

**Committee:** Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Date:** 29 June 2016

Agenda item:

Wards: All wards

**Subject:** Performance monitoring 2015/16 (March 2016)

Lead officer: Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Performance, Children Schools and Families

Lead member(s): Councillor Katy Neep; Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah.

Forward Plan reference number: n/a

Contact officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Head of Policy, Planning and Performance.

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**Recommendations:** That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel;

- A. Note the current level of performance as at the end 2015/16 (appendix 1)
  - B. Consider reviewing the Scrutiny Panel dataset for 2016/17
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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To provide the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel with a regular update on the performance of the Children, Schools and Families Department and key partners.
- 1.2. Data provided in appendix one is as at the end of March 2016 and as such the end of year outturn. Members are invited to consider reviewing the dataset for 2016/17.

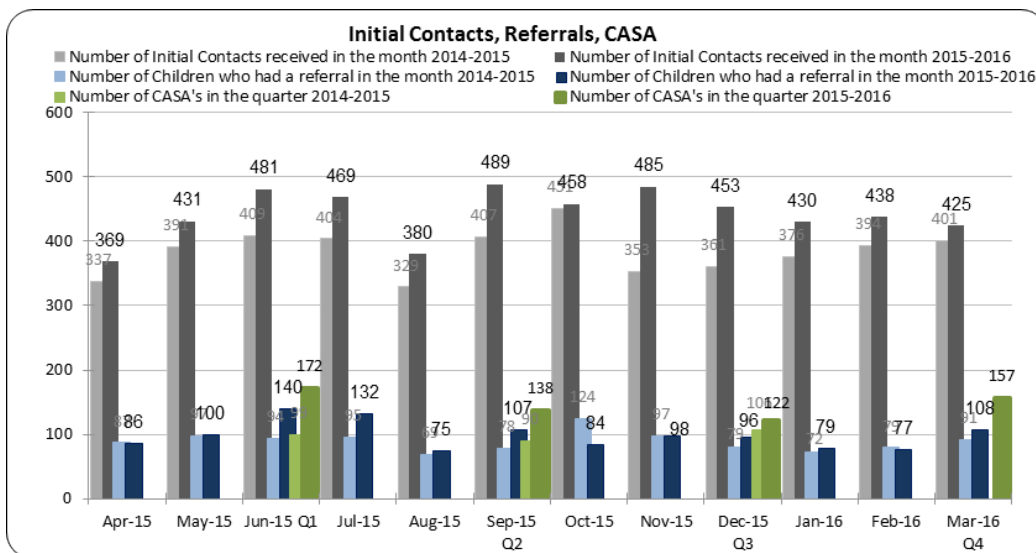
## 2. DETAILS

- 2.1. At a Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel meeting in June 2007 it was agreed that the Children Schools and Families Department would submit a regular performance report on a range of key performance indicators.
- 2.2. This performance monitoring report acts as a 'health check' for the Panel and as such is over and above the more detailed performance reports scheduled to the Panel which relate to specific areas of activities such as the annual Schools Standards report, Corporate Parenting Report, MSCB annual report etc.
- 2.3. This performance index is periodically reviewed and revised by Members, most recently in April 2015. In line with good performance monitoring practice Members may wish to review this dataset for the new municipal year. Officers could facilitate a workshop to review and agree a revised dataset for Scrutiny Member monitoring during 2016/17.
- 2.4. Members have also requested that Officers raise any additional KPIs on which there may be additional management oversight at any given point in the year. As this is an end of year report, Officers have provided additional commentary on particularly good end of year outturns as well as management comments on exception for all Red indicators. Appendix one presents the performance dataset for 2015/16.

2.5. **March 2016 Performance commentary**

2.6. **Assessments**

2.7. On average Merton receives 440 initial contacts a month, one in four of these contacts lead to a referral of which only 4% result in no further action and the remainder require either a statutory Single Assessment or Section 47 enquiry. The number of repeat referrals remains low (13.3%), suggesting that appropriate services are provided at the point of our first intervention.



