



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Scrutiny Performance Panel – Child & Family Services

**At:** Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

**On:** Wednesday, 18 December 2019

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Convenor:** Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams

#### Membership:

Councillors: C Anderson, M Durke, K M Griffiths, Y V Jardine, P K Jones, S M Jones, E T Kirchner, W G Lewis and D W W Thomas

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### Agenda

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|----------|---|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence.</b>   |                |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.</b><br><a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a> |                |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips</b>  |                |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)</b><br>To receive the minutes of the previous meeting(s) and agree as an accurate record.   | <b>1 - 4</b>   |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Public Question Time</b><br>Questions must relate to matters on the agenda and will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.   |                |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Update on Regional Adoption Service</b><br><i>Nichola Rogers, Regional Adoption Manager, Western Bay Adoption Service</i>  | <b>5 - 51</b>  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Corporate Parenting Board Update</b><br><i>Gemma Whyley, Child &amp; Family Services Project Manager</i>   | <b>52 - 70</b> |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Performance Monitoring</b><br><i>Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services</i>   | <b>71 - 89</b> |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Work Programme Timetable 2019/20</b>   | <b>90 - 91</b> |

**10 Letters**

**92 - 97**

- a) Response from Cabinet Member (28 August 2019 meeting)
- b) Letter to Cabinet Member (28 October 2019 meeting)

**Next Meeting:** Monday, 24 February 2020 at 4.00 pm



**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Wednesday, 11 December 2019**  

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**Contact: Liz Jordan 01792 637314**

# Agenda Item 4



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Child & Family Services**

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 28 October 2019 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor P R Hood-Williams (Chair) Presided

### **Councillor(s)**

C Anderson  
Y V Jardine  
D W W Thomas

### **Councillor(s)**

M Durke  
P K Jones  
W G Lewis

### **Councillor(s)**

K M Griffiths  
S M Jones

### **Other Attendee(s)**

Joanne Abbott-Davies	West Glamorgan University Health Board
Elliott King	Cabinet Member, Children Services
Sam Pritchard	Cabinet Member, Children Services
Jennifer Raynor	Cabinet Member, Education, Improvement, Learning and Skills

### **Officer(s)**

Gavin Evans	Youth Support Services Manager
Liz Jordan	Scrutiny Officer
Jay McCabe	Principal Officer Bays+/Youth Justice Services
Julie Thomas	Head of Child and Family Services

### **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): E T Kirchner

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## **1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

No disclosures of interest were made.

## **2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**

No declarations were made.

## **3 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

The Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 28 August 2019 as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **4 Public Question Time**

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

## **5 Update on Progress with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

Joanne Abbott-Davies, Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships, West Glamorgan University Health Board attended to present an update on progress including performance, strategic vision and services to support health and wellbeing of children and young people, and to answer the Panel's questions. Gavin Evans, Youth Support Services Manager for the Council also attended for this item.

Discussion points:

- Swansea's compliance with Welsh Government performance targets for CAMHS, from the point of referral, is improving.
- Waiting time before children and young people are referred, is also getting better in Swansea.
- Education and Social Services are involved in CAMHS strategic steering group. There is a shared direction of travel. It is complicated but trying to get to more joined up process.
- There will be an integrated CAMHS service with a single point of contact. Planned to be in place June 2020.
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing is aimed at primary school age. Money has been received from a grant for youths age 11 to 18. This should help children who are now in comprehensive, who went through primary and did not get picked up for CAMHS.
- Transition is both - from primary into secondary, and secondary onwards. A group meeting is being held to try and improve the transition from primary into secondary.
- Referrals in future will be much broader, not just through GPs (schools, other professionals etc). There is still work to do on the new standardised process for referral.
- Need to be clear about what alternative interventions are available for individuals who do not meet criteria for CAMHS.
- Cwm Taff provide the CAMHS service in West Glamorgan Health Board. The Health Board buy in the service from Cwm Taff.
- Cabinet Members for CFS sit on CAMHS Partnership Board. If members inform them of any children waiting a long time for the CAMHS service, they can chase it up.
- Panel feels new plans for CAMHS look good. However lots of issues in the past and Panel needs to keep monitoring it. Agreed to have another update on CAMHS in 12 months.

Actions:

- Add 'Update on progress with CAMHS' to Work Programme in 12 months (October 2020).

## **6 Briefing on Youth Offending Service**

Jay McCabe, Principal Officer Bays+ and Youth Justice Services, attended to update on developments since the disaggregation of Western Bay Youth Justice Service in March 2019 and the formation of Swansea Youth Justice Service in April 2019, and to answer the Panel's questions.

Discussion Points:

- Timeline - The first Management Board meeting was held in July 2019; a Management Board training session was held on 30 October 2019; and the second Management Board meeting was held on 7 November 2019. In future the plan is to hold Board meeting bi-monthly. The hope is that individuals on the Board will take personal responsibility for an area.
- The Youth Justice Service is now integrated with Child and Family Services in Swansea.
- Youth Justice Board will be carrying out a mock inspection in December 2019 to help review the improvement journey and make recommendations for areas of improvement before the next inspection that will be within 18 months from June 2019.
- Going forward the Department will have a much broader sense of how the service is performing (not just performance indicators).
- As this is a new service, the Panel would like an update report on the Swansea Youth Offending Service in approximately 12 months to check on progress.
- Early intervention is key.
- Definitely seeing benefits of integrating locally. There is much more planning and joined up working between the Youth Offending Team, Children's Services, Early Intervention and Prevention etc.
- Many positives have been retained from the regional work.
- The Cabinet Member for Education attended for this item and welcomed this report. Of opinion previous set up did not work, members of Board were not happy and performance indicator were too narrow.
- Agreed that case studies on the service will come to the Panel in March 2020, to help members understand it better.
- Very bad inspection of regional youth justice service but recommendations are very useful for newly formed youth justice service in Swansea. Very positive to see how team have come up with solutions and developed processes.
- Department discussing doing qualitative as well as quantitative assessments. Historically many PIs have been performance driven. Need more qualitative information to identify individuals experience and the outcomes.

Actions:

- Add an item 'Update on Youth Offending Service' to the work programme for October 2020.
- Add an item 'Case studies on Swansea Youth Offending Service' to the work programme for March 2020.

**7 Presentation - Update on report to Welsh Government on safe Looked After Children Reduction Strategy**

Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services attended to update the Panel on this issue and answer the Panel's questions.

Discussion points:

- Welsh Government priority for reducing number of looked after children in Wales was discussed.
- Panel informed about the detail of the visit by WG officials. Swansea had received very positive feedback following their presentation, and the proposals put forward in terms of safely reducing the number of children looked after within Swansea were accepted with no additional information required. Proposals and soft targets reflect the work that has been ongoing in Swansea for a number of years so no significant change to practice or CFS Improvement Plan was required.
- Regular reports are made available to the Panel through reporting of CFS monthly performance report.
- Panel would like to invite the Minister to a Panel meeting to discuss Welsh Government targets.

Actions:

- Invite Minister to attend a panel meeting to discuss Welsh Government targets.

## **8 Work Programme Timetable 2019/20**

The Panel considered the work programme.

## **9 Letters**

Letter received and considered by the Panel.

The meeting ended at 5.55 pm

# Agenda Item 6



## Report of the Cabinet Members for Children's Services

### Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel – 18 December 2019

#### **UPDATE ON REGIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE**

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide an overview of the work of Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) and present the regional performance with a comparison to national trends
<b>Content</b>	The appendices to this report are <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Western Bay overview presentation, which details the service structure, and recent developments within the service.</li><li>• The National Adoption service (NAS) annual report for 2018/19</li><li>• NAS Quarter 2 performance report 2019, which provides detail of WBAS performance against the National picture.</li></ul>
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the report as part of their scrutiny of the performance of Swansea Child and Family Service, particularly improvements in performance and plans to address areas for development.</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Elliott King Cabinet Member for Children's Services
<b>Lead Officer(s)</b>	David Howes (Director of Social Services) and Julie Thomas (Head of Child and Family Services)
<b>Report Author</b>	Nichola Rogers – Regional Manager for WBAS Port Talbot Civic Centre



Western Bay  
ADOPTION SERVICE  
GWASANAETH MABWYSIADU  
Bae'r Gorllewin

# Western Bay Adoption Service





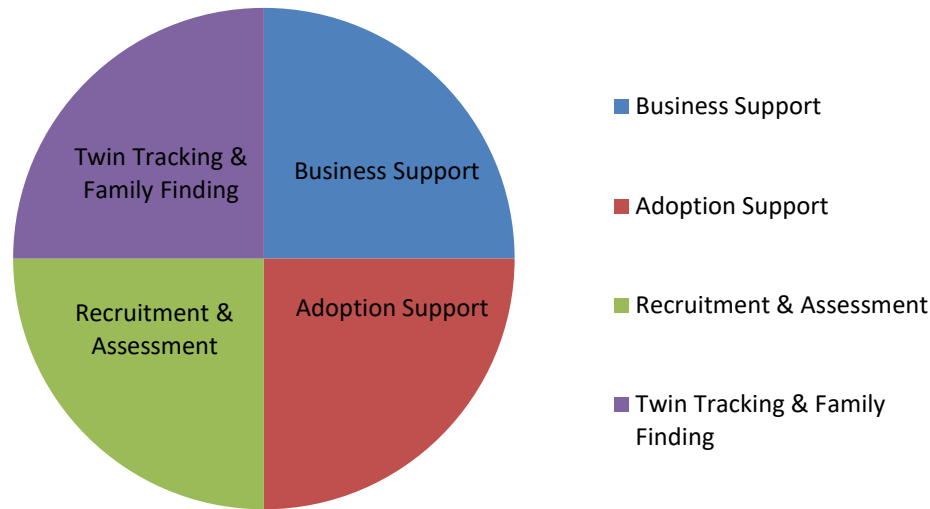
# Current Position for WBAS



- Co-located February 2015 and operational as a Regional Service from April 2015
- Currently Based at Port Talbot Civic Centre
- Currently there is an independent review taking place as to whether Bridgend will remain part of the regional collaboration.

# Functional Model

There are four functions within the Service





# Recruitment and Assessment



- New Marketing officer. Work to improve website and social media
- Average number of enquiries per year = 134
- Assessments ongoing as at 31.10.19 = 28
- Number of approved adopters
  - 01.04.18 – 31.3.19 = 42
  - 01.04.19 – 31.10.19 = 32
  - End of year prediction = 55-60

# Twin tracking and Family Finding



- No. Children referred to the service  
01.04.18 – 31.3.19 = 170  
01.04.19 – 30.11.19=
- No. Placement Orders made  
01.04.18 - 31.3.19= 94  
01.04.19 – 31.10.19 = 37
- No. Children Placed  
01.04.18 - 31.3.19 = 67  
01.04.19 - 31.10.10 = 52  
End of year prediction = 80

# Family Finding Activity



Currently there are 70 children in Family finding activity

16 of these have potential links identified

17 of these are in the matching process

12 of these have a change of plan

25 of these have active family finding activity

# Adoption Support



- No. of Open Cases receiving support - 300
- No. of Letterbox cases active/open 948
- No. of contact investigations 36
- No of birth records counselling 34



Gwasanaeth  
**Mabwysiadu** | National  
Cenedlaethol | **Adoption**  
Service

**Achieving More Together /  
Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19







# FOREWORD

Since being established in 2014 The National Adoption Service has focused on clear priorities to deliver an improved adoption service in Wales. This Annual Report (2018/19) reflects on achievements whilst identifying future priorities to deliver ongoing improvement of the service to children and adopters.

Actively listening to adopters and children has influenced how the National Adoption Service has evolved and developed to deliver change and good services. There is evidence that the benefits of improvement are being felt by many adopters and their children although we acknowledge there is more to do.

Continued improvement remains a priority for the service delivered through the Central Team, Regional Local Government Adoption Services and Voluntary Sector Agencies. This collaborative approach has brought a shared vision, priorities, strategies and delivery of services that is making a positive difference.

We are very pleased to take this opportunity to thank adopters, staff in all agencies within the National Adoption Service Collaborative for their hard work and dedication.

We are also delighted that the Welsh Government has made available a £2.3m investment package from 2019/20 which will enable us to move forward on agreed improvement priorities for the immediate future.

Much progress has been made since the Service's inception, but the needs of children in Wales continue to demand a faster and smarter response to the scale and complexity of the challenge. NAS is ambitious for the role we can play in responding to that challenge.



*Philip T. Hodgson*

**Phil Hodgson**  
Independent Chair of the Advisory Group



*Geraint Hopkins*

**Cllr Geraint Hopkins**  
Chair of Governance Board



*Suzanne Griffiths*

**Suzanne Griffiths**  
Director

# INTRODUCTION

The National Adoption Service for Wales is a collaboration for the provision of adoption services across Wales.

Since November 2014, it has brought together all local authority adoption services into five regional collaboratives, with co-ordination and leadership provided by a small central team and Director. Voluntary adoption agencies operating in Wales are key partners in the collaborative, as are other agencies such as health and education.

## CENTRAL TEAM



Gwasanaeth  
Mabwysiadu  
Cenedlaethol | National  
Adoption  
Service

### National Adoption Service – Central Team

c/o City of Cardiff Council,  
Room 409 County Hall, Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff, CF10 4UW  
029 2087 3927  
contact@adoptcymru.com  
www.adoptcymru.com

## NORTH WALES

Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy,  
Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham



### North Wales Adoption Service

3rd Floor, Lambpit Street,  
Wrexham, LL11 1AR  
01978 295311  
adoption@wrexham.gov.uk  
www.northwalesadoption.gov.uk

## MID & WEST WALES

Ceredigion, Powys, Carmarthenshire,  
Pembrokeshire



Mabwysiadu  
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru  
Adoption  
Mid & West Wales

### Mid & West Wales Adoption

Building 1, St David's Park, Johnstown,  
Carmarthenshire, SA31 3HB  
01267 246970  
adoptionenquires@carmarthenshire.gov.uk  
www.adoptionmwwales.org.uk  
  
Neuadd Brycheiniog, Cambrian Way,  
Brecon, Powys, LD3 7HR  
01597 827666  
adoptionenquiries@carmarthenshire.gov.uk  
www.adoptionmwwales.org.uk

## WESTERN BAY

Swansea, Neath Port Talbot,  
Bridgend



Western Bay  
ADOPTION SERVICE  
GWASANAETH MABWYSIADU  
Bae'r Gorllewin

### Western Bay Adoption Service

Port Talbot Civic Centre,  
Port Talbot CF131PJ  
0300 365 2222  
enquires@westernbayadoption.org  
www.westernbayadoption.org

## VALE, VALLEYS & CARDIFF

Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf,  
Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan



Vale, Valleys  
and Cardiff  
Adoption | Mabwysiadu  
yn y Ffro, y Cymoedd  
a Cheerdydd

### Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Adoption

Level 7, Ty Pennant, Catherine Street,  
Pontypridd, CF37 2TB  
0800 0234 064  
adoption@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk  
www.adopt4vvc.org

## SOUTH EAST WALES

Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent,  
Torfaen, Caerphilly, Newport



South East Wales Adoption Service  
Achieving More Together  
Gwasanaeth Mabwysiadu Deddfyrain Cymru  
Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd!

### South East Wales Adoption Service

North Wing, 2nd Floor Block B,  
Mamhilad House, Mamhilad Parke Estate,  
Pontypool, Torfaen, NP40HZ  
01495 355766  
adoption@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk  
www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/3122.asp

**ALL WALES VOLUNTARY  
ADOPTION AGENCIES SERVICES**

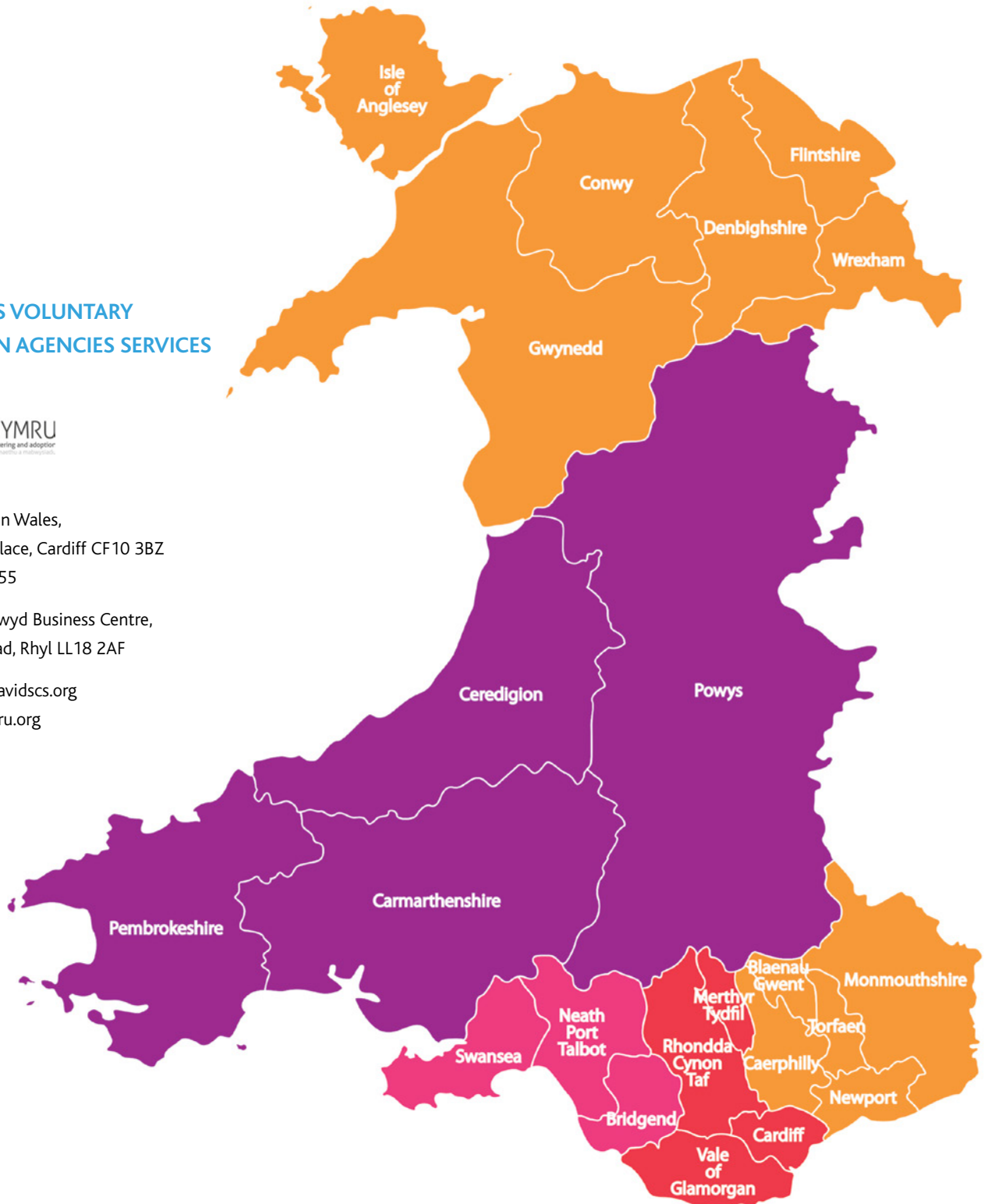


**AFA Cymru**

c/o Children in Wales,  
25 Windsor Place, Cardiff CF10 3BZ  
029 2076 1155

W2 Morfa Clwyd Business Centre,  
84 Marsh Road, Rhyl LL18 2AF

Info-afa@stdavidscs.org  
www.afacymru.org



**Adoption UK**

Penhaved Studios, Penhaved Street,  
Grangetown, Cardiff, CF117LU  
029 2023 0319  
www.adoptionuk.org



**Barnardo's Cymru**

Trident Court, East Moors Road,  
Cardiff, CF245TD  
0800 0546 788  
cymruadoptionandfostering@  
barnardos.org.uk  
www.barnardos.org.uk/adoption



**St David's Children Society**

28 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3BA  
029 2066 7007  
info@stdavidscs.org  
www.adoptionwales.org

# FIVE YEARS ON

## Celebrating our achievements and embracing the challenges



The National Adoption Service (NAS) has been working for five years to support better outcomes for children for whom adoption is the best plan.

It was established in 2014 in response to a National Assembly Enquiry through a subsequent Ministerial Advisory Group. Its role is to work in a unique collaborative way, improving and coordinating the delivery of adoption services across Wales and in particular:

- Raising the profile of adoption;
- Improving timescales for children and adopters;
- Improving adoption support including changing the 'postcode lottery' for services; and
- Providing leadership to promote more consistent services and standards.

