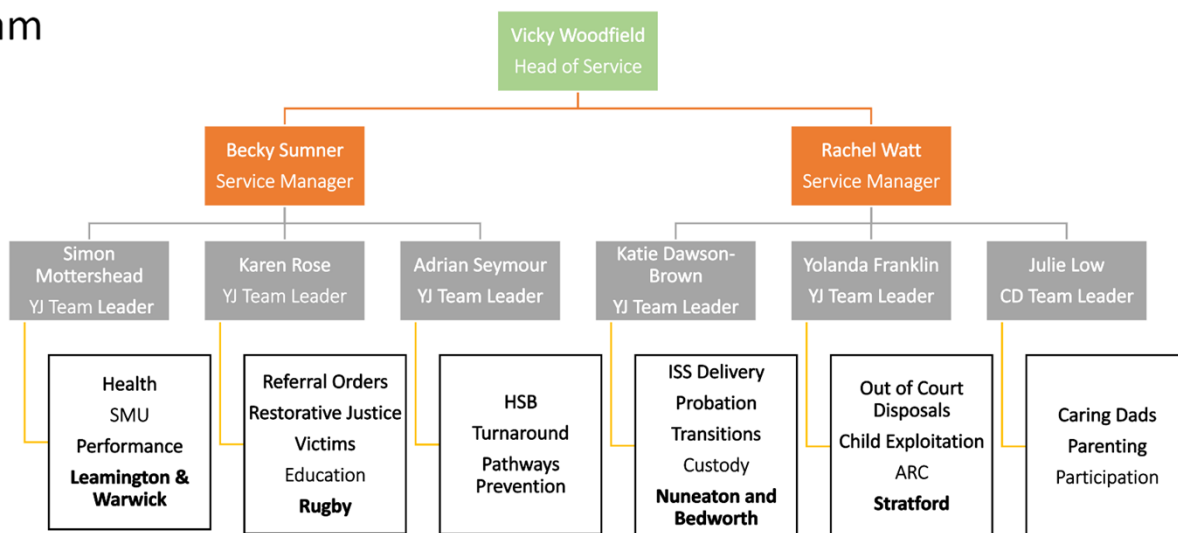
Children & Families SLT



Youth Justice Structure Chart



Youth Justice Management Team



Appendix Three – Budget Costs and Contributions 2024/25

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in Kind	Other delegate funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	439,488		109,872	549,360
Local Authority	1,212,138		669,741	1,881,879
Police	179,401		15,290	194,691
Police and Crime Commissioner	90,000			74,494
Probation	46,655		5,000	49,861
Health	107,120			103,000
Welsh Government				0
Other			£63,292	0
Total	2,074,802	0	863,195	2,937,997



Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Item	Report Detail	Date of Meeting
Questions to Cabinet Portfolio Holders	Up to 30 minutes of the meeting are available for members Committee to put questions to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services.	Standing items for every meeting
Updates from Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Assistant Directors	Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Assistant Directors are invited to provide any updates they have on issues within the remit of the Committee.	
SEND Member Panel Update	Portfolio Holder for Education will provide a verbal update on the work of the council’s SEND Member Panel.	
Corporate Parenting Panel Update	Portfolio Holder for Children & Families is invited to provide an update on the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel. (To include an update from the Voice, Influence & Change Team when appropriate)	
Integrated Performance Report	Quarterly performance updates presented to the Committee. Link to Power BI Platform	Quarterly Reports
Report Detail		Date of Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s OSC Feedback report • Youth Justice 		17 September 2024

Report Detail	Date of Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-16 participation in education, employment, and training performance report 2024 • Persistent and severe absenteeism • School Outcomes Report – Early Headlines including Virtual Schools 	26 November 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update in relation to Family First Pathway 	25 February 2025

Future Items to be added to the Work Programme

- Visit for the Committee to be arranged to the Warwickshire Academy (Formerly the PEARS site).
- Consideration to be given to adding an annual update to the committee in relation to Educational Attainment.
- Draft Home to School Policy Update

Briefing Notes circulated to the committee (please contact Helen Barnsley if you've not received one)

- Interim briefing note in relation to absenteeism to be circulated April/May '24 (Sarah T)

Briefing Notes/Information Requests

1. Request for information in relation to the recent tender for the provision of children's centres, including plans on how to improve outreach to surrounding larger villages.

Motions from Council – none currently

Items on the Forward Plan relevant to the remit of the Committee

Decision	Description	Date due	Decision Maker

Upcoming Member Development Sessions

Please contact Helen Barnsley (Senior Democratic Services Officer) if you would like more information or if you are missing a calendar invitation. All development sessions will be held via Microsoft Teams unless otherwise stated.

Session	Date and Time

- **Next Chair and Spokes Meeting - these meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams**
 - 4th September 2024 at 10am

- **Future Committee Meeting. These meetings will be held at Shire Hall, Warwick.**
 - 17 September 2024 at 10am
 - 26 November 2024 at 10am
 - 25 February 2025 at 10am

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