2.8. **Indicator 2: Percentage of Single assessments completed in the statutory 45 days – Green.**

2.9. 93% of Single Assessments undertaken were completed within the 45 day statutory requirements. Performance improvements have been delivered through sustained performance management over the past two years, this outturn is a 10% improvement on 2013/14, 81%. Merton's 2015/16 performance is better than the National 82% and London 80% benchmarks. The focus for the coming year will be to engage services as soon as practicable rather than waiting until the assessment has been completed.

2.10. **Indicator 3: Percentage of new Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20 week timescale – Red.**

2.11. 50% of new requests for EHC plans were completed within 20 weeks, this is broadly inline with the national benchmark 55% (Jan 2016). During the year we have seen an increase in requests for new EHC plans, we received 237 requests between April 2015 to March 2016 of which we agreed 177 with 5 pending a decision on whether to undertake an assessment. We are continuing to embed the new statutory process.

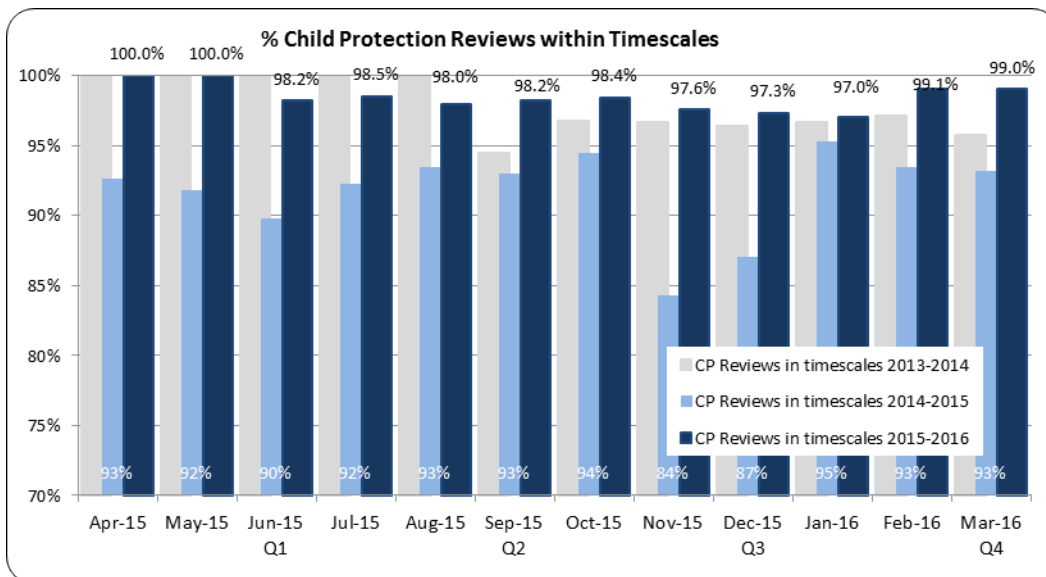
2.12. Alongside new requests we have transferred SEN statements to EHC plans as per the requirements of the Children and Families Act, of these transfers 74% were completed within 20 weeks. We have 817 transfers remaining before March 2018. Merton (18% transferred) is performing in line with the national benchmark (18%) and better than London (14%, January 2016) this places Merton 7<sup>th</sup> fastest in London to transfer SEN statements to EHC plans.

2.13. The SEN reform grant has been confirmed for 2016/17, we will use this to retain additional capacity to the SEN team. We are reviewing our internal processes to improve timeframes and increase the administrative support to the SEN Team. We are working with other Local Authorities to review best practice and to support the reconfiguration of the SEN staffing team's role and function.

2.14. **Child Protection**

2.15. There has been a reduction in the number of children subject to Child Protection plans during the year; this is attributed to the ending of plans for large sibling groups and for some child protection plans that have been open for more than 18 months. Management is continuing to monitor this reduction.

2.16. **Indicator 9: Percentage of child protection reviews completed in time – Green.** It is pleasing to report that 99% of all child protection reviews were completed on time. This is an improvement on last year 93% and better than both National 96% and London 96% benchmarks.