The role adoption plays in society continues to change; legislation continues to change to reflect this. What has not changed is that children who cannot remain with their birth family need permanent substitute families, to belong, to be nurtured and be loved. Adoption services provide these children with families as well as services and support to adoptive parents, birth parents and others affected by adoption.

This year marks the fifth year of the National Adoption Service and the thirtieth anniversary of the UK's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The National Adoption Service seeks to secure positive changes for children where adoption is in their best interests so that they might realise their rights under the convention.

## SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS FROM THE LAST FIVE YEARS

- Successfully raised the profile of adoption with the public, funders and policy makers.
- Accessed additional funding; a £90k development grant from the Welsh Government each year, £125k targeted investment in 2017/18 and a £2.3m investment for adoption support to commence in 2019/20.
- Improved performance in the key areas of approving adopters and placing children more quickly, alongside embedding a performance culture supported through regular evaluation and reporting.
- Increased the availability of life journey materials through a new best practice approach.
- Developed how we listen to adopters and their children and ensured their messages and input make a difference to the service.
- Created five regional adoption collaboratives as the focus for local government adoption expertise and access point for services.
- Developed and maintained a strong partnership with the Welsh Voluntary Adoption Agencies. This added value, different expertise, additional services and more choice, resulting in exciting new services such as Adopting Together Service, TESSA and a new Children and Young People's service.
- Commissioned and developed the all Wales website, which now provides a comprehensive source of information for parents and agencies.
- Brought the Wales Adoption Register into the service, giving greater breadth and depth of choice for prospective parents and children.
- Produced strategic plans, which not only outline what improvements are needed but help influence and improve legislation and policy, as well as achieve investment in times of constraint.

## THE CHALLENGES WE ARE NOW ADDRESSING ARE:

- Maintaining performance improvements and making them more consistent within services and across Wales.
- Improving service agility and access to resources to respond to emerging issues and changing service demands.
- Using our data and information to better effect.
- Making a complex governance and operational structure for collaboration, work effectively within local government and with partners.

## THESE SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES INFORM OUR CURRENT VISION WHICH IS TO:

- > Increase the number and range of adoptive homes available so that all children with an adoption plan are placed in a timely way.
- > Ensure prospective and approved adopters receive good quality, timely assessment and support.
- > Implement the National Adoption Service Framework for Adoption Support to provide improved access to advice, information and services for those that need and want support.
- > Achieve overall improvements in the performance of adoption services across Wales.
- > Create a modern, responsive and forward-thinking adoption service for Wales.

Alongside these undoubted strides forward and improvements to services new challenges have become evident; not least of all in ensuring that there are sufficient adopters available to meet the number and needs of children for whom we are family finding.

# THE SERVICE IN 2018/19



## During the business year:

- more than 310 children were placed in their new adoptive home;
- approximately 280 children had their adoption orders granted<sup>1</sup>;
- a further 338 children, with the legal authority to be placed, were waiting to be matched or placed with their new family at the end of the year;
- 212 new adoptive families were approved.

The service worked with circa 14% of the children who were looked after in Wales last year.

Welsh Government data indicates that for 2017/18 (latest available) 18% of all the children who ceased to be Looked After were adopted.

The adoption agencies that make up the National Adoption Service for Wales provide a range of services to support these children and their families, as well as for others affected by adoption.

## In addition to working with the children above, adoption services across Wales also:

- provided adoption support to more than 100 of the children placed in the year
- facilitated more than 3,281 active letterbox contact arrangements
- provided a service to 268 birth parents
- received 38 requests for support from birth siblings' other relatives
- received 226 requests for access to birth records and
- received 124 requests for intermediary/tracing support.



# OUR 2018/19 PRIORITIES

## PRIORITY 1

### Placing children effectively

- Keeping recruitment focused on the needs of children likely to be adopted
- Implementing the new Wales Adoption Register and adopter database

#### WHY WAS THIS IMPORTANT?

- We wanted to increase the range of adoptive homes available to meet the needs of all children with an adoptive plan.
- Research tells us outcomes in adoption are affected by the length of time children spend in care and their age at the time of placement. Being able to make a timely match for a child depends on having a sufficiency of adopters who are prepared to care for children who have varied and sometimes complex needs.
- Making the best possible match between children and adopters increases the likelihood of a successful outcome and improves timeliness.
- We aim to use the best information about service performance, research and best practice to develop more effective processes, and timeframes to underpin best practice.

#### HOW DID WE DO?

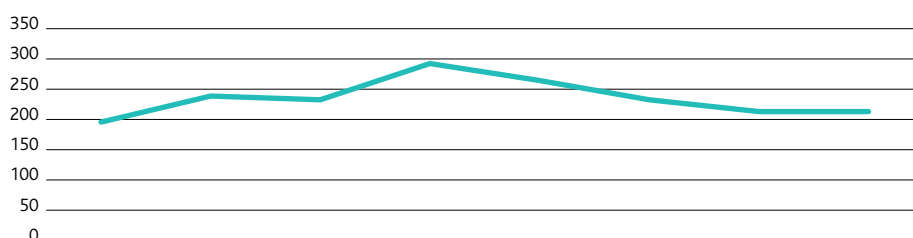
At 311, slightly more children were placed with their new families this year and approximately 280 children were already in placement and had their Adoption Orders granted.

However, recruiting sufficient adopters in Wales has become an ongoing challenge.

At the time of NAS's creation, we faced a different range of challenges, namely reducing waiting time to approve adopters and ensuring we were recruiting adopters who could be matched with children who had complex needs and were waiting longer.

Our strategies are now informed by our data, giving us a much better understanding of the need for placements, which is greater than the number of adopters we are approving. However, having an impact on recruitment takes time; recruitment in 2018/19 remained at a similar level to last year. Adopter recruitment in Wales has been falling and is now back to pre NAS levels; it is difficult to identify precisely why adopter approvals have fallen – this trend is, however, also evident in England and Scotland.

#### Adopters Approved



2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
197	245	236	294	266	236	212	212



# The story behind the data

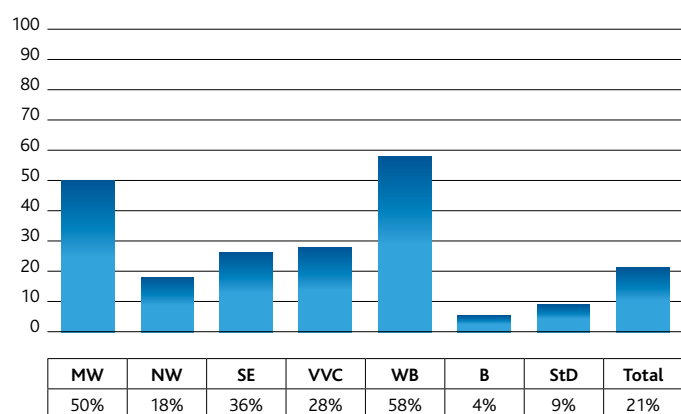
## ADOPTER ENQUIRIES AND ASSESSMENTS

There has been an overall increase in enquiries from prospective adopters since NAS was formed.

However, the picture beneath this is more complex. At a regional level there is an overall upward trend in two of the bigger regions and maintenance in another, while the two voluntary adoption agencies have higher levels of enquiries.

In both the regional and voluntary adoption agencies, conversion of enquiries into assessments varies, with the regional services tending to see more applications resulting from enquiries received.

### Percentage conversion from initial enquiry to assessment starting



Q4 2018-19, based on average of 3 months from Initial Enquiry to Assessment Starting

We can build on the early indications of success, in increasing the number of potential adopters coming forward at enquiry stage. Adopters have reported that:

- there is good information available through the national website and directly from the regional services;
- response times to enquiries are timely and many first contacts are considered helpful and supportive.

In order to understand this better, NAS commissioned customer feedback research to consider the reasons behind so many enquirers not proceeding beyond this stage. The overall findings are informing our work. Whilst identifying that the majority of enquirers cited personal reasons for not proceeding, key recommendations from the report also include:

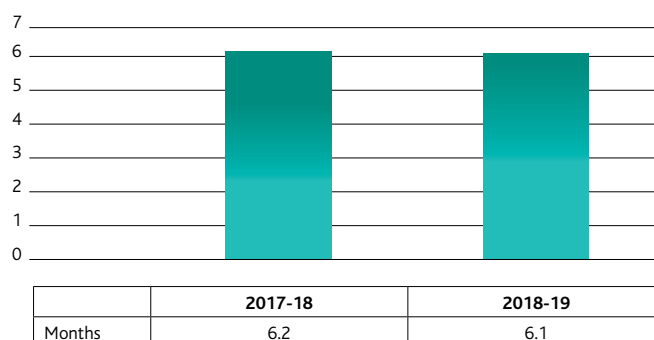
- A need for a more consistent message across agencies
- More flexibility around timeframes, where potential adopters want to delay their applications
- A more welcoming approach and clearer follow up processes for those who do want to defer applications.

This work has led to a number of changes which will be implemented in 2019/20:

- We are producing a good practice guide to support staff in dealing with enquiries and the early stage of the assessment process. This will move away from agencies trying to 'test' people at the very start of their enquiry and respond to adoption managers views that the messages that are given regarding issues such as smoking, income and medical criteria are up to date, accurate and consistent.
- We have commissioned Cowshed PR to support NAS at both national and regional levels. This will lead to better integrated marketing and recruitment activity.
- We are providing more focused efforts to increase enquiries and approvals within a revised NAS Recruitment Strategy. Using recognised marketing techniques, we aim to keep people engaged and ensure barriers families face, to progress their interest into further action, are removed.
- To meet planned changes to regulations, we are implementing a two-stage process for the assessment and approval of prospective adopters whilst reducing the timescales for making use of the Adoption Register for Wales. NAS has been working since 2015 to influence a change in the Adoption Agency (Wales) Regulations 2003 to simplify and streamline the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters. This has borne fruit with revised regulations due to be implemented in 2019/20.

The above will enable us to further improve the timeframes for adopter approvals. The average timeframe from enquiry to approval improved to just 9.1 months this year, with administrative delays around essential checks behind many that took longer. The time between the formal application by adopters and their approval is good, an average of 6.2 months, which is within the government guideline. 56% of applicants were approved with the 6-month benchmark.

### Average timeframe (months) from formal application to adopters approval



Benchmark: 6 months or less

## DEMAND FOR PLACEMENTS

The numbers of placement orders being granted by Welsh courts is now showing year on year fluctuations after a peak of 467 in 2012/13; regions report that circa 340 placement orders were made in 2018/19. This is alongside a further increase in the number of children being identified by local authorities as, likely to be in need of an adoptive placement, which indicates that similar, or more placement orders are likely as we go through the coming year.

We are using these trends to project forward so that regions and agencies have a clear understanding of likely demand, allowing them to plan activity in advance in order to meet more ambitious recruitment goals.



## IMPACT ON PLACEMENT ACTIVITY

The number of children waiting for a placement reduced slightly at the end of this year.

NAS had previously been successful in reducing average timeframes for children being placed, but this has changed this year.

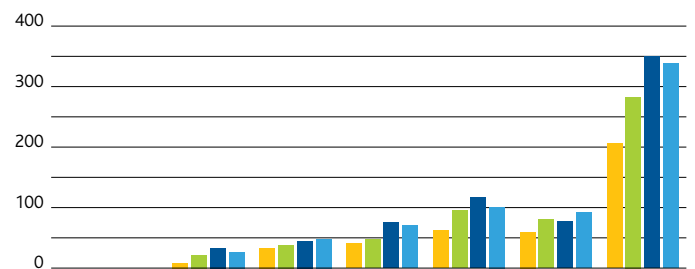
Although almost half of the children were placed within the benchmark of 6 months or less, during 2018/19, the projected annual average time has increased in 2018/19 to 9.9 months.

There are a number of factors that have impacted on this indicator:

- Some adoptive homes have been more challenging to find due to a small number of children with very complex needs;
- Late decisions or delayed applications where it is agreed that foster carers can adopt the children they are caring for;
- Prolonged court proceedings including appeals by birth parents.

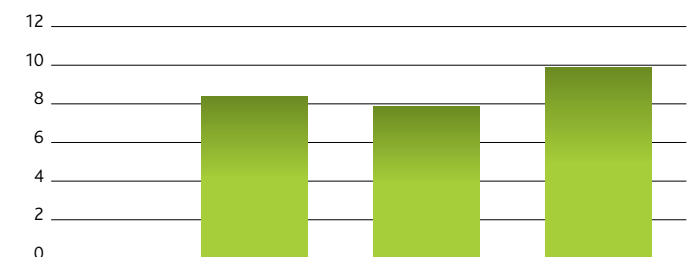
The more positive aspect of this is that regions have been increasingly successful in placing children with more complex needs, however as identified this leads to placement preparations taking longer.

Measure 7: Number of children with 'should be placed decision' and placement order who have not yet been placed



	MWW	NW	SE	VVC	WB	Total
2015/16	9	34	41	62	60	206
2016/17	22	39	47	95	80	283
2017/18	34	46	76	117	77	350
2018/19	27	48	70	101	92	338

Average timeframe (months) between placement order and placed for adoption



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Months	8.4	7.9	9.9

Benchmark: 6 months or less

# What else is helping us recruit adopters and place children?



## ADOPTING TOGETHER SERVICE

The voluntary adoption agencies in Wales play a key role in delivering adoption services across the country, and recent innovative projects like the 'Adopting Together Service' demonstrates their commitment and capacity to work creatively and support the sector as a whole.

Adopting Together Service was launched this year in 2018/19 – a collaborative project between St David's and Barnardo's with Adoption UK in Wales and supported by the statutory sector through the National Adoption Service. It emerged, following a request from statutory services, for a creative response to a shared desire and need, to secure permanence for children who wait longest for a family.

Contracts have now been agreed in four out of the five regional services.

Although the number of children placed is unlikely to be high, it is of utmost importance that children with additional needs have the opportunity to experience living in stable and loving homes. Twelve children have been placed to date in the first year of operation, with a target of placing 25 children in 2019/20.

The scheme provides a new best practice for placing children and providing early support and is being evaluated by Cardiff University School of Psychology. An indication of its innovation and value is that it received The Institute of Collaboration ICW Innovation Award and a Highly Commended 1 Award in the GO Wales Social and Community benefit category.



Cofrestr Fabwysiadu Cymru  
Wales Adoption Register

## WALES ADOPTION REGISTER / ADOPTION REGISTER FOR WALES

We have worked hard in the past year to ensure that the new bilingual Wales Adopter Register, now called the Adoption Register for Wales (ARW) is ready to be launched. In order to do this the Central Team has:

- Commissioned a new partner, 'Link Maker', to provide a modern bi-lingual and on-line linking service;
- Linked with adoption services and agencies to support implementation of the new Adoption Register for Wales, raising awareness for staff use and ensuring transfer of information about children and adopters;
- Supported the development of a set of national guidelines, which outline expectations for use of the Register;
- Briefed partners, and stakeholders including Heads of Children's Services and Family Justice Network for Wales through the publication of regular bulletins.

The new Adoption Register for Wales came into operation in March 2019 and was formally launched in June 2019. The aim of the ARW is to improve how we match children to prospective adopters. It will be more user friendly and efficient and provides managed access for approved adopters. It will also allow the development of a 'keeping in touch' system for adopters as part of the improved adoption support arrangements.

Significantly, all children and adopters will be listed on the Register more quickly. It will facilitate matching, managed at a regional, Welsh and UK level when needed.

During its last year of operation the previous Wales Adoption Register:

- Matched 36 children through the register data base, Adoption Exchange Days and an Adoption Activity Day;
- Saw an increase in child referrals to the register during the year although the end of year figure as of March 2019 was 293, 57 less than the previous year;
- Saw changes in the profile of children waiting; over 60% being below the age of 3, fewer sibling groups and the percentage of those with additional or complex needs continued to rise;
- Saw the number of adopters referred to the register continuing to drop, with just 32 active for family finding at the end of the year. This reflects proactive family finding with many adopters being pre-linked by the time they are approved.

## PRIORITY 2

# Continuing to improve adoption support by implementing the NAS Adoption Support Framework

- Agreeing the next priorities and identifying funding
- Continuing things that are already helping e.g. improving Life Journey Work, improving 'adoption awareness' in schools and health services, changing the law for adoption support, improving training and development for adopters, consistent approaches across Wales.

## WHY?

The Wales Adoption Cohort Study by Cardiff University shows that 47% of children who are placed for adoption had experienced at least 4 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) before they were placed. This puts them in the highest risk group for later life difficulties, in line with just 14% of the general population. It is therefore critical that good support is available from the start as well as being accessible throughout childhood.

Adopted children have additional needs that emerge at different points in their lives and can continue into adulthood. These can include; understanding their identity as an adopted child, why they were adopted, managing contact and feelings of loss or grief. Many of these are issues are unique to adoptive families and require adoption informed support. Children, young people and adopters consistently report high levels of dissatisfaction with the process of getting help and sometimes with the quality of the help itself.

Research also tells us that adoption and the long-term legacy for children who have suffered significant harm are generally poorly understood. There is a particular need to improve awareness in schools, where adopted children are being excluded at a younger age and in greater numbers than their peers. Children who have been in care often have additional learning needs and a more complex mixture of difficulties.

It is a NAS priority to deliver high quality adoption services in Wales.

## ADOPTION SUPPORT CARRIED OUT IN 2018/19

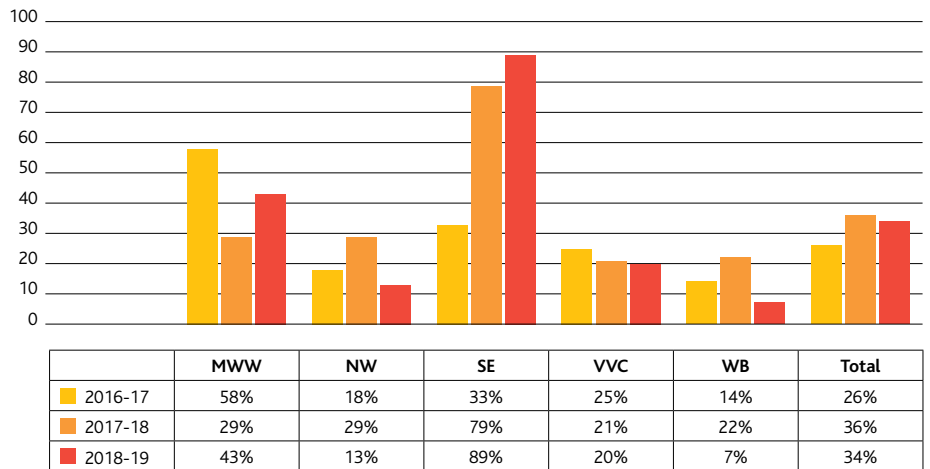
- More than 3,281 active letterbox contact arrangements were in place (a reduction from 2017/18)
- 819 birth parents were referred to adoption services in 2018/19 (a reduction from 2017/18) of these 98% were offered a service
- A service was provided to 268<sup>2</sup> birth parents
- 38 requests for support were received from birth sibling and other relatives (a reduction from 2017/18)
- 226 requests for access to birth records were received, an increase on the 205 for 2017/18
- 124 requests for intermediary / tracing support were received, a reduction on the 156 for 2017/18.

There was a slight reduction in the number of children who had an ongoing service established at point of placement, down from 112 (36%) in 2017/18 to 107 (34%). This masks significant regional variations as well as year on year changes within regions, linked to the fact that support packages are individualised.

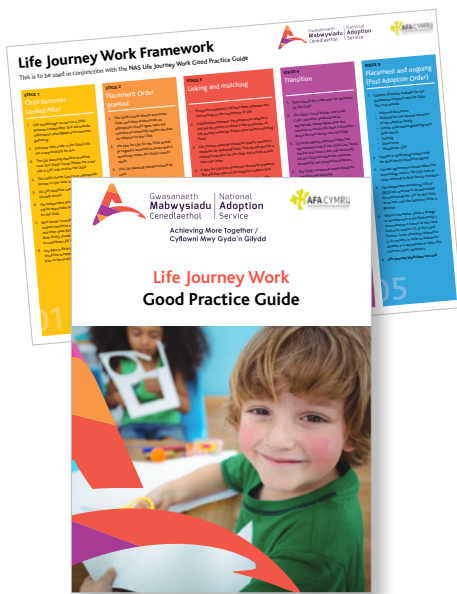
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<sup>2</sup> A number of regions were unable to provide data as required from their LA's. An additional region was unable to provide data due to the contractor going into administration.

**Percentage of children placed for adoption whose plan for adoption support involved ongoing service provision at the point of placement**



There were fewer new requests for post adoption support received, with decreases in 2 regions. There were 160 assessments for post adoption support completed, similar to previous figures. The majority of these completed assessments resulted in practical or therapeutic support being provided to families.



