

# Agenda

## Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

**Tuesday, 20 September 2022, 2.00 pm**  
**County Hall, Worcester**

All County Councillors are invited to attend and participate

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Scrutiny on telephone number 01905 844965 or by emailing [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

## DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:  
**'Disclosable pecuniary interests'** and **'other disclosable interests'**

### WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

**NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you**

### WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
  - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

**NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI**

### WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
  - You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

### WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

### DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests** **OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

### DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
  - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

## **Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

### **Tuesday, 20 September 2022, 2.00 pm, County Hall, Worcester**

#### **Membership**

##### **Councillors:**

Cllr Steve Mackay (Chairman), Cllr David Chambers (Vice Chairman), Cllr Dan Boatright, Cllr Kyle Daisley, Cllr Nathan Desmond, Cllr Matt Jenkins, Cllr Jo Monk, Cllr Tony Muir and Cllr David Ross

##### **Co-opted Church Representatives (for education matters)**

Mr T Reid (Church Representative - Church of England)

##### **Parent Governor Representatives (for education matters)**

Mr M Hughes (Parent Governor Representative)

#### **Agenda**

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page No</b>
1	<b>Apologies and Welcome</b>	
2	<b>Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip</b>	
3	<b>Public Participation</b> Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 16 September 2022). Enquiries can be made through the telephone number/e-mail address below.	
4	<b>Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b> (previously circulated)	
5	<b>Supporting Families First Update</b> (Indicative timing: 2.05 – 2.55pm)	1 - 26
6	<b>Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring</b> (Indicative timing: 2.55 – 3.45pm)	27 - 38
7	<b>Work Programme</b> (Indicative timing: 3.45 – 3.55pm)	39 - 44

Agenda produced and published by the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager (Interim Monitoring Officer) Legal and Governance, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP. To obtain further information or hard copies of this agenda, please contact Alyson Spall/ Alyson Grice 01905 844962 email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the [Council's Website](#)

Item No	Subject	Page No
---------	---------	---------

**NOTES**

**Webcasting**

Members of the Panel are reminded that meetings of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel are Webcast on the Internet and will be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website. Members of the public are informed that if they attend this meeting their images and speech may be captured by the recording equipment used for the Webcast and may also be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website.

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**20 SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **SUPPORTING FAMILIES FIRST UPDATE**

---

#### **Summary**

1. The Panel