2.17. **Indicator 11: Percentage of children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time – Red.**

2.18. 24% of children were subject to second or subsequent child protection plan as at the end of March 2016, this equates to 49 of 204 children.

2.19. This outturn is higher than the national benchmark of 16% (March 2015). During 2015/16 we completed an extensive review of all the cases where child protection plans had been initiated for a second or subsequent time and have agreed a number of recommended actions to deliver improvements through 2016/17. Actions include: strengthening the quality of Child Protection planning through focused training with Child Protection Chairs and social workers in Signs of Safety; more effective safety planning particularly in relation to domestic violence; strengthened processes for consultation and review where children have previously been subject to a plan.

2.20. **Looked After Children**

2.21. The number of looked after children has remained stable throughout the past year. This reflects a cohort of children and young people who have a plan for long term care, and a further more fluid cohort of children (generally in the 0-5 age group) who are moving on to alternative permanent arrangements away from care either through reunification to their parents or through an alternative permanent care route (eg adoption).

2.22. Placement stability has been an on-going area of focus for us, and it is reassuring to see evidence of improvement for those in care for 2.5 years+. The data does however show that we still have a number of children who are failing to achieve stability in care with 19 children and young people having 3 or more placement moves, of these 4 children are young children whose final move was into a permanent placement (not in care). Of the remaining 15 children 5 are young

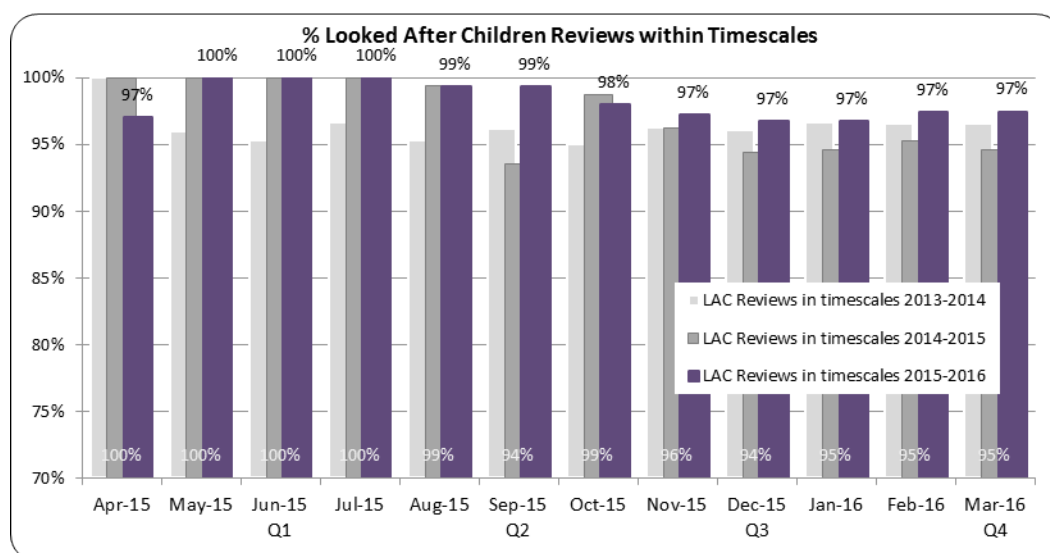
people presenting challenging behaviours which are resulting in placement disruption and a further 5 young people in this cohort are either at risk or have previously been at risk of CSE and have a number of missing episodes (a factor in instability for several of these children has been time limited placements in specialist out of borough placements).

2.23. **Indicator 15: Average number of weeks taken to complete Care proceedings against the national target of 26 weeks - Green**

2.24. There continues to be significant improvements in the timeliness of care proceedings being completed. CAFCASS published data as at the end of March 2016 – 30 weeks YTD, this is in line with the national average of 30 weeks and an improvement from March 2015 average of 42 weeks.