**LIFE JOURNEY WORK**

We have continued to implement and develop the new NAS Framework for 'Life Journey' work.

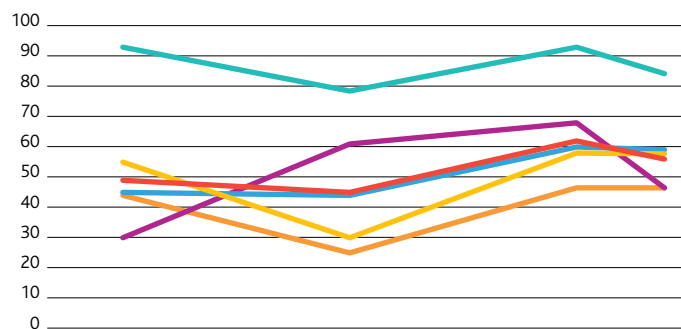
All children who cannot be cared for by their birth families, need to have an understanding of their family history and their unique journey. Life Journey Work is designed to help a child make sense of their past and understand their current situation in order to help them move into the future. Life journey work should support a child's identity, promote self-esteem, and help give the child a sense of belonging, wellbeing and support good mental health. The NAS website hosts guidance and existing tool kits around life journey work and we are currently working on making toolkits for children and young people, foster carers and birth parents available.

In November 2018 NAS was invited to present the 'Framework' developments within Wales to the Adoption UK national conference.

In January 2019 a conference was held in Wales to formally launch the Framework. Opened by the new Deputy Minister for health and Social Services, Julie Morgan, this highly successful event was oversubscribed with more than 110 delegates from across Wales attending, taking back the learning into their agencies.

Due to varying performance levels across Wales (from 83% to 46%) overall improvement has marginally declined. This will continue to be a priority area for NAS with all regions committing to making further improvements.

**Percentage of children at second adoption review with Life Journey materials in place**



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Mid & West Wales	92%	79%	92%	83%
North Wales	44%	25%	46%	46%
South East Wales	45%	43%	60%	59%
Vale, Valleys & Cardiff	30%	61%	68%	46%
Western Bay	55%	30%	58%	57%
WALES	49%	45%	62%	56%

Consultation with adopters was commissioned through our 'Adopter Voice' service with Adoption UK Cymru. We wanted to identify whether adopters were beginning to see improvements in the life journey materials being provided.

There was evidence of some improved satisfaction amongst adopters who had adopted more recently (within the last 3 years) suggesting that, whilst there is still some work to be done in terms of delivering the Life Journey framework, improvements are being made. Significantly, adopters suggested that:

- More training workshops are needed pre matching to prepare adopters.
- The most confident parents were the ones who had met with birth parents.
- Overall adopters preferred having accurate information and then making the life journey book themselves.

These comments will feed into the ongoing improvement project.



# How did we do on our improvement priorities?

We have focussed this year on continuing to implement the NAS Adoption Support Framework which is key to successful outcomes. We were delighted when the Welsh Government announced that they were making available a £2.3m investment package from 2019/20; this will enable us to move forward with our focus on the agreed improvement priorities for the immediate future.

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ADOPTERS

We have finalised the post-approval training package for adopters. This now includes twelve different modules, providing advanced information on areas that adopters asked for, such as; 'Attachment and Trauma', 'Parenting teenagers', 'Understanding and dealing with challenging behaviours' and 'Life Journey work'.

- This work was led by AFA Cymru and Adoption UK Cymru. The modules have been tested thoroughly including within regional services and will be launched during 2019/20.

We have improved our preparation training, with Adoption UK Cymru and AFA Cymru also leading on this working, utilising existing trainers to refresh and extend the preparation offer.

- This will also be launched during 2019/20 and will include a guide for prospective adopters outlining what to expect along with an individualised planner.



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## IMPROVING ADOPTION AWARENESS IN EDUCATION

NAS supports and works alongside the lead organisation Adoption UK in this area of work, with support provided by the Education Minister, as well as resources from the Welsh Government's 'Supporting Vulnerable Learners' section.

Adoption UK has continued to deliver its 'Adoption Support Wales – Getting it Right for Every Child' programme which extended its previous success; producing a school's guide and a parent's guide for working with adopted children

- Delivering a series of master classes supported by staff from the regional services to education professionals and adopters. This ensured they understood adoption, what it means for children and families and how they can shape and improve services to meet adopted children's needs.
- Delivering INSET training to 479 education staff in schools across Wales on the needs of adopted children
- Delivering education 'master classes' with 500 people participating and giving extremely positive feedback. The learning from this work has been made digitally available for use by school staff when supporting other adopted children.

NAS supported the launch of Adoption UK's 'Equal Chance' campaign, in Wales during June 2018. This UK wide campaign aims to ensure that adopted children have the same chances to education as other children by raising awareness of their particular needs for additional support.

The work was further supported when the Welsh Education Minister wrote to all schools encouraging them to co-operate in supporting adopted children within education services.

## IMPROVING ADOPTION AWARENESS IN HEALTH SERVICES

NAS benefits from input by the Designated Doctor for the NHS National Safeguarding Team and a lead Medical Advisor from North Wales into its Advisory Group; they work with us on health-related matters as does the Welsh Government CAMHS lead.

- We worked with these key health advisors and industry experts Practice Solutions to develop a publication for health service staff; 'Care about Adoption – A Guide for Healthcare Professionals'. This will come into use during 2019/20.

The guide will enable health staff to positively contribute to the well-being of adopted children young people and their families.



## NEW INITIATIVE IN ADOPTION SUPPORT

### TESSA

NAS worked alongside Adoption UK, to develop the Wales element, of a successful UK wide bid for funding from the National Lottery Community fund for the TESSA service.

TESSA – a therapeutic education support service for adoptive families began to be established in Wales in February 2019. It is the intention that NAS adds to the resources available for TESSA through match funding from the investment in 2019/20. The service sets out to deliver:

- > A focus on early intervention and support as soon as post-settling in concerns are raised
- > Professional psychological assessments for children, with information shared with parents and other support staff
- > 6-session therapeutic parenting support, delivered by teams consisting of a clinical psychologist and experienced adoptive parents (parent partners)
- > Ongoing parent partner support.





## CHANGING TO KEEP PACE WITH THE 21ST CENTURY LIVING – CONTACT

NAS is continually seeking to improve adoption services informed by research and the life experiences of those affected by adoption, within a society that is continuously changing. This means that adoption policy and practice needs to develop, whilst keeping children's need for security and a sense of belonging firmly at its heart. Contact is one of the areas where this is most challenging.

In order for adopted children to be confident about their identity, they need information about their past. This requires us to change the 'clean break' approach to adoption of letterbox contact and annual exchanges of letters. We want to modernise contact to maintain children's rights to permanence and security, while enabling them to know and understand their history.

- We have been working with partners to respond to a recommendation from the Children's Commissioner for Wales, that NAS works with the Welsh Government *'to ensure that siblings' rights to contact are fully considered during adoption care planning'*.
- NAS attended and provided an issues paper for a scoping event with Welsh Government and other stakeholders.
- In order to get a better understanding of what would work better in sibling contact, we commissioned Adoption UK Cymru and the former After Adoption, to undertake consultation with adopters and adopted children and young people.
  - From an adopters' perspective this identified that contact arrangements, agreed at placement, often become unworkable and that there would be widespread benefit from increasing support to adopters and birth families. Practical areas for development were suggested including production of guidance, standardised templates and in-depth research to better understand what is best for children in terms of contact.
  - From a young person's perspective it was concluded that contact is positive and should be allowed and encouraged where possible, with young people stating that they felt the care they receive and connections they make, pre adoption, are an integral part of their early attachment and should be continued where they can<sup>3</sup>.

- We've continued to work with other partners and are collaborating with:
  - Voices from Care Cymru, to be part of an 'Event' to create change in how we support ongoing sibling relationships.
  - Swansea Law Centre, to produce an advice leaflet for adopted and looked after children.

## WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

We continued to request that Welsh Government brings entitlement to adoption support, into line with the Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014; Welsh Government has committed to doing this when the opportunity arises.

We continued to engage with adopters and children and young people to hear and understand their experiences through Adoption Voices and the former Talk Adoption services. We also focused on co-producing development where we could.

- Adopter Voice reports have been provided to all five regions and the third sector providers, for consideration by their management boards or equivalent.
- NAS worked with Adoption UK to develop the Wales section of their new Adoption Barometer which will be an annual survey gauging views from adopters. The first wave of this was distributed at the year, with an initial report expected in the Spring.

Most significantly, NAS has been involved this year in ensuring that a direct service for children and young people could continue, following the former After Adoption announcement that they would be withdrawing from providing services in Wales after March 2019.

We successfully worked with Adoption UK Cymru to support it to become the provider for this service, so that it could continue to support the circa 100 children and young people registered. We look forward to continuing to work with Adoption UK Cymru to expand and develop this valuable service.

<sup>3</sup> The report was based on structured discussions with a very small number of children supplemented by informal information gathered through group sessions.

# Regional & Voluntary Adoption Agencies Priorities and Achievements



## AFA CYMRU

- Life Journey Work (LJW) – the annual conference was attended by over 100 people
- The LJW pack has been expanded to include materials for birth parents, young people and foster carers.
- Taking a collaborative approach to the development of post approval training courses – working alongside adopters and social workers to develop materials

## BARNARDO'S

- The push within Barnardo's and NAS from an Equalities Diversity and Inclusion perspective has seen an increase in applications from people with more diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- Work to achieve an improvement in the timescales from Enquiry to Approval and ultimately placement of children

## ADOPTION UK CYMRU

Many of our services are provided by volunteers who are also adoptive parents – between them they provided 984 hours of support to other adoptive parents.

- Established a buddy scheme for new adopters within the Adopting Together scheme.
- Worked with AFA Cymru to develop twelve training modules for use by adopters' post-adoption order, as well as new guidance and information for prospective adopters to be used during the preparation training.
- Delivered training to nearly 500 adoptive parents and delivered INSET training to 479 education staff in schools across Wales and responded to 1,376 contacts 25% higher than last year.
- As part of a UK wide project, Adoption UK Cymru were successful in an application to the Big Lottery Community Fund. This will provide therapeutic and educational input to adoptive families early in their adoption journey, in order to prevent difficulties building up over the coming years.

## MID & WEST WALES

- Improved preparation arrangements in order to reduce delay for adopter assessments.
- Used social media to successfully increase attendance at Information Events.
- Produced an innovative short film with birth parent and adopters, which highlighted positive contact arrangements.

## NORTH WALES

- Appointment of a Contact Coordinator Officer, offering a consistent response and support to adopters and birth parents, with in-direct and direct contact.
- Worked with expert Richard Rose, to implement the Life Story Framework.
- Expanded the Buddy scheme for adopters.
- Invested in upskilling Training Officer – completed Dyadic developmental psychotherapy level 2 and is currently undertaking a diploma in therapeutic parenting.

## SOUTH EAST WALES

- Significant investment in workforce development including accessing innovative 'Circle of Security' training.
- Improved the information pack for adopters.
- Enhanced adopter's preparation training with greater focus on Therapeutic Models of parenting

## ST DAVID'S CHILDREN SOCIETY

- External launch of Adopting Together Service and first placement made.
- Invested in upskilling social workers in Theraplay and DDP.
- Received two awards for Adopting Together – Winner of The Institute of Collaboration ICW Innovation Award and Highly Commended 1 in the GO Social and Community Benefit in Procurement Award.

## VALE, VALLEYS & CARDIFF

- Appointment of a Marketing Officer offering a timely, consistent response to adopter enquiries and building knowledge of adopter demographic within the region.
- The development of the Life Journey Work 'champion' role resulting in positive progress in this area.
- Highest number of children placed for adoption since region was established.

## WESTERN BAY

- Strengthened the work of our adoption panel on matching, by introducing a checklist to ensure that all the relevant information such as life journey materials, transition plans etc. are in place.
- Improved co-production; adopters have been involved in a quarterly form for adoption support and a successful inaugural profiling event to help approved adopters consider a wider range of children needing adoptive placements.
- Providing additional early support, where children with additional needs are placed with WBAS adopters.



### PRIORITY 3

## Forward thinking

- Thinking about the sort of adoption service we want for the future
- Continuing co-production and engagement with those who use adoption services
- Working to improve the legal, policy & evidence framework that affects adoption
- Encouraging the development of improved professional understanding and skills



### WHY?

The National Adoption Service was created to improve services for all those affected by adoption in Wales. However, the needs and challenges faced by children presenting for adoption are changing rapidly and there is an on-going need to respond more consistently and effectively particularly in the areas of recruitment of adopters and ongoing support.

We also want to modernise the service to make adoption experience better for children, young people, and their adopters as well as others affected by adoption.

### HOW DID WE DO?

We believe that adoption continues to provide good outcomes for children. The role of NAS is to ensure Welsh adoption services keep pace with the changing global environment of engagement and the way people live their lives.

We can and will contribute to the continued discussion about the role adoption plays in permanency planning across the country. Alongside this we will seek to continue to improve services through effective planning, informed by research and evidence from people who use our services.

The sections above gives an outline of the many things we have done to both deliver and improve services. We have also continued to engage in strategic and infrastructure work;

- We have considered the outcomes of the NAS Review of Arrangements which has been carried out for us, independently, by the Institute of Public Care. We have acted to implement the recommendations which will contribute to the streamline national level governance over the next year alongside looking at how we further improve accountability.



- Successfully secured marketing and recruitment support to increase adopter recruitment.
- Improved the integration of NAS policy work across local government and third sector organisations by working jointly with AFA Cymru so we can better influence more consistent and innovative practice.
- Provided advice to the Welsh Government for their proposed changes to adoption regulations as well as in relation to relevant education and safeguarding matters.
- Undertook work with the Adoption Leadership Board in England and Welsh services to ensure that Wales would stay in line with increases to the interagency adoption fee. These are paid when an adoptive placement is secured and purchased from another adoption agency. This led to the Welsh VAA's agreeing a short delay to allow Welsh local authorities time to plan in the adjustment.
- Put in place alternative arrangements for the NAS Performance Monitoring System when the current contract runs out in June 2019. Expert advice has been commissioned, working with Data Unit Wales to develop a service specification, which will deliver a flexible, easy to use system to improve accuracy and support. This will provide us with flexibility to join up with the Wales Community Care Information System in the future.
- Supported practice development
  - Inter-country adoption training was commissioned and delivered
  - Post commencement training was commissioned and delivered
  - Continued to share research and good practice across the regional collaboratives and to use the evaluation emerging from initiatives such as the 'Adopting Together' service.
  - Shared learning from significant cases, specifically, this year, the child practice review by the Regional Safeguarding Children Board in Wales, into the death of an adopted child. The central team worked with the adoption region and will be holding an all Wales practice seminar to share the learning.
- Worked to advocate and develop a business case which has resulted in Welsh Government investing £2.3 million ongoing funding to improve adoption services.

# PLANS FOR 2019/20 ONWARDS

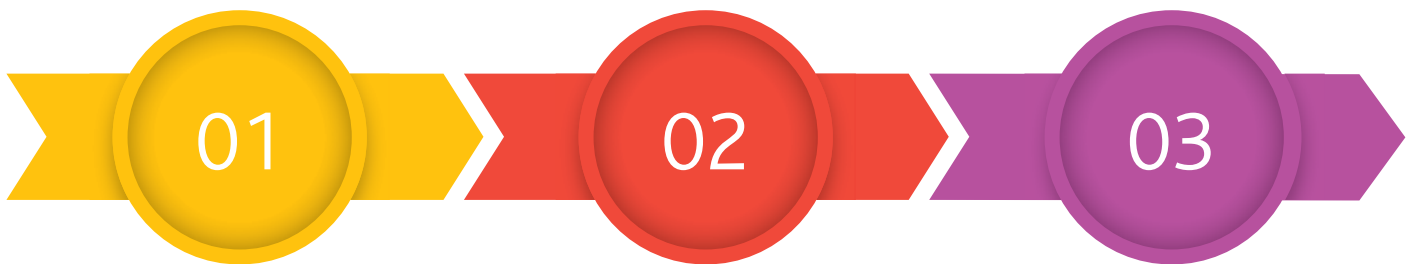
This plan will build on the improvements made over the first five years of NAS; with the significant benefit of the availability of new investment funding.

This is in the form of £2.3m from Welsh Government for service improvement; around £250,000 via Adoption UK Cymru for TESSA from the Big Lottery and Communities Fund, in addition to grant aid of around £300,000 to the Voluntary Adoption Agencies from Welsh Government Third Sector grant scheme currently agreed up to 2020.

The National Adoption Service will continue to work to deliver services to high numbers of children, young people and families and others affected by adoption; mainly through NAS regional services and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies. The core business of the service will continue to be, recruiting adopters so that children who cannot be cared for by their own families can live in stable, loving homes as the best alternative.

The work of NAS is closely linked with the Welsh Government Ministerial Advisory Group for Children (MAG). Adoption features across the numerous work streams of this important national initiative.

## Improvement priorities for 2019/20



### Placing more children

Increase recruitment of adopters to meet the number and needs of children waiting including use of 'Adopting Together' for children who wait longest

Embed the new Adoption Register for Wales to speed up matching of children through quicker notification of children and adopters in line with revised regulations

### Continuing to improve adoption support

Implementing the Adoption Support Framework and investment plans

Continuing to raise awareness amongst professionals and the public

### Thinking ahead

Continuing to co-produce and use information from engagement

Using data from the revised performance measurement system

Working to improve the legal, policy and evidence framework that affects adoption

Encouraging the development of workforce understanding and skills to meet NAS priorities

**The National Adoption Service was created to improve services for all those affected by adoption in Wales.**

The National Adoption Service (NAS) for Wales, launched in November 2014, is an innovative collaborative for the provision of adoption services. It brought together Welsh local authority adoption services into a three-tier structure which includes partnerships at all levels with Voluntary Adoption Agencies based in Wales, Health and Education Services, as well as others.

At local authority level, all 22 Welsh councils continue to provide services to all looked after children whilst identifying and working with those children for whom a plan for adoption is appropriate.

Regionally, local authorities work together within five regional collaboratives to provide a range of adoption services. Each regional collaborative has links with the voluntary adoption agencies, health and education. The services provided differ in each collaborative but all provide the adoption agency functions for children, recruit and assess adopters, offer counselling to birth parents and advice to adopted adults. Some currently directly provide adoption support services, whereas in others this remains with their local authorities.



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Gwasanaeth  
**Mabwysiadu**  
Cenedlaethol

National  
**Adoption**  
Service

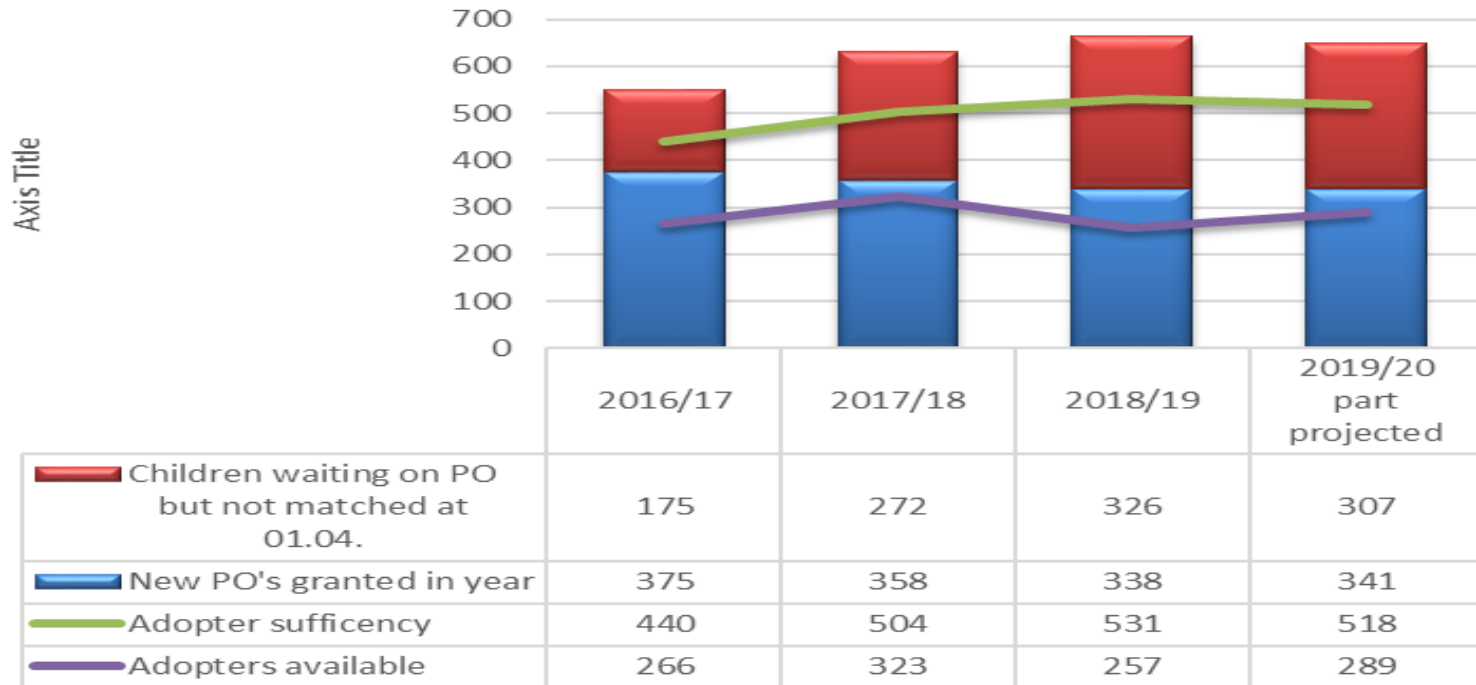
**Achieving More Together**  
**/ Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd**



# Placement demand/ sufficiency / adopter recruitment



**Need / sufficiency / availability**



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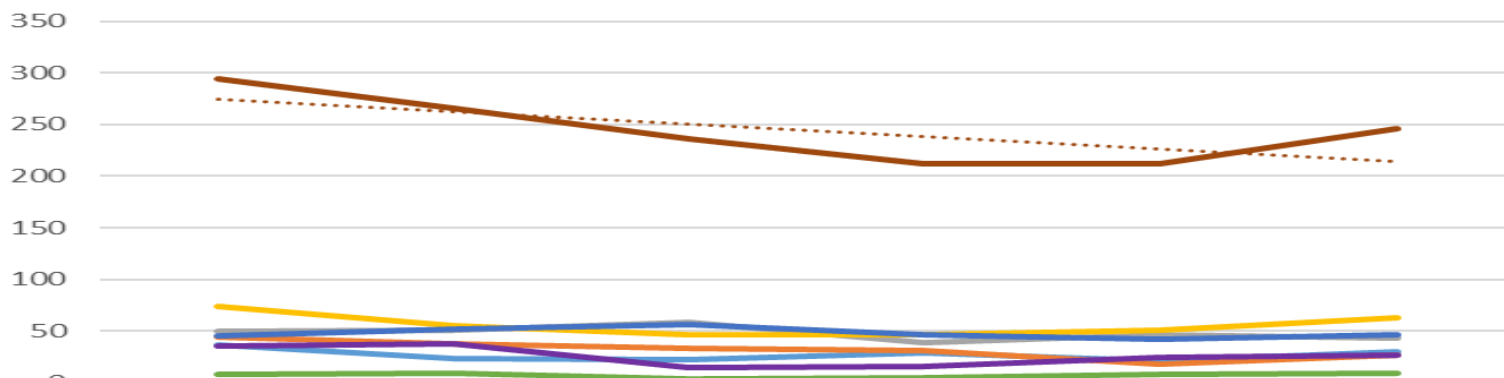
Current definition of adopter sufficiency = Placement demand minus 20% (sibling factor)

**Achieving more together / Cyflawni mwy gyda'n gilydd**

# Adopters Approved



Number of Adopters Approved



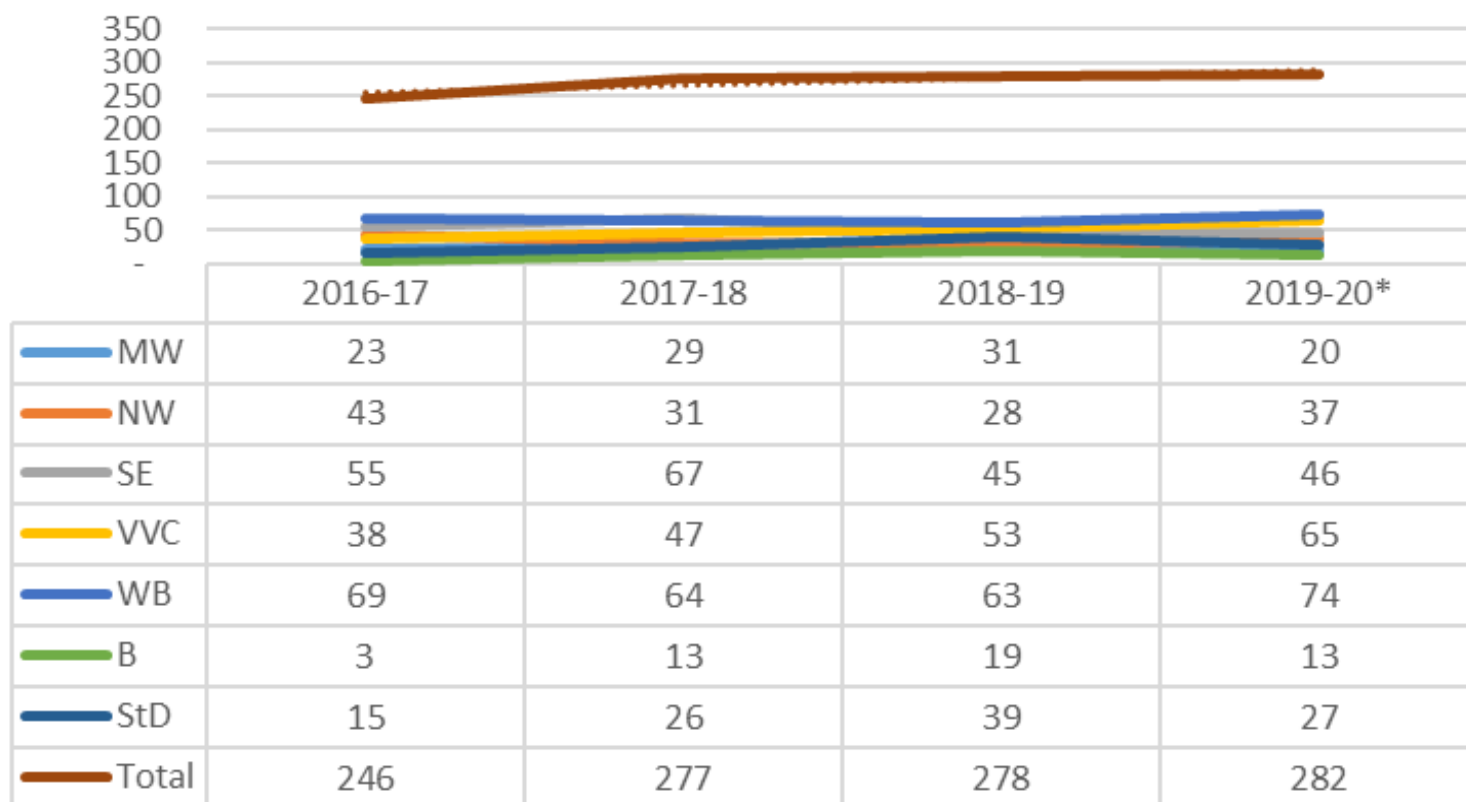
	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20 Proj*
MW	37	23	22	29	21	30
NW	44	38	33	31	18	27
SE	50	51	59	39	47	43
VVC	74	55	47	46	51	63
WB	45	52	56	46	42	47
B	8	9	4	5	8	9
St D	36	38	15	16	25	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>246</b>

2014/15 to 2019/20

\*2019/20 full year projection calculated using average of data since 2014/15

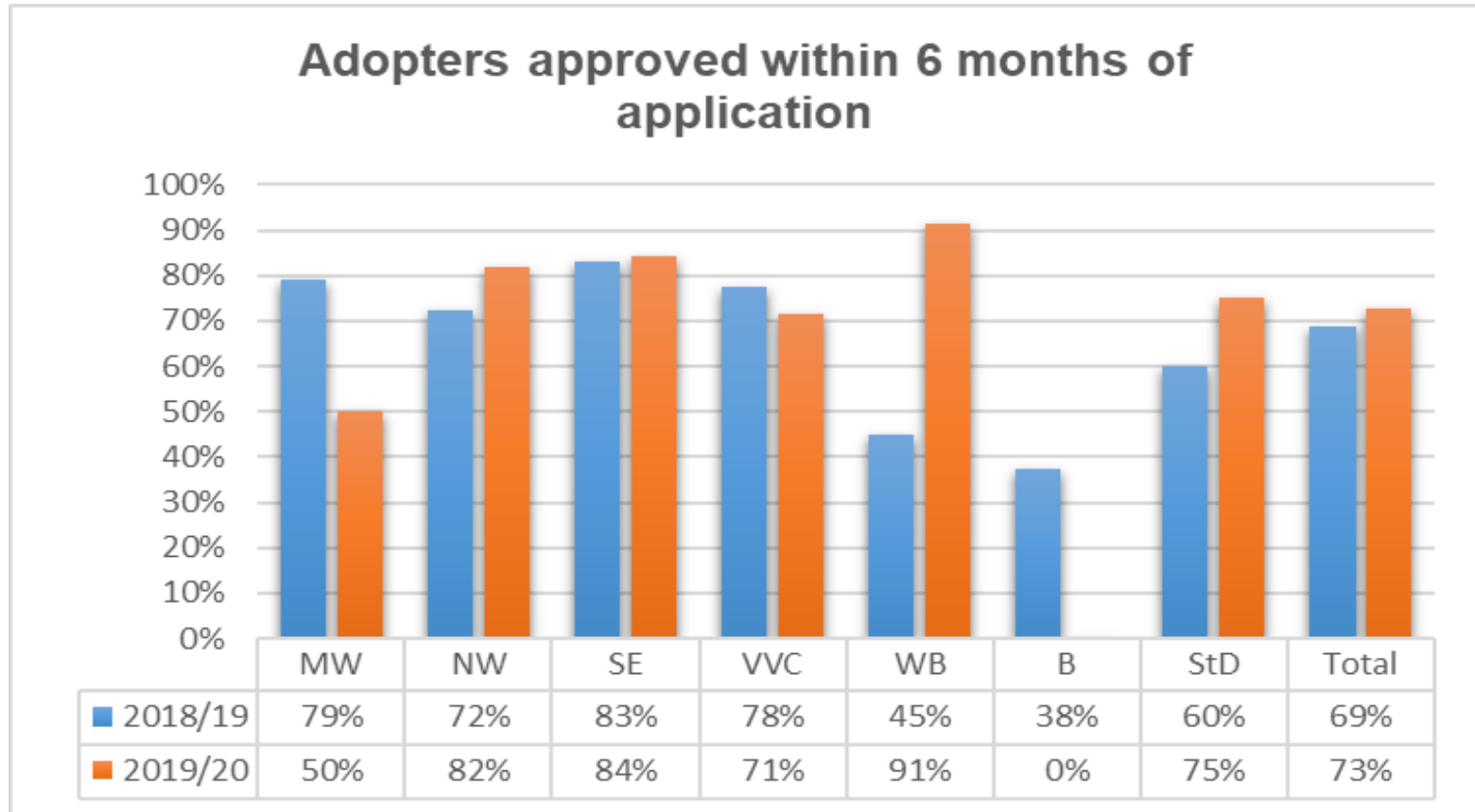
# Adopter Assessments Starting

Number of Aseessments started during quarter



\*2019/20 full year projection calculated using average of data since 2016/17

# Adopters Approved in 6 months



# Recruitment Summary

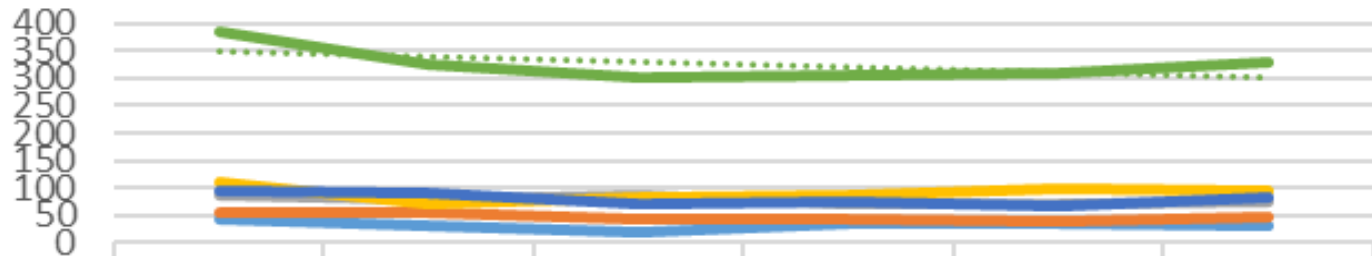


Region / Agency	Approval trend (over 5 years)	Enquiry trend (over 5 years)	New assessment trend (over 3 years)
Mid and West Wales			
North Wales			
South East Wales			
Vale, Valleys and Cardiff			
Western Bay			
Barnardos			
St Davids			
<b>Overall</b>			

# Placed for Adoption



## Children Placed for Adoption



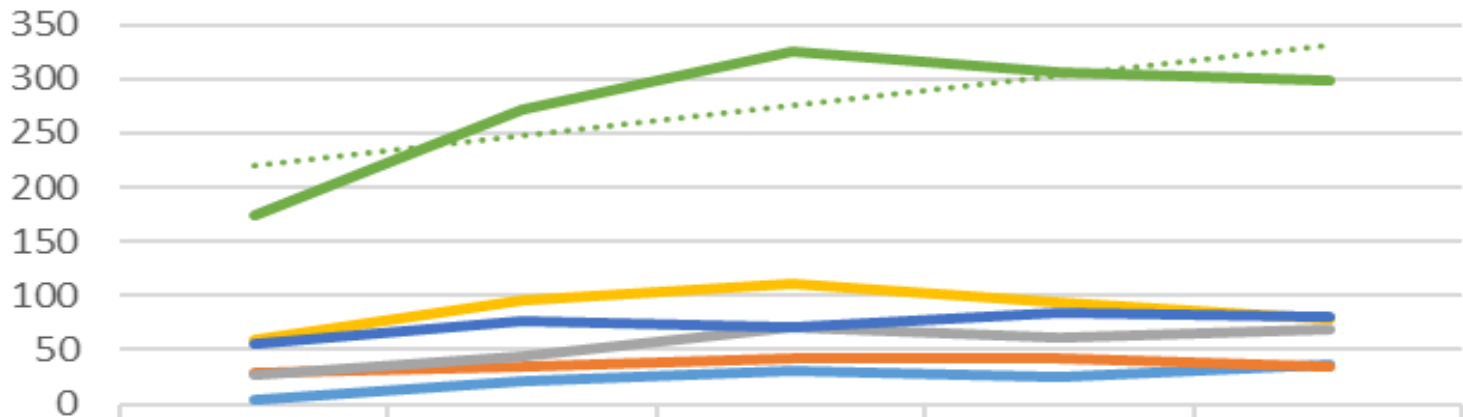
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 Proj*
MW	41	30	19	35	35	31
NW	55	56	44	41	39	46
SE	85	80	85	71	70	75
VVC	112	70	81	86	100	96
WB	93	90	71	74	67	81
Total	386	326	300	307	311	329

\*2019/20 full year projection calculated using average of data since 2014/15

# Children Waiting



## Children waiting with a Placement Order who have not been matched

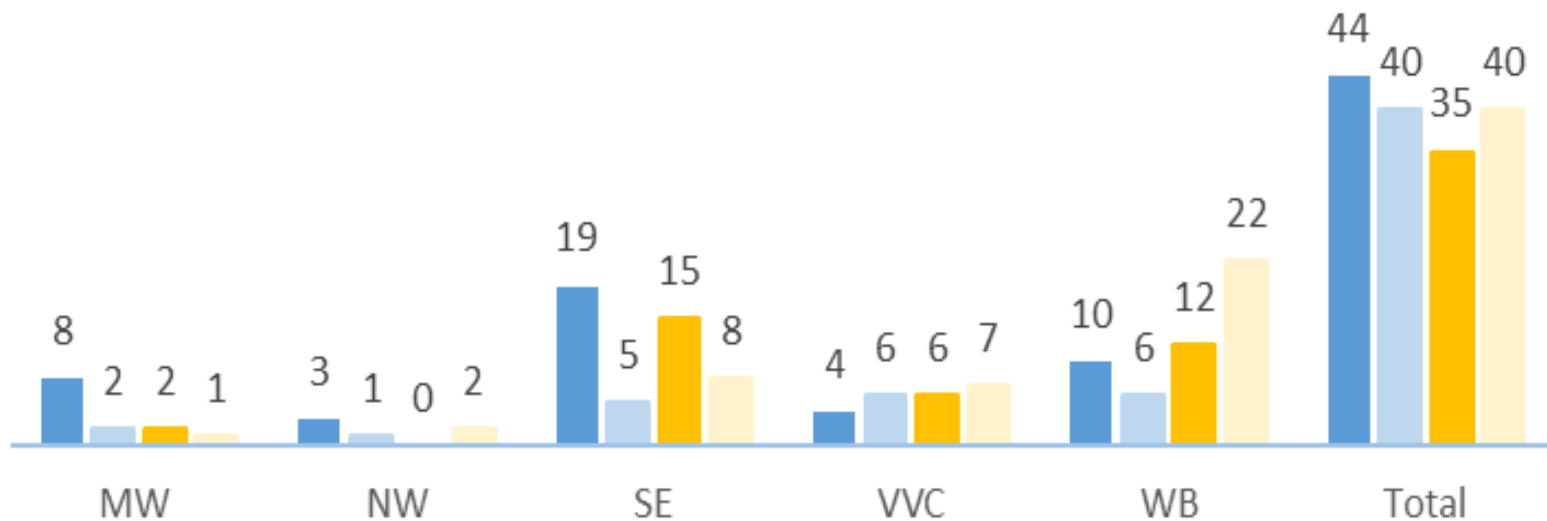


	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2016-17	Q4 2017-18	Q4 2018-19	Q2 2019-20
MW	4	21	30	25	36
NW	28	35	43	42	35
SE	27	44	71	62	68
VVC	60	95	111	94	79
WB	56	77	71	84	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>298</b>

# Changes of Plan

## Changes of plan 2018-19 & 2019-20(yr to date)

- Change of plan recommended at LAC review 2018-19
- Change of plan recommended at LAC review 2019-20 year to date
- PO's discharged 2018-19
- PO's discharged 2019-20 year to date

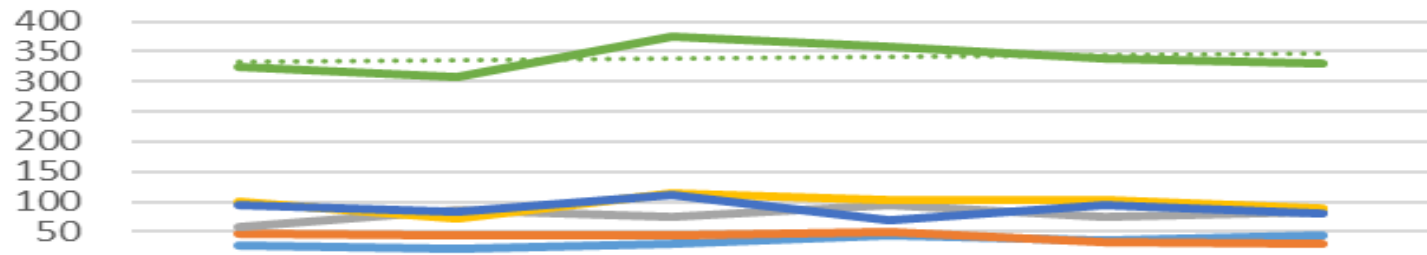




# Placement Orders Made



## Placement Orders Made

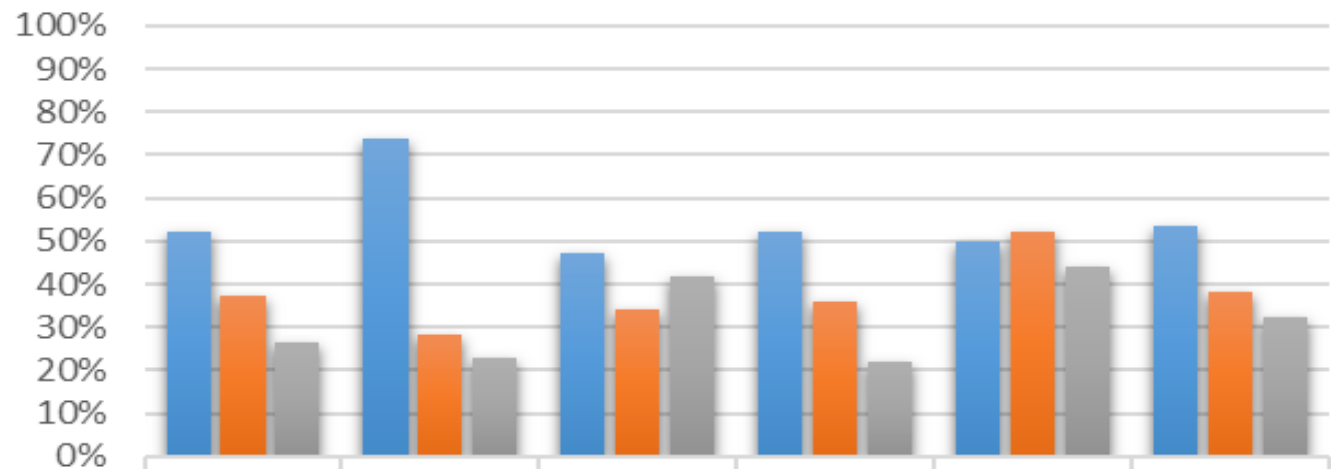


	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 Proj*
MW	28	21	31	43	36	44
NW	46	45	43	50	32	31
SE	58	87	76	95	74	85
VVC	99	71	113	102	102	89
WB	94	83	112	68	94	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>330</b>