2.25. **Indicator 16: Percentage of Looked After Children cases which were reviewed within required timescales – Red.**

2.26. We continue to be ambitious in setting our Children in Care review target expectation of 100% timeliness. During 2015/16 97% of all Children in Care cases were reviewed on time, this equates to 154 of 158 cases. Senior managers review all cases which fall outside timescales to establish the reasons why and where necessary take follow up action with staff. Our performance remains above the national benchmark 95% (2014/15).



2.27. **Indicator 21: Number of in-house foster carers recruited – Red.**

2.28. We set a stretch target to recruit 20 foster cares during the year, we have delivered 13 approvals in 2015/16, 9 of these being from our target group of carers for teenagers.

2.29. We had a further 11 in the assessment process at the end of Quarter 4. Some of these did not come to approval in 2015/16 due to delays in Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks being returned. We have continued to work to improve timescale for assessment of foster carers, improving from 6 months to 5 in the last year. We are also undertaking 3 assessments of supported lodgings carers to increase our pool of available placements for young people aged 16/17.

2.30. **Indicator 20: Percentage of Looked After Children placed with agency foster carers – Green**

2.31. Only 37% of LAC were placed with agency foster carers, this demonstrates a year on year improvement (2013/14, 50%, 2014/15, 41%) and is better than the national benchmark 39%. Although we have recruited fewer new foster carers than our ambitious target our year on year successful recruitment strategy is contributing to this good performance.

2.32. **Children’s Centres and Schools**

2.33. **Indicator 23: Percentage of all Children Centre Ofsted inspection ‘overall effectiveness’ outcomes which are good or outstanding – Green**

2.34. 100% of all Children’s Centres are graded good or outstanding; this has been sustained for the third year running. Merton’s performance is better than the national (66%) and London (72%) benchmark.

2.35. **Indicator 25: Percentage of School Ofsted inspection ‘overall effectiveness’ outcomes which are good or outstanding – Green**

2.36. 91% of Merton Schools are graded good or outstanding; this is an improvement on last year (85%) and is better than the national (84%) and London (88%) benchmark.

2.37. **Indicator 29 and 30: Percentage of Reception year surplus places. Percentage of Secondary school (Year 7) surplus places including Academies - Red**

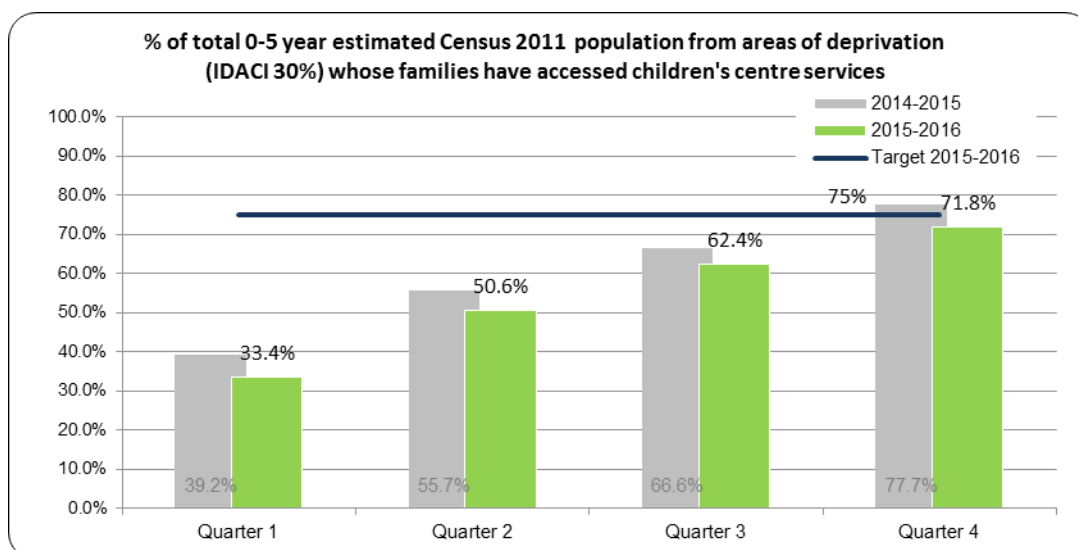
2.38. We set challenging targets which we have very nearly met for both reception and Year 7 surplus places, both outturns are well within the old Audit commission recommended level of surplus places of between 5% and 10%.