\*2019/20 full year projection calculated using average of data since 2014/15

# Duration from Placement Order to Placement

**Proportion of children placed for adoption within 6 months of their placement order**



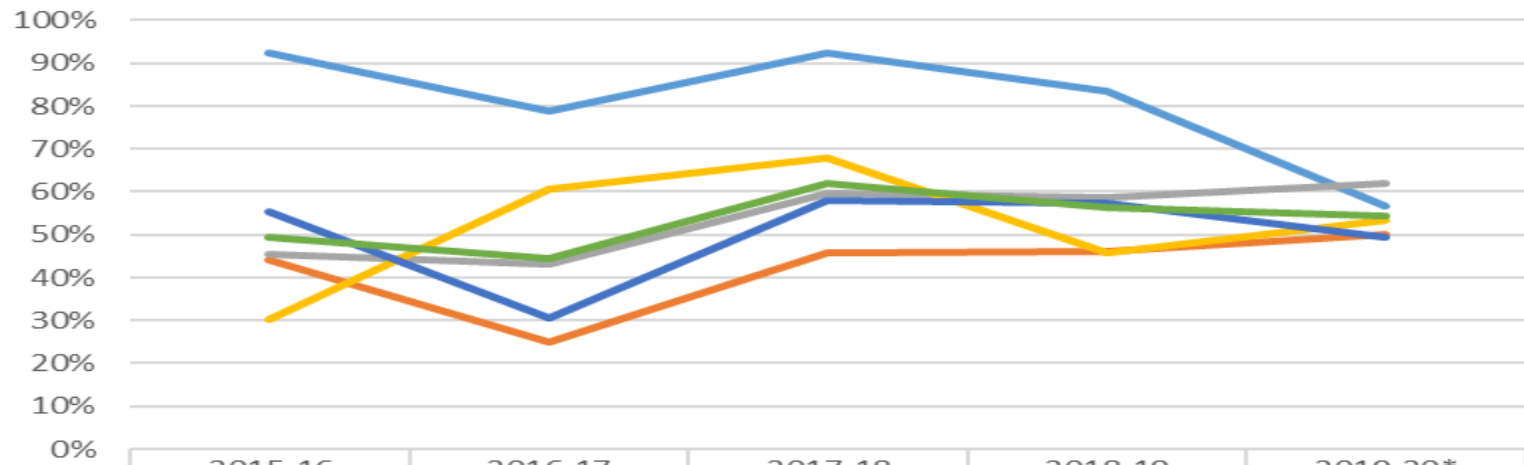
	MW	NW	SE	VVC	WB	Total
■ 2017/18 Q3&Q4	52%	74%	47%	52%	50%	53%
■ 2018/19	37%	28%	34%	36%	52%	38%
■ 2019/20 Q1&Q2	27%	23%	42%	22%	44%	32%

# Life Journey Materials available at 2<sup>nd</sup> review



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**Proportion of children who had their life journey materials at 2<sup>nd</sup> adoption review**



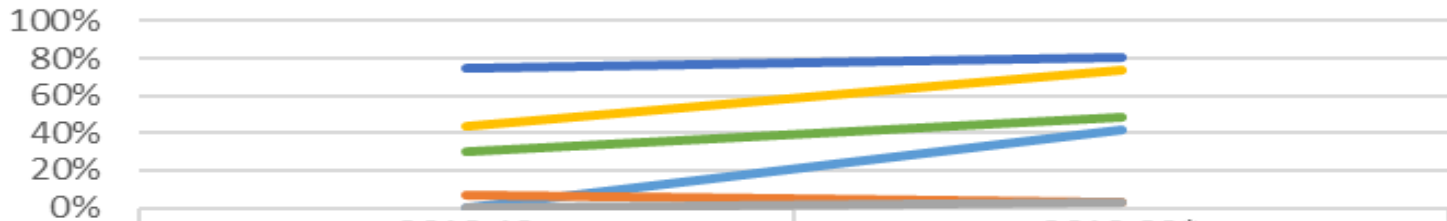
\*2019/20 full year projection calculated using average of data since 2015/16

**Achieving more together / Cyflawni mwy gyda'n gilydd**

# Life Journey Materials available at matching



**Proportion of children who had their life journey materials at matching panel**



	2018-19	2019-20*
MW	0%	41%
NW	7%	3%
SE	0%	3%
VVC	44%	74%
WB	74%	81%
Total	30%	48%

\*2019/20 full year projection calculated using average of data since 2018/19



# Child and Family Services

## Annual Participation Report 2019



**When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account**

Article 12 - Respect for the views of the child - United Nations Convention on the Rights the Child (UNCRC), 1989.

**“We are more interesting than our paperwork”** EW,  
Swansea Corporate Parenting Challenge 2017

# Participation and Corporate Parenting

Corporate Parenting  
Page 54  
Timeline



Participation Forum  
Timeline



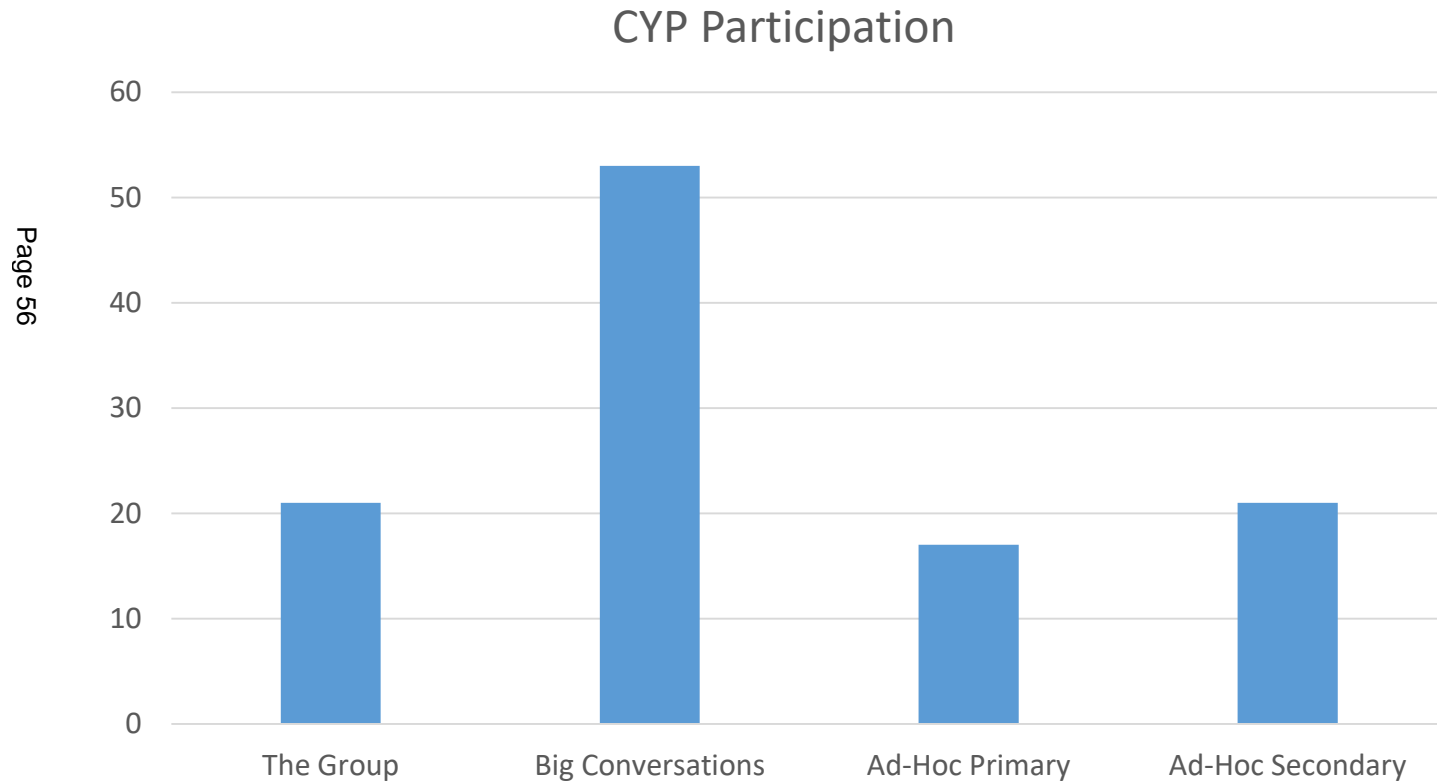


# The Participation Work Plan



- Information – Swansea Care’s Pack
- Welsh Government Consultation – Education Attainment
- Bays 16+ Participation
- Delegated Authority
- Book Start Project
- Film Making
- LAC Art and Design Project
- Big Conversations
- Senior staff recruitment

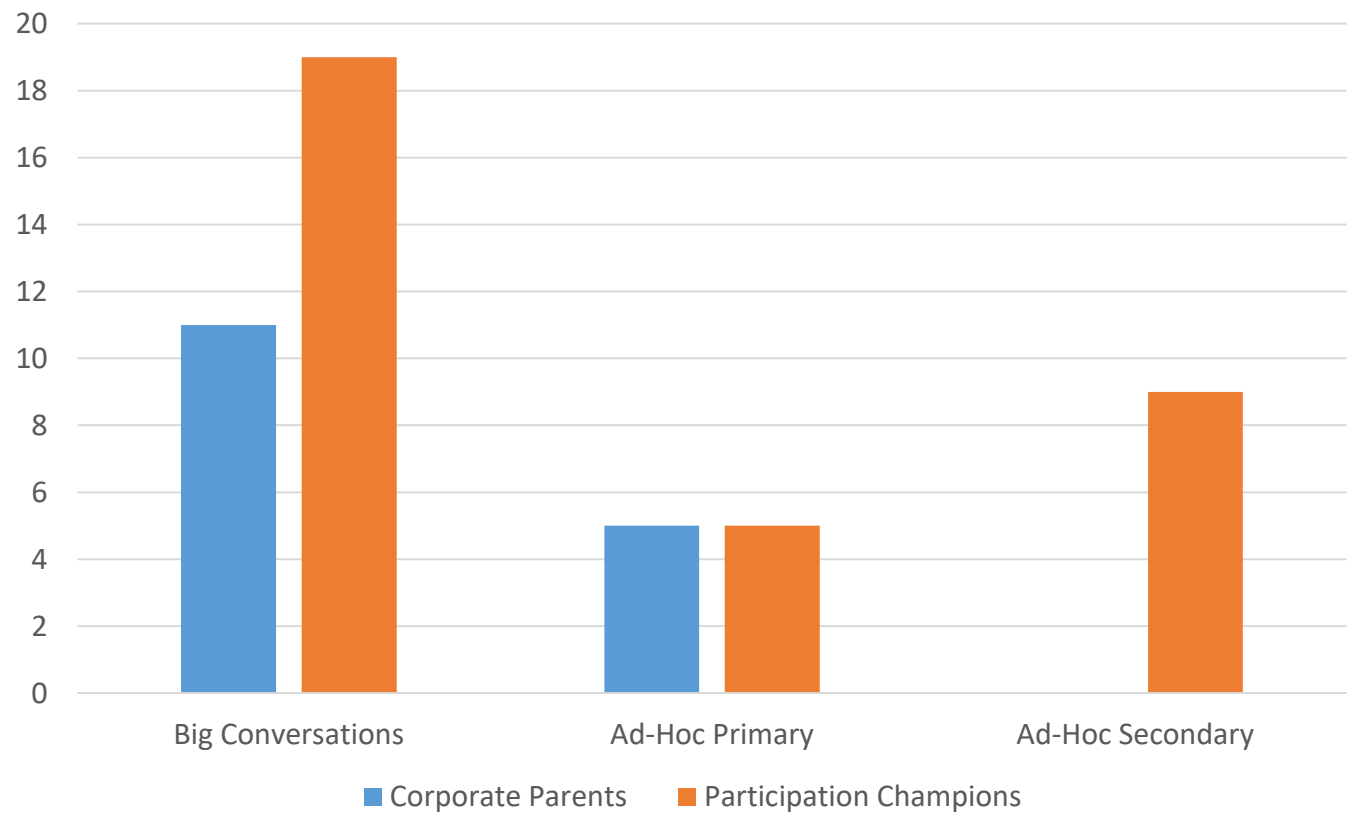
# Participation with Children and Young People



- Group work
- 4x Big Conversations
- Book Start Project
- 'Our Identity' Project
- Film Work

# Wider Support and Engagement

CP and Champion Support



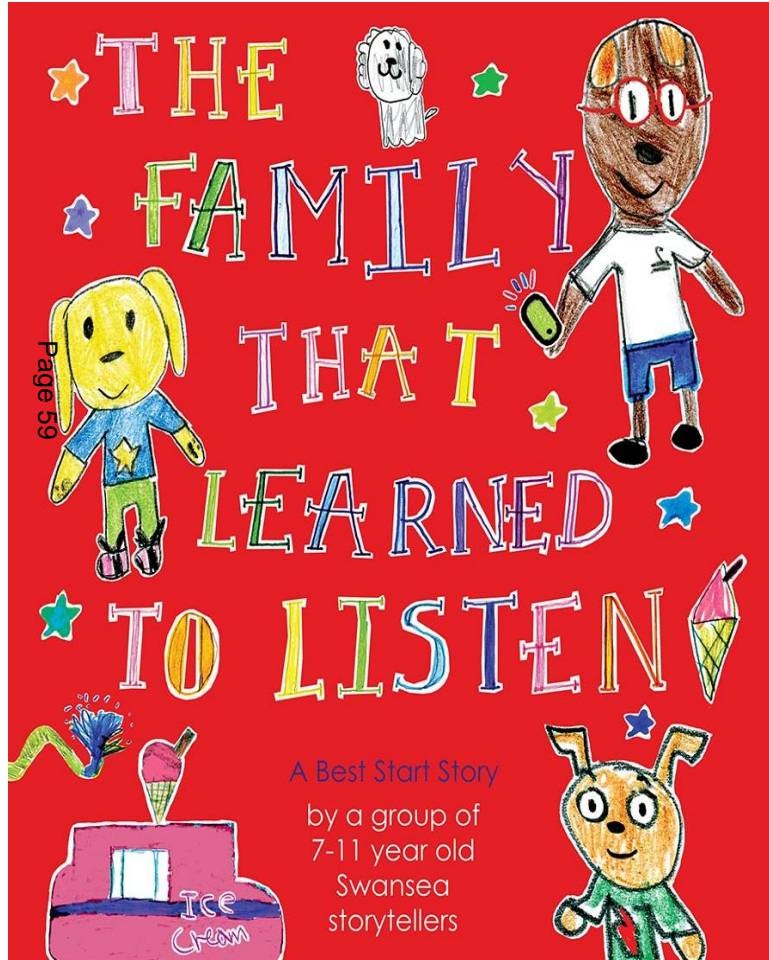
- 4x Big Conversations
- Book Launch
- Film Work

# Big 'Your Info' Conversation



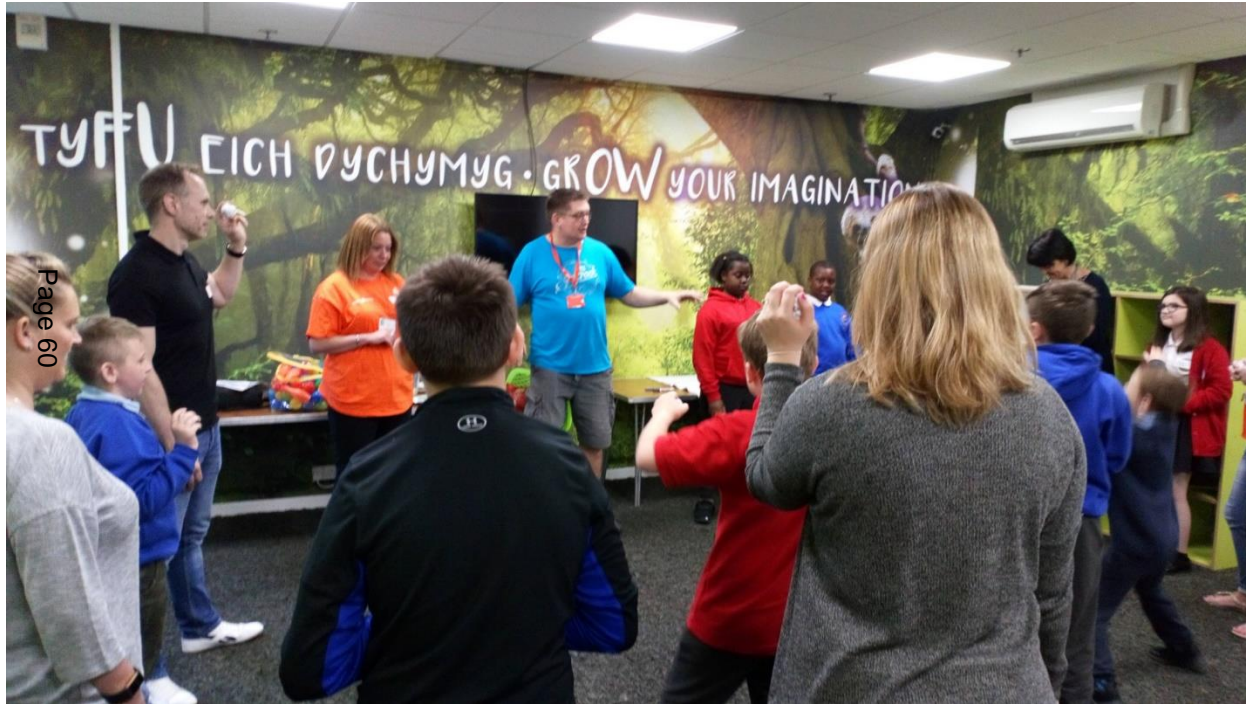
- Provide up to date, honest and accurate information.
- General information about services, the support CYP can expect to receive and their rights.
- Access to appropriate personal information via a secure area (i.e. personal plans and documents).
- Use appropriate language that is understandable.
- Utilise wider engagement tools such as social media and video's

# The Best Start Book Project



- 17 Care Experienced children and young people aged between 7 and 11 were involved in producing a children's book.
- The book will focus on the importance of children being listened to and having their voice heard.
- 400 copies of the book have been published initially.
- The book was formally launched with a reading from the children involved. Amongst the audience was a select group of Parents/Carers, Officers, Teachers and Corporate Parents
- It complements the Signs of Safety Framework and is now being used as a direct work tool.

# Big 'Your Service' Conversation



- Support to understand different choices and what the implications of those might be.
- Be honest about limitations.
- Provide notice for visits from professionals.
- Build good, honest relationships with children and young people.
- Keep in touch.
- Encourage independence through service provision.

# Bays+ 16-25 Offer



- BAYS+ have been working hard to develop their participation offer for young people aged 16+.
- Supper club – providing young people with a chance to meet with staff and shape the design of the vision for the service.
- Service Feedback - The Social Work team have embedded young people's feedback about the service they have received from BAYS+ in to the closure meetings for any young person turning 18.
- Mummy/Daddy and Me Sessions – aimed at developing a new engagement and participation forum for young people with babies.

# Big 'Your Paperwork' Conversation



- Ensure the voice of the child or young person is clear through the use of paper work.
- Provide good, clear information that is understood by the young person.
- Use paperwork as an opportunity to bring professionals, young people and families together to make decisions collaboratively.
- Share information sensitively.
- Be flexible with then paperwork as needs, ages and stages change.





Cymuned Gwelliant  
Parhaus Cymru Gyfan  
All Wales Continuous  
Improvement Community

# Good News

- 'The Group' our participation task and finish forum were nominated and shortlisted for the 'Working Together for a better Wales' award at this years All Wales Continuous Improvement Awards.
- 'The Group' developed a video to support their entry. The young people involved wanted to ensure that the video could be used to advertise the group to other looked after children and it is envisaged that this video will form part of the new Swansea Cares website.
- The Participation team was nominated for their work with young people to improve and embed participation across Child and Family services.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1so5z3lhOteaJjeF23cE\\_n9ljqph01K72/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1so5z3lhOteaJjeF23cE_n9ljqph01K72/view)



# The 'Our Identity' Project



- Secondary aged children were invited to discuss identity and how that is reflected in the services they receive.
- Work focused around the LAC Statutory Social Care Team.
- The group worked on creating their ideas of what the LAC Team identity could be through the use of art work.
- There are plans to develop this work in the new year which will conclude in a formal exhibit to showcase the work.

# Joint Corporate Parenting Board

## Forward Look



### **Forward Look**

The information discussed and agreed as part of this session will provide some of the content for our annual Corporate Parenting Board which will be presented to the board towards the end of the year.

Our Big Conversation in December will share this report with 'The Group' and set the focus of 'The Group's' conversations for 2020.

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[Contact us for more information](#)

*Gemma Whyley*

07471 145402 | [gemma.whyley@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.whyley@swansea.gov.uk)

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- Video was created by young people to support a workshop at Corporate Parenting Board.
- Young people discussed issues such as Social Work, Schooling, Family, Safety and Corporate Parenting.
- Corporate Parenting Board considered the responses from young people.
- Themes were created to identify action plans and priorities for next year which were built on at the Big Conversation in December.

# Big 'You Said, We Did, What Next...' Conversation

Page 66



- A joint Big Conversation was held between Children and Young People, Participation Champions and Corporate Parents.
- Themes focused around Safety, Schooling, Health, Activity and Friends.
- Young People told us how they liked to make friends, what helped them feel safe, who they felt could support them with particular issues and what they liked about school.
- Their feedback will be used in the annual Corporate Parenting report and will help inform the action plans for next year

- Strong Relationships - professionals, friends and family
- Geographical areas i.e. specific places and locations
- Awareness and networks
- Boundaries
- Support – managing anger, saying no, finding alternative solutions
- Respect



- Inclusion, happiness, safety and security
- Time with friends
- Trusted adult
- Know the support options
- Coping strategies

- Bullying
- Children's Rights
- Relationships with teachers and pastoral leads
- Friendships and peer support
- More choice – subjects, teachers, uniform
- Face to Face support and contact



- Mutual respect and honest
- Inclusion and equal treatment
- Kindness
- Care
- Control in sharing information about the past

- Variety of choices to stay fit and healthy
- (over?) use of mobile technology and online gaming
- Links to emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Friends to 'go' with
- Performance, drama and the arts
- Healthy eating and other habits



# Welsh Government Ministry Advisory Group

## Improving Outcomes for Children

### Corporate Parenting Task and Finish Group

- Cabinet Paper
- End Youth Homelessness Group
- Voluntary Charter
- Legislation



# Next Years Plan

Themes that include

- Safety
- Schooling
- Health
- Friendships
- Leisure and Activity



# Actions and Next Steps

- Agree themes with Corporate Parenting Board
- Develop specific actions using feedback from Children and Young People
- Identify next priority areas for Children and Young People
- Create new identity for the LAC Team and launch at a formal art exhibition in February
- Provide Young People with an opportunity to discuss their schooling and how Welsh Government support can be better utilised
- Launch the interactive Swansea Cares website
- Funding for Passports for Children Looked After
- Fully launch the Virtual School
- Work with the Welsh Government Corporate Parenting Task and Finish Group





# Agenda Item 8



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Child and Family Services

### Scrutiny Performance Panel - Child and Family

18<sup>th</sup> December 2019

### Monthly Performance Report – October 2019

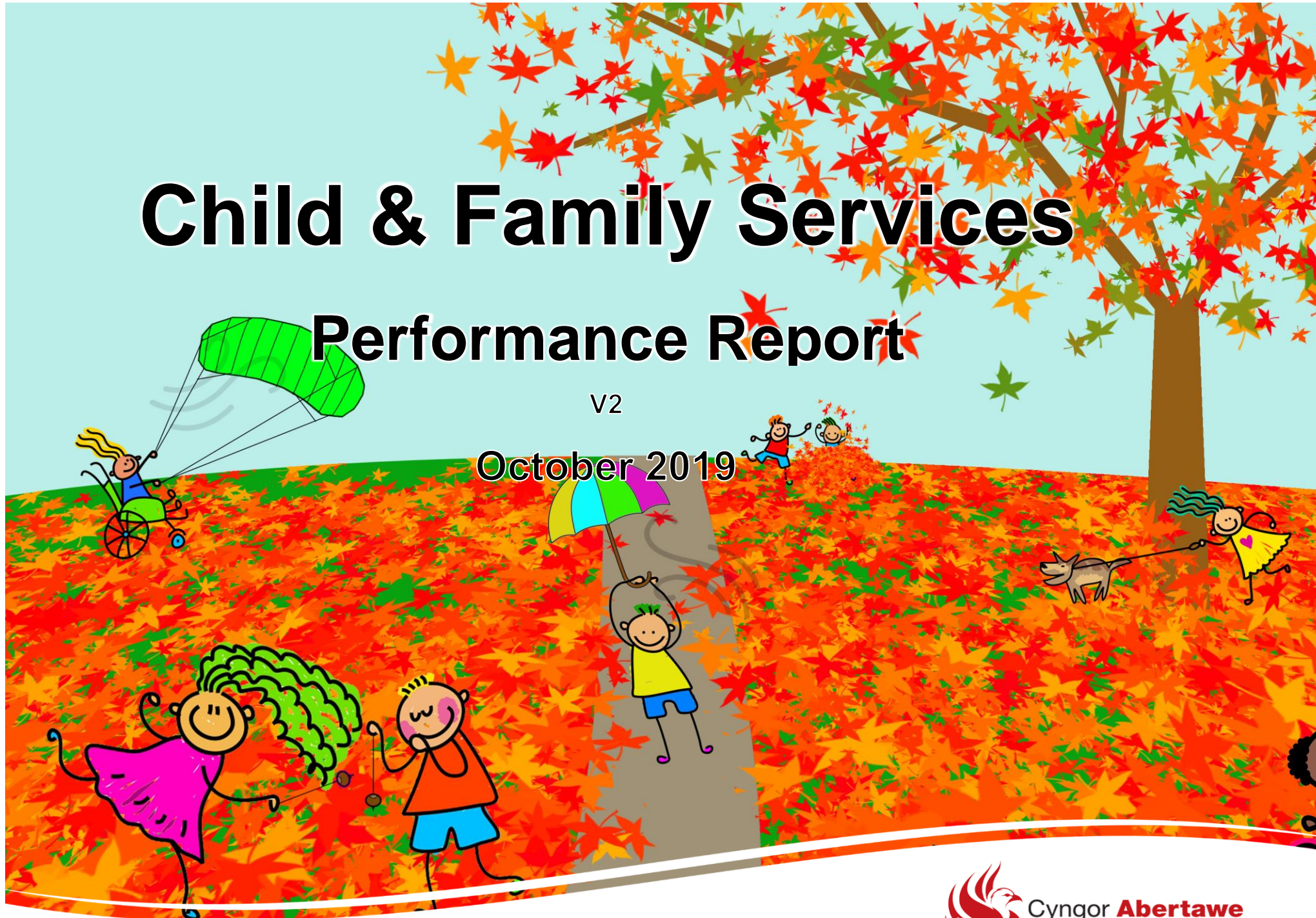
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To present Child and Family Services monthly performance report for October 2019</li></ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appended is the monthly report which includes performance against Welsh Government and local indicators.</li><li>• The report includes performance at Child and Family Services front door – the Information, Advice and Assistance team, the Supported Care Planning teams, including Child Disability, the Looked After Childrens team, Bays 16+ and Fostering Services.</li><li>• The report also includes performance around personal and case supervision and for the first time, the signs of safety metrics.</li></ul>
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutiny Performance Panel are asked to consider the report as part of their routine review of performance in Child and Family Services.</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Cllr Elliott King, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services
<b>Lead Officer(s)</b>	David Howes, Director of Social Services Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services
<b>Report Author</b>	Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services 01792 633812 <a href="mailto:Julie.thomas5@swansea.gov.uk">Julie.thomas5@swansea.gov.uk</a>

# Child & Family Services

## Performance Report

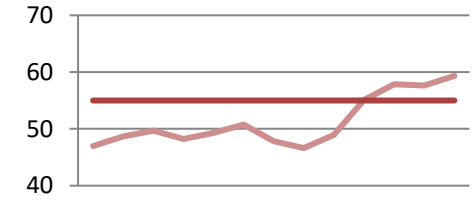
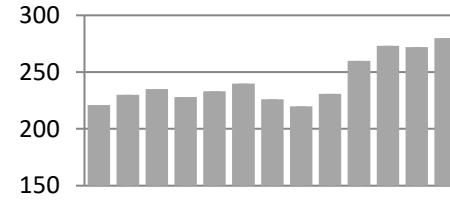
V2

October 2019



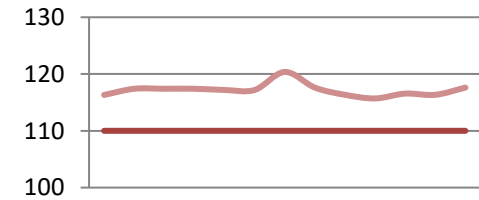
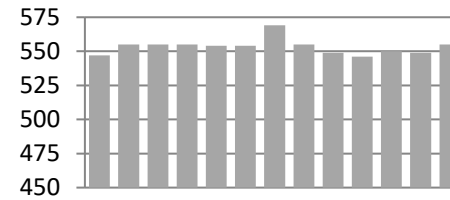
## Child Protection

There are **280** (272) children on the children protection register. This is an **increase of 8** from last month giving us a rate of **59** Per 10,000.



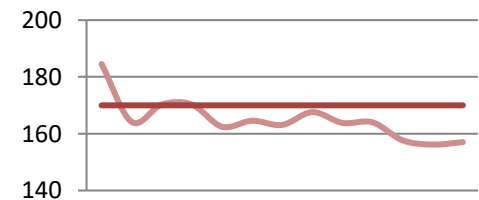
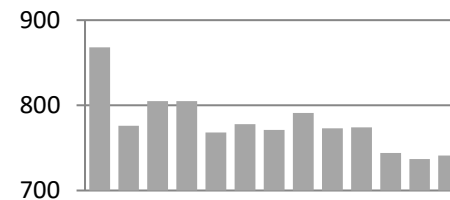
## Looked After Children

There are **555** (549) children looked after. This is an **increase of 6** from last month giving us a rate of **118** Per 10,000.



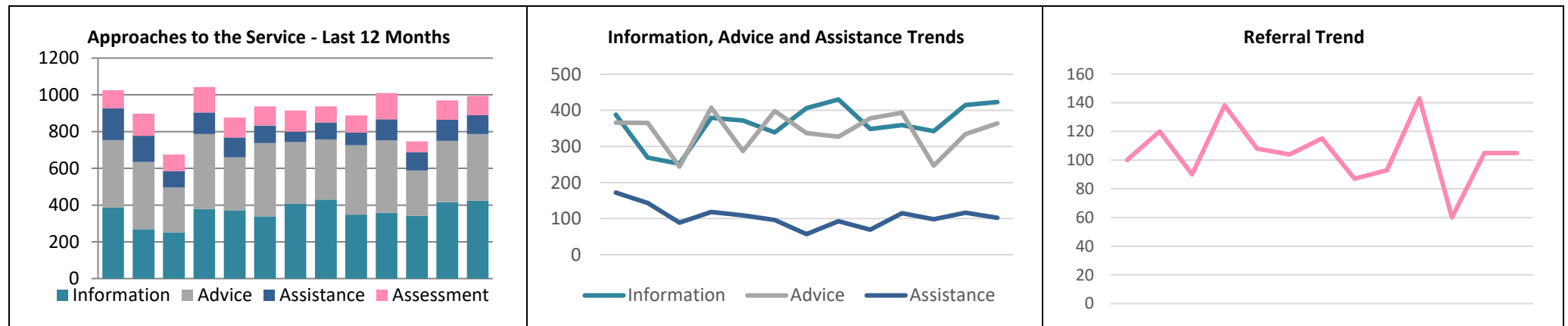
## Children in Need of Care and Support

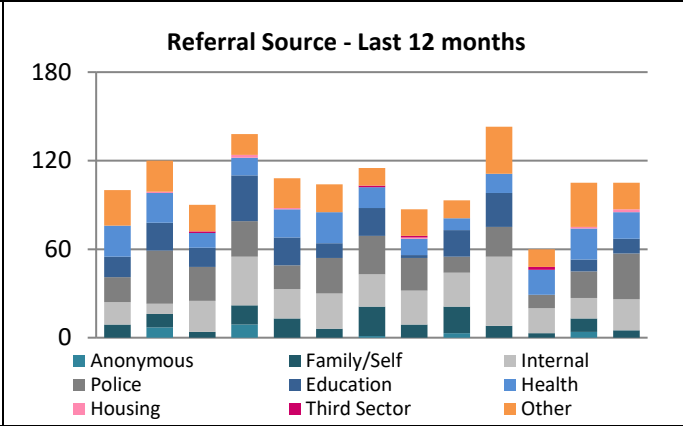
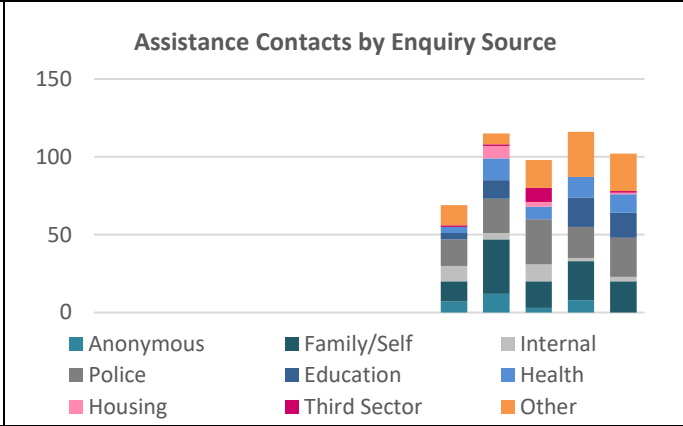
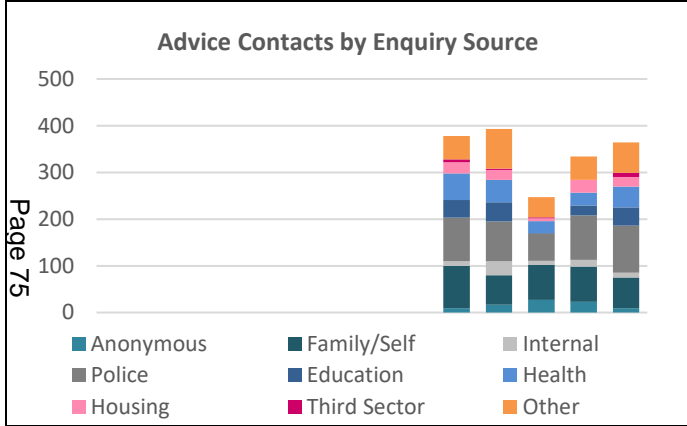
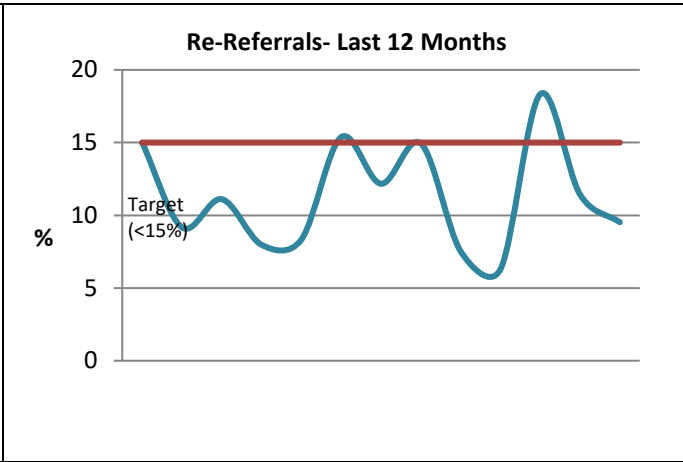
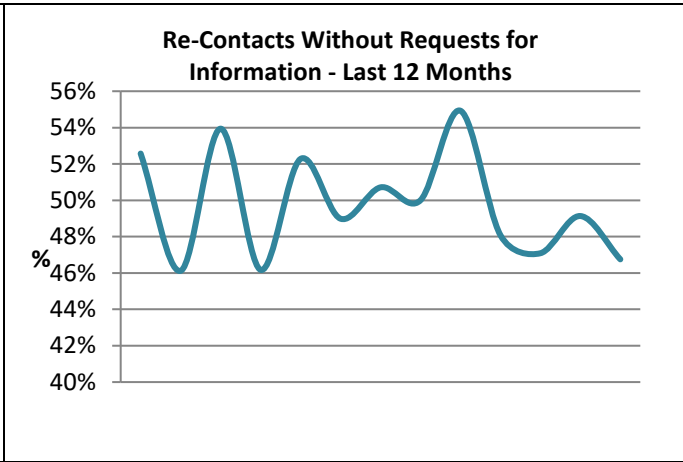
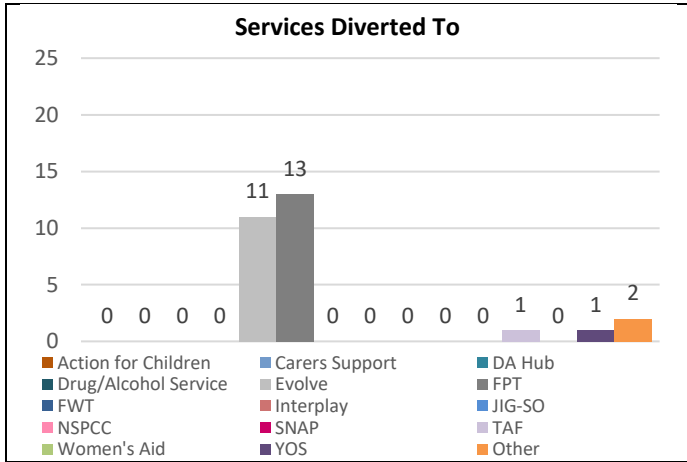
There are **741** (737) children in need of care and support. This is an **increase of 4** from last month giving us a rate of **157** Per 10,000.