2.39. With regards to percentage of reception year surplus places the outturn figure 6.2% is only 1.2% from the target and towards the bottom of the old Audit commission recommended level of surplus of between 5% and 10%.

2.40. With regards to percentage of Year 7 surplus places the outturn figure 5.5% is only 0.5% from the target, apart from one all schools were substantively full in Year 7.

2.41. **Indicator 24: Percentage of total 0-5 year estimated ACORN estimated population from areas of deprivation (IDACI 30%) whose families have accessed children's centre services – Red**

2.42. 72% 0-5 year old children living in areas of deprivation have accessed Children’s Centres. As the population profiles of Merton changes contact becomes more challenging, this also impacts the number of children eligible for the 2 year funding for free provision, which is based primarily on low working income or low household income for families not working. We continue to use multi agency partnerships to raise awareness and identify suitable families.

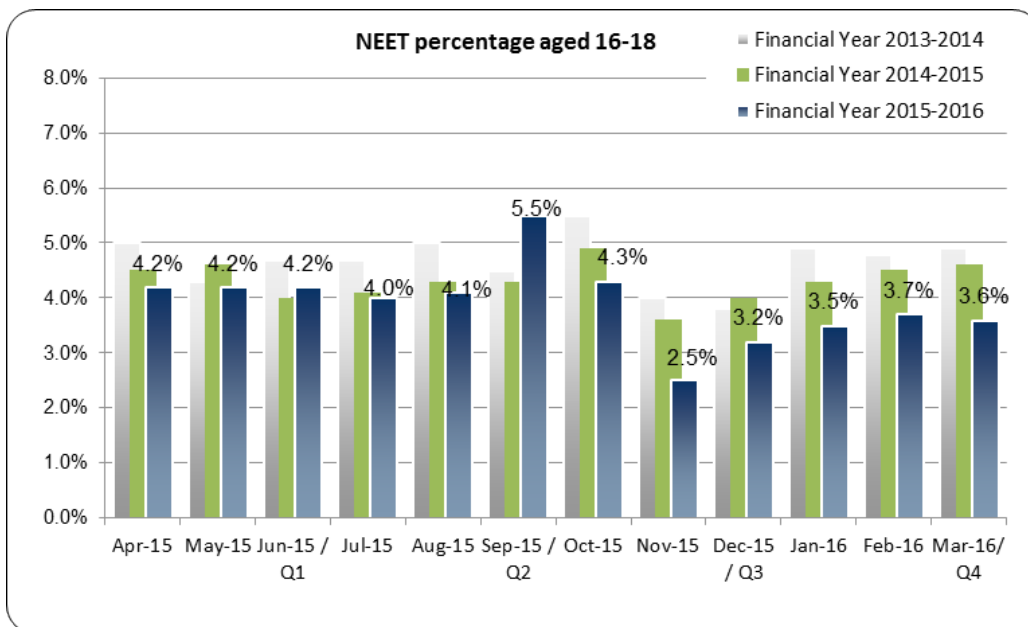


2.43. **Young People and Services**

2.44. There are no Red indicators to report under the Young People and Services theme.

2.45. **Indicator 32: Percentage of CYP (16-18 year olds) not in education, employment or straining (NEET) – Green**

2.46. The NEET figure for Merton stood at 3.6% at the end of March 2016, a 1% reduction compared to the same time last year (4.6%) and above the set target of 5%. This also represents a marked improvement compared to 2013/14 5.3%.



2.47. **Indicator 33: Percentage of CYP \*(16-18 year olds) education, employment or training status “unknown”. – Green**

2.48. The percentage of Merton young people whose status was unknown at the end of March was 4.4%, which is the lowest in South West London and the 10th best in London.

1. **APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

Appendix 1: CYPP performance index 2015/16 (March 2016)

2. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

CSF Performance Management Framework <http://intranet/departments/csf-index/csf-performance.htm>