# Wellbeing

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The number of contacts received by the service – instances of <b>Information, Advice, Assistance or Assessment</b> :	<b>994</b> (970)		Low is Good	
The percentage of these contacts that were <b>helped by providing information</b> only:	<b>423, 42.56%</b> (415, 42.78%)		High is Good	
The percentage of these contacts that were <b>helped by providing advice</b> only:	<b>364, 36.62%</b> (334, 34.43%)			
The percentage of these contacts that were <b>helped by providing assistance</b> only:	<b>102, 10.26%</b> (116, 11.96%)			
The percentage of these contacts that were <b>passed on for formal assessment</b> :	<b>105, 10.56%</b> (105, 10.82%)	10%	Low is Good	
The percentage of these contacts that were <b>diverted to other services</b> :	<b>28, 2.82%</b> (48, 4.95%)		High is Good	
The number of <b>repeat contacts helped by providing information, advice or assistance</b> in the month, but <b>excluding</b> requests for information where there has been a contact within the last 12 months):	<b>367, 46.75%</b> (369, 49.13%)			
The number of <b>repeat referrals</b> in the month (where a referral is received within 12 months of a previous referral):	<b>10, 9.52%</b> (12, 11.43%)	Less than 15%	Low is Good	





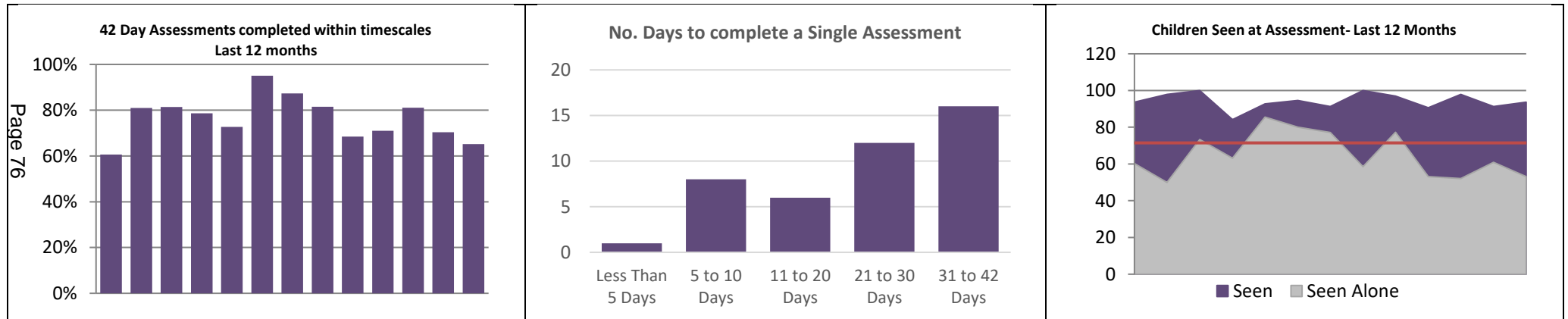
**What is working well?**

**What are we worried about?**

**What do we need to do?**

# Supported Care Planning - Assessments

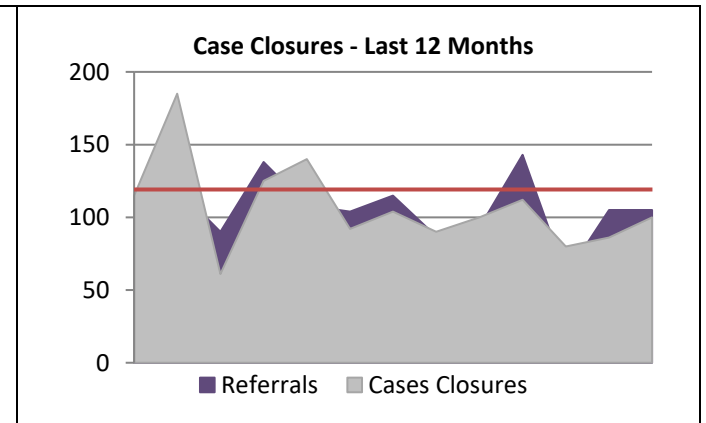
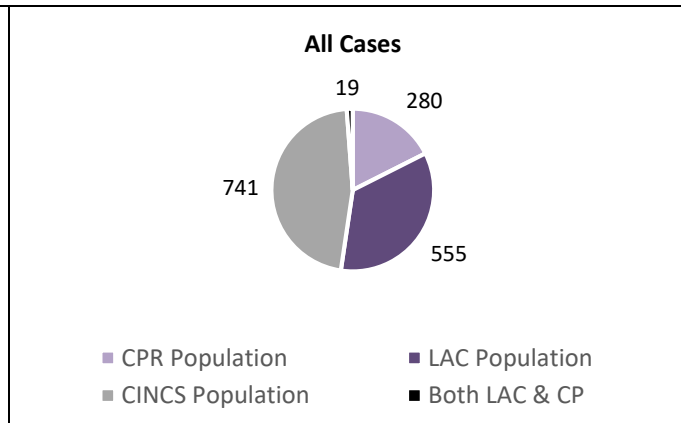
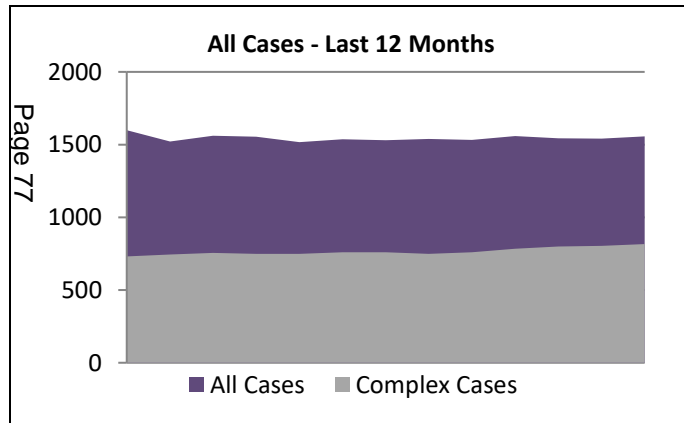
Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
Number of 42 day Assessments Carried out during the month:	<b>66</b> (71)		Lower is Better	
The percentage of 42 day assessments carried out within timescales:	<b>43, 65.15%</b> (50, 70.42%)	90%	High is Good	
The percentage of Assessments where there is evidence the child has been <b>seen by a qualified worker</b> :	<b>44, 93.62%</b> (42, 91.30%)	More than 90%	High is Good	
The percentage of Assessments where there is evidence the child has been <b>seen alone by a qualified worker</b> :	<b>25, 53.19%</b> (28, 60.87%)	More than 65%	High is Good	



What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Supported Care Planning – Planning, Reviews and Caseloads

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
<b>Number of Cases</b> of Children needing Care and Support Managed by the Service at the end of the month:	<b>1557</b> (1540)	1600	Lower is Better	
Of these, the percentage that represent <b>complex cases</b> (LAC, CP):	<b>816, 52.41%</b> (803, 52.14%)	65%	Higher is Better	
The number of <b>cases closed</b> to Child and Family Services during the month:	<b>100</b> (86)		Higher is Better	
The percentage of <b>reviews of Children in Need of Care and Support held during the month within prescribed timescales</b> :			High is Good	
The percentage of <b>CINCS allocated to a qualified worker</b> at the end of the month:	<b>591, 79.76%</b> (581, 78.83%)		High is Good	



What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Supported Care Planning – Children with a Disability

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The number of <b>disabled children referred</b> to the Child Disability Team during the month:	<b>8</b> (10)		Range	
The total number of <b>disabled children with a Care and Support Plan</b> at the end of the Month:			Range	
The number of <b>disabled children provided with Direct Payments</b> at the end of the month:			Range	
The number of <b>disabled children transitioning to the Care of Adult Services</b> during the month:			Baseline	
The number of <b>disabled children provided with respite care</b> at the end of the Month:			Range	

**Proportion of Referrals that are CDT - Last 12 Months**

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## Disabled Children by Team

**CDT Cases**

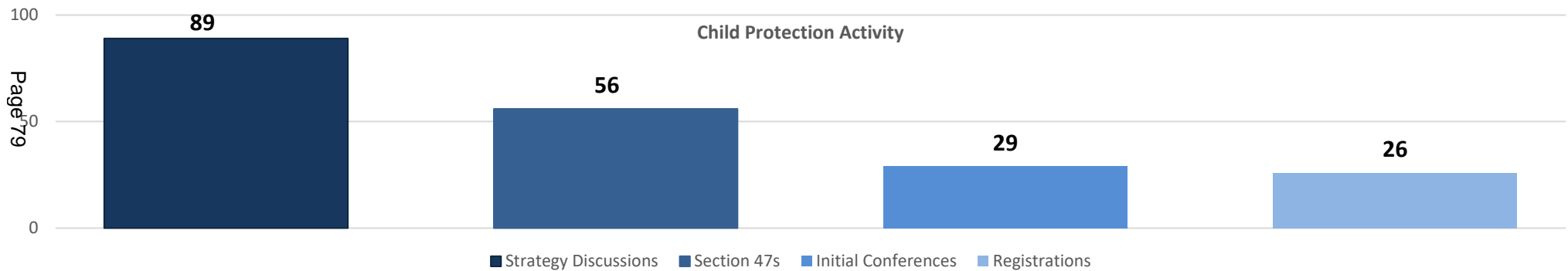
Category	Count
CINC	228
CP ONLY	18
LAC ONLY	49
LAC & CP	1

What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?



# Safeguarding – Child Protection Activity

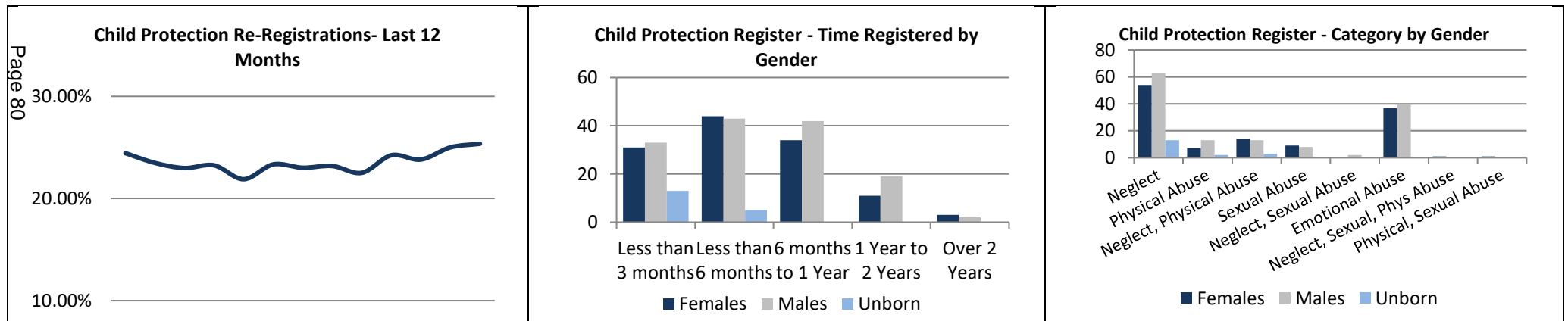
Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The total number of children <b>added</b> to the Child Protection Register in the month.	<b>26</b> (22)		Low is Good	
The total number of children <b>removed</b> from the Child Protection Register in the month.	<b>18</b> (23)		Higher is Better	
The Percentage of <b>Initial Conferences</b> held in timescales during the month.	<b>29, 100%</b> (19, 100%)	100%	High is Good	
The percentage of <b>Initial Core Group Meetings</b> held within timescales during the month.	<b>15, 75.00%</b> (23, 95.83%)	90%	High is Good	
The percentage of visits to children on the Child Protection Register that were on time or not overdue.	<b>229, 87.07%</b> (236, 90.42%)	90%	High is Good	



What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Safeguarding – Reviews and Allocations

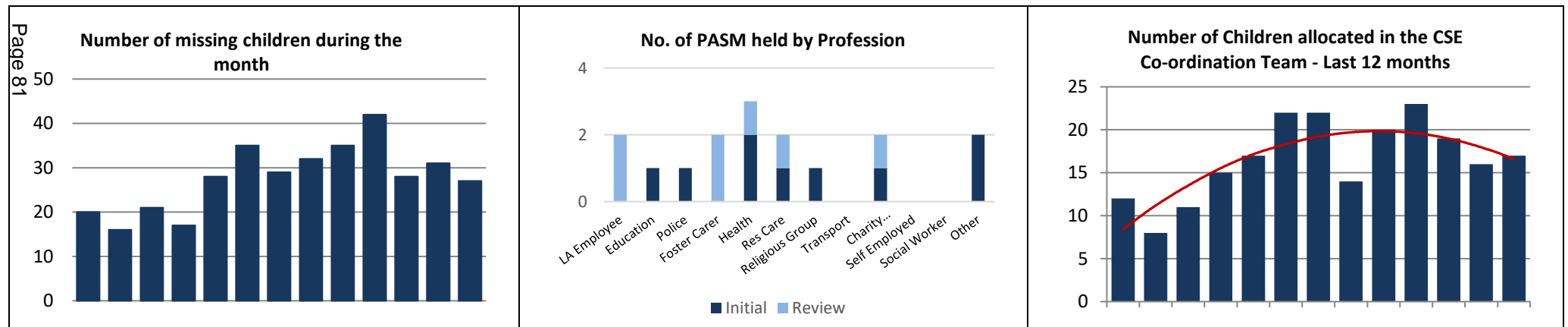
Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The percentage of children on the Child Protection Register that have been <b>registered previously</b> .	<b>71, 25.36%</b> <i>(68, 25.00%)</i>	Less than 20%	Low is Good	
The <b>length of time on the Child Protection Register</b> for those children removed during the month.	<b>231 days</b> <i>(221 days)</i>	Range of 100-300	180-270 is Optimal	
The percentage of <b>Review Conferences held on time</b> during the month.	<b>70, 100%</b> <i>(84, 100%)</i>	100%	High is Good	
The percentage of children de-registered in the month who were <b>de-registered at the first review</b> :	<b>1, 5.56%</b> <i>(8, 34.78%)</i>	< 15%		
The percentage of children on the Child Protection Register <b>Allocated to a qualified worker</b> at the end of the month.	<b>280, 100%</b> <i>(263, 96.69%)</i>	100%	High is Good	



What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Safeguarding – CSE, Missing Children and Professional Abuse

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The number of children allocated in the CSE Co-ordination Team at the end of the month:	<b>17</b> (16)	No Target Set	Lower is Better?	
The number of episodes of <b>children going missing</b> or <b>absent without authority</b> from home during the month:	<b>43</b> (43)	No Target Set	Lower is Better	
The <b>number of children</b> that these episodes related to:	<b>27</b> (31)	No Target Set	Lower is Better	
The number of Strategy Discussions held by the CSE Co-ordination Team during the month:	<b>13</b> (14)	No Target Set		
The number of <b>Professional Abuse Meetings</b> held during the month:	<b>10</b> (8)	No Target Set	Low is Good	



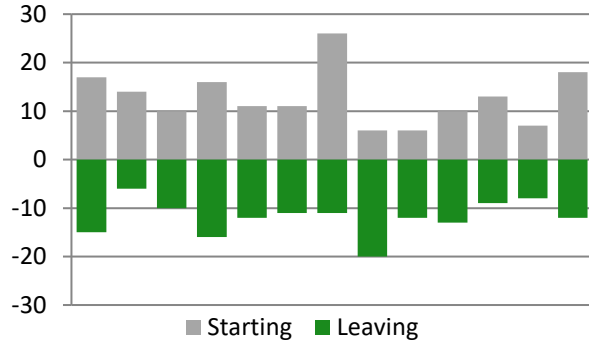
What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Permanence – Looked After Children

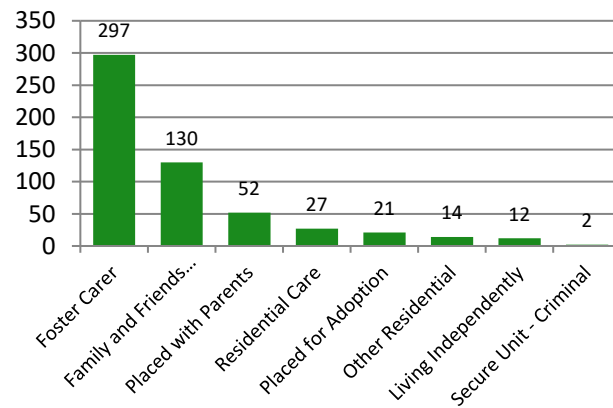
Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The number of children becoming looked after during the month:	<b>18</b> (7)	No Target Set	Low is Good	
The number of children ceasing to be looked after during the month:	<b>12</b> (8)	No Target Set	Higher is Better	
The percentage of children becoming looked after during the month who had a completed Care and Support plan within 10 working days of becoming LAC:	<b>18, 100%</b> (7, 100%)	100%	High is Good	
The percentage of LAC Statutory Visits in the month that were completed or not overdue:	<b>456, 87.02%</b> (471, 91.63%)	90%	High is Good	
The percentage of Looked After Children allocated to a qualified Social Worker:	<b>555, 100%</b> (546, 99.45%)	100%	High is Good	

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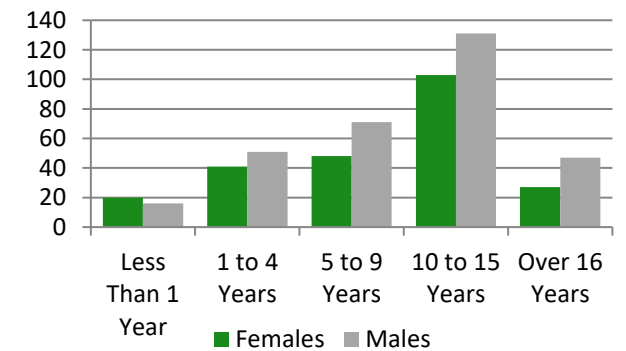
Starting and Ceasing LAC - Last 12 Months



Looked After Children - Current Placement Types



Looked After Children - Age and Gender



What is working well?

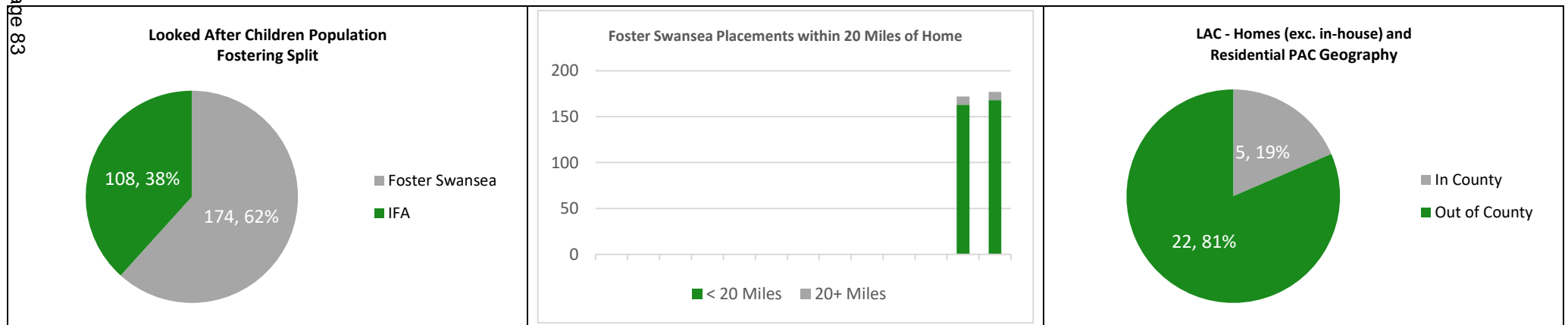
What are we worried about?

What do we need to do?

# Permanence – Reviews and Placement Stability

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The number of LAC Reviews Carried out during the month:	XX (136)	No Target Set	High is Good	
The number of LAC reviews that were completed within statutory timescales:	XX, XX% (136, 100%)	100%	High is Good	
The percentage of 4 month LAC reviews which had a plan for permanence:	XX, XX% (9, 100%)	100%	High is Good	
The percentage of PEP's received within 20 school days of becoming looked after:	XX, XX% (4, 57.14%)	100%	High is Good	
The percentage of looked after children who have had three or more placements in the previous 12 months of being looked after:	54, 9.73% (52, 9.47%)	Less Than 12%	Lower is Better	
The number of children/Young People residing in Bed and Breakfast at any time during the month:	0 (0)	Zero	Low is Good	

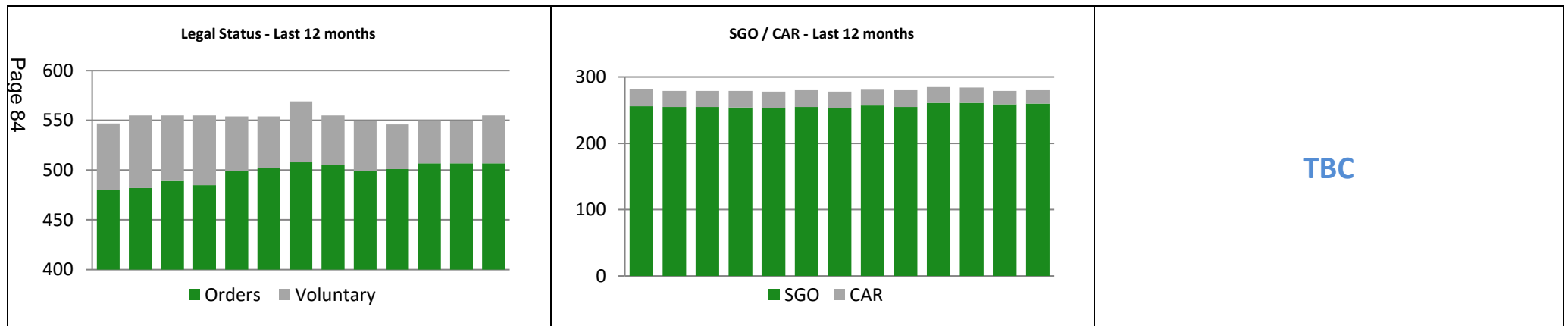
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What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Permanence – Leaving Care

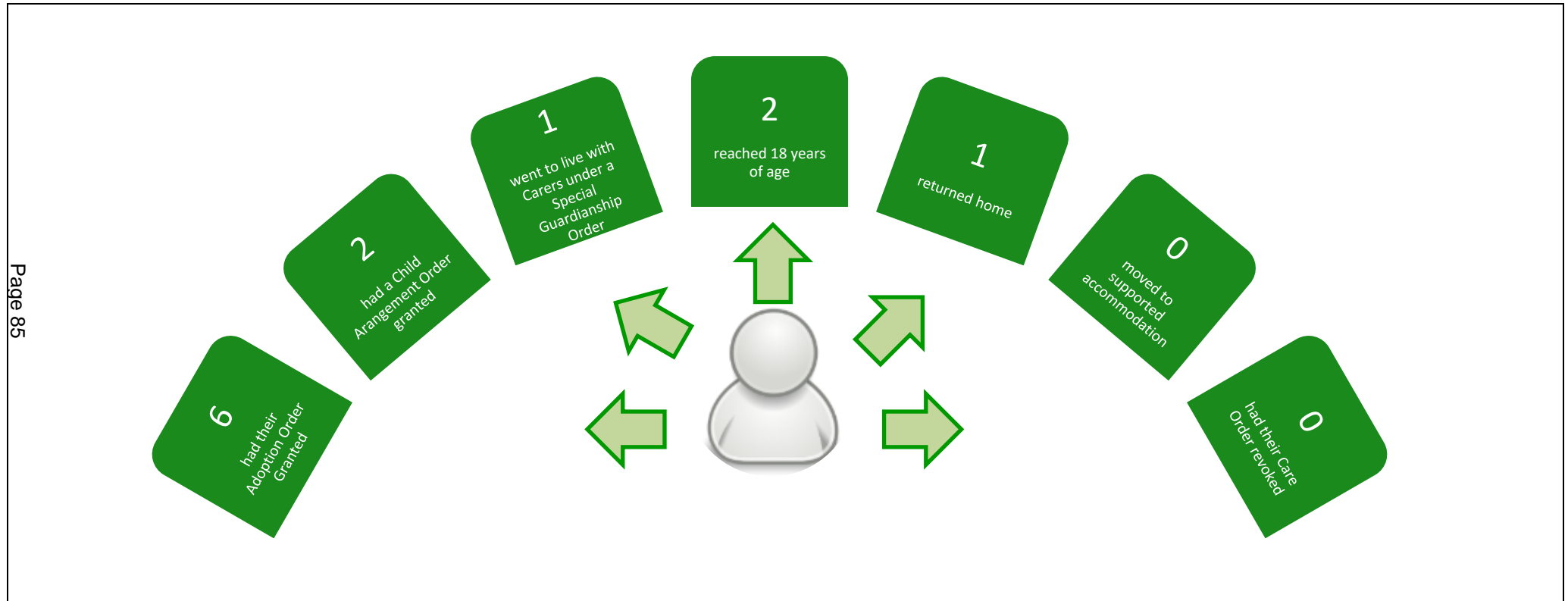
Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The number of cases managed under Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders at the end of the month:	<b>280</b> (279)	No Target Set	Range of 250-300	
The number/percentage of young people becoming category 2-4 during the month who have an up to date Pathway Plan:	<b>2, 100%</b> (2, 100%)	100%	High is Good	
The number/percentage of young people becoming category 2-4 during the month who have an allocated personal adviser:	<b>2, 100%</b> (2, 100%)	100%	High is Good	
The number of young people in category 2-4 at the end of the month who were in Education, Employment or Training 12 months after ceasing to be LAC:	<b>2, 100%</b> (2, 66.67%)	No Target Set	High is Good	
The number of young people presenting as homeless during the month:	<b>9</b> (10)	No Target Set	Low is Good	



What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

## Permanence – Destination upon Leaving Care

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The percentage of children supported to live at home at the end of the month:	<b>1002, 64.35%</b> <i>(991, 64.35%)</i>	75%	High is Good	
The percentage of children returning home from care during the month:	<b>4, 33.33%</b> <i>(5, 45.45%)</i>	55%	High is Good	

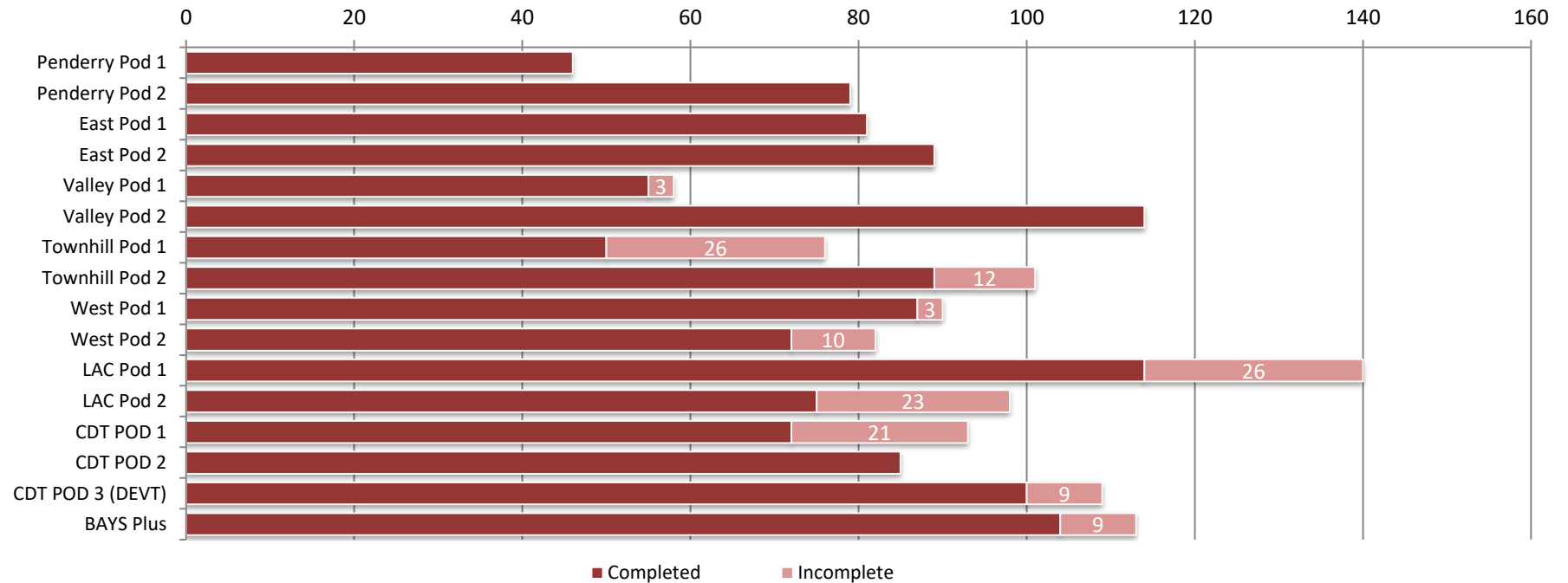


What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

# Quality – Case and Personal Supervision

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The percentage of children in need of Care and Support whose cases were reviewed during the month:	<b>1312, 90.23%</b> <i>(1319, 90.84%)</i>	90%		

**Case Supervision SCP**



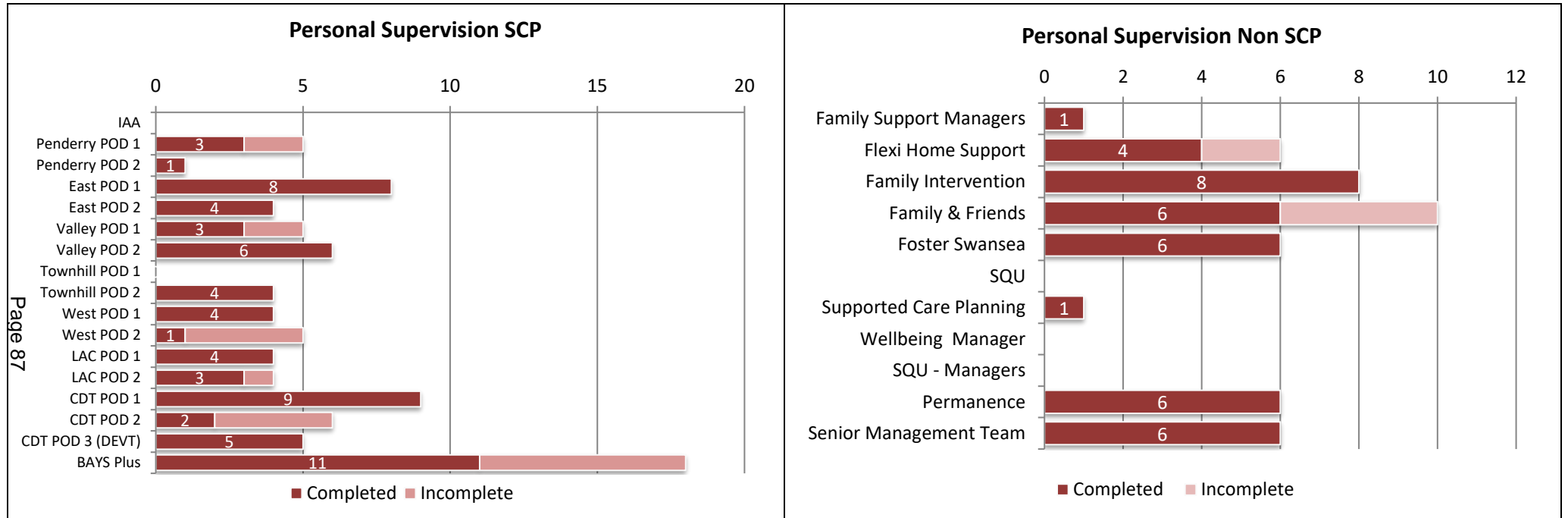
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What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?



# Quality – Case and Personal Supervision

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
The percentage of Personal Supervision sessions that took place within prescribed timescales	<b>106, 80.30%</b> (115, 70.99%)	90%		



What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?

## Quality – Signs of Safety Metrics

Measure / Metric	Result	Target	What's Good?	Status
Of the assessments completed during the month, the percentage that have Direct Work attached:	<b>18, 26.87%</b> <i>(22, 30.56%)</i>		High is Good	
Of the Initial Conferences held during the month, the percentage where there is evidence that a Family Network Meeting has taken place:	<b>5, 17.86%</b> <i>(11, 57.89%)</i>		High is Good	
Of the Conferences held during the month, the percentage where there is evidence of a child friendly explanation of the Safety Plan:	<b>22, 32.84%</b> <i>(31, 47.69%)</i>		High is Good	
The percentage of Words and Pictures completed within 5 working days of a child becoming Looked After due in the month:	<b>4, 33.33%</b> <i>(0, 0.00%)</i>		High is Good	
Of the Initial LAC Reviews held during the month, the percentage where there is evidence that a Family Network Meeting has taken place:	<b>2, 11.11%</b> <i>(0, 0.00%)</i>		High is Good	

What is working well?	What are we worried about?	What do we need to do?
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# Notes

# Agenda Item 9

## CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

<p><b>Meeting 1</b> Wednesday 26 June 2019</p> <p>4pm</p>	<p><b>Cabinet Member presentation and Q and A session</b> <i>Elliott King and Sam Pritchard, Cabinet Members</i> <i>Children's Services</i></p> <p><b>Review of the year 2018/19 and draft Work Programme 2019/20</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 2</b> Wednesday 28 August 2019</p> <p>4pm</p>	<p><b>Performance Monitoring</b></p> <p><b>Feedback on CIW Inspection Report – update on action plan</b></p> <p><b>CIW Performance Review and Letter</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 3</b> Monday 28 October 2019</p> <p>4pm</p>	<p><b>Briefing on Youth Offending Service</b></p> <p><b>Update on progress with CAMHS (referred from CAMHS Inquiry Panel)</b></p> <p><b>Update on report to WG on Safe LAC Reduction Strategy</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 4</b> Wednesday 18 December 2019</p> <p>10am</p>	<p><b>Update on Regional Adoption Service</b></p> <p><b>Corporate Parenting Board Update</b></p> <p><b>Performance Monitoring</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 5</b> Monday 24 February 2020</p> <p>3pm</p>	<p><b>Draft budget proposals for Child and Family Services</b></p> <p><b>Briefing on Carer Assessments (including young carers)</b></p> <p><b>Progress on Child and Family Improvement Programme</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding (County Lines and Child Sexual Exploitation)</b></p>
<p><b>Meeting 6</b> Monday 27 April 2020</p> <p>4pm</p>	<p><b>Performance Monitoring</b></p> <p><b>Child Disability Update</b></p> <p><b>Case studies on Swansea Youth Offending Service</b></p>

	<b>WAO report on Tackling Violence Against Women, Domestic (includes fieldwork in Swansea amongst others)</b>
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**Future work programme items:**

- CFS Complaints Annual Report 2018-19 (June 2020)
- Wales Audit Office Reports (dates to be confirmed) –
  - Integrated Care Fund (Joint Adult Services and CFS)
  - Care Experienced Children and Young People
- Why children become looked after (TBC)
- Examples of tools and techniques employed by front line staff in family engagement (TBC)
- Update on progress with CAMHS (October 2020)
- Update on Youth Offending Service (October 2020)

Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams  
Convener – Child & Family Services  
Scrutiny Panel

**BY EMAIL**

*Please ask for:* Councillor Elliott King  
*Direct Line:* 01792 63 7438  
*E-Mail:* [cllr.elliott.king@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.elliott.king@swansea.gov.uk)  
*Our Ref:* EK/KH  
*Your Ref:*  
*Date:* 5 November 2019

Dear Cllr Hood-Williams

Thank you for your letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 and for the interest and challenge that the Child and Family Services Scrutiny panel offer.

### **Performance monitoring**

I would agree that generally performance is good and consistently stable across all areas. There has been some additional information added, particularly around the front door or IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance Team). This forms part of the preparation work prior to moving to the new Early Help Hub model, with a view to tracking performance across the continuum of need.

I can confirm that the additional information in relation to missing children will be added to the CFS (Child and Family Service) monthly performance report in November.

The total number of Independent Children's Homes in Swansea is currently twelve (not including child disability short breaks) and Swansea use seven of these on a relatively regular basis. The total number of Swansea children placed in these homes currently amounts to five.

Staff absenteeism data will be added to the October 2019 report, and a glossary of acronyms contained within the monthly report will be provided to October's Scrutiny Panel. Scrutiny may wish to focus on the newly added signs of safety metrics going forward, to ensure progress is made in this area.

### **Feedback on Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Report – update on action plan**

I would agree that there has been some slippage in terms of timescales but progress is being made and feedback from CIW has not raised concerns.

The link to the CFS newsletter is below for your information.

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/article/53030/Your-latest-news>

## **Care Inspectorate Wales Local Authority performance review.**

In terms of succession planning and creating a stable workforce I can advise that a paper is to be presented to CMT away day on October 16<sup>th</sup>. I would be agreeable to providing feedback to Scrutiny as to the recommendations of this meeting as appropriate.

Finally CIW undertook a focused activity inspection within the Independent Reviewing Service on the 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> September 2019 which centred on the voice of the child. Once feedback has been received I suggest a report is scheduled into the Scrutiny work plan.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elliott King', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT KING  
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**



**To:**  
**Councillor Elliott King, Cabinet Member for  
Children Services (Early Years) / Councillor  
Sam Pritchard, Cabinet Member for  
Children Services (Young People)**

Please ask for: Scrutiny  
Gofynnwch am:  
Scrutiny Office 01792 637314  
Line:  
Llinell  
Uniongyrchol:  
e-Mail [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk)  
e-Bost:  
Date 27 November 2019  
Dyddiad:

**Summary:** This is a letter from the Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Members for Children Services following the meeting of the Panel on 28 October 2019. It covers progress on CAMHS, Youth Offending Service and Safe Looked After Children Reduction Strategy.

Dear Cllr King and Cllr Pritchard,

The Panel met on 28 October to receive an update on progress with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, a briefing on the Youth Offending Service and an update on the report to Welsh Government on safe Looked After Children Reduction Strategy.

We would like to thank you, Julie Thomas, Gavin Evans, Jay McGabe of the Council and Joanne Abbott-Davies of West Glamorgan University Health Board for attending and answering questions. We would also like to thank Cllr Mary Jones, who chaired the previous scrutiny inquiry into CAMHS and Cllr Jennifer Raynor for participating in the discussion. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the Panel, and, where necessary, raise any issues or recommendations for your consideration and response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

### **Update on Progress with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

Joanne Abbott-Davies, Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships, West Glamorgan University Health Board presented an update on progress and answered the Panel's questions. Gavin Evans also attended for this item.

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU**  
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We were pleased to hear that Swansea's compliance with Welsh Government performance targets for CAMHS, from the point of referral, is improving and that waiting time before children and young people are referred is also getting better in Swansea.

We heard that Education and Social Services are involved in CAMHS strategic steering group and that there is a shared direction of travel. We also heard that you are trying to get to a more joined up process but it is complicated.

We were informed that there will be an integrated CAMHS service with a single point of contact and that this is planned to be in place June 2020. We were pleased to hear this.

We heard that Emotional Health and Wellbeing is aimed at primary school age but that money has been received from a grant for youths age 11 to 18. This should help children who are now in comprehensive, who went through primary and did not get picked up for CAMHS.

We heard that Transition is both - from primary into secondary, and secondary onwards and that a group meeting is being held to try and improve the transition from primary into secondary.

We heard that referrals in future will be much broader, not just through GPs (schools, other professionals etc) but there is still work to do on the new standardised process for referral. We raised the issue of alternative interventions and the need to be clear about what alternative interventions are available for individuals who do not meet the criteria for CAMHS.

We were informed that Cwm Taff provide the CAMHS service in West Glamorgan Health Board and that the Health Board buy in the service from them.

We heard that you sit on CAMHS Partnership Board and that if members inform you of any children waiting a long time for the CAMHS service, you can chase it up.

We feel that the new plans for CAMHS look good. However, there have been many issues in the past and, therefore, the Panel needs to keep monitoring it and agreed to have another update on CAMHS in 12 months.

### **Briefing on Youth Offending Service**

Jay McCabe, Principal Officer Bays+ and Youth Justice Services, attended to update on developments since the disaggregation of Western Bay Youth Justice Service in March 2019 and the formation of Swansea Youth Justice Service in April 2019, and to answer the Panel's questions.

We were informed that the first Management Board meeting was held in July 2019; a Management Board training session was held on 30 October 2019; and the second Management Board meeting was held on 7 November 2019. We heard that in future the plan is to hold Board meeting bi-monthly and the hope is that individuals on the Board will take personal responsibility for an area.

We heard that the Youth Justice Service is now integrated with Child and Family Services in Swansea. We also heard that the Youth Justice Board will be carrying out a mock inspection in December 2019 to help review the improvement journey and make recommendations for areas of improvement before the next inspection, which will take place within 18 months from June 2019. We think that this is a very good idea.

We were pleased to hear that going forward the Department will have a much broader sense of how the service is performing (not just performance indicators).

The Panel stated that as this is a new service, we would like an update report on the Swansea Youth Offending Service in approximately 12 months to check on progress.

We were informed that Early intervention is key and that the Department is definitely seeing benefits of integrating locally. There is much more planning and joined up working between the Youth Offending Team, Children's Services, Early Intervention and Prevention etc. We were pleased to hear that many positives have been retained from the regional work.

The Cabinet Member for Education attended for this item and welcomed this report. She felt that the previous set up did not work, that members of the Board were not happy and performance indicators were too narrow.

We agreed that case studies on the service will come to the Panel in March 2020, to help members understand it better.

We heard that although there was a very bad inspection of the regional youth justice service, the recommendations are very useful for the newly formed youth justice service in Swansea. We also heard that it is very positive to see how the team have come up with solutions and developed processes.

We were informed that the Department is discussing doing qualitative as well as quantitative assessments. Historically many PIs have been performance driven but there is a need for more qualitative information to identify individuals experience and the outcomes.

### **Update on Report to Welsh Government on Safe LAC Reduction Strategy**

Julie Thomas updated us on this issue and answered the Panel's questions.

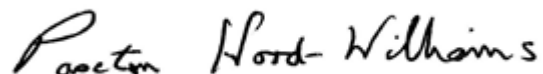
The WG priority for reducing the number of looked after children in Wales was discussed. The Panel was informed about the detail of the visit by WG officials. We heard that Swansea had received very positive feedback following their presentation, and the proposals put forward in terms of safely reducing the number of children looked after within Swansea was accepted with no additional information required. We also heard that the proposals and soft targets reflect the work that has been ongoing in Swansea for a number of years so no significant change to practice or CFS Improvement Plan was required.

The Panel acknowledges that regular reports are made available to us through reporting of CFS monthly performance report.

## Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your views and comments on any of the issues raised but, in this instance, we do not require a formal response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paxton Hood-Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

**PAXTON HOOD-WILLIAMS**  
**CONVENER, CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**CLLR.PAXTON.HOOD-WILLIAMS@SWANSEA.GOV.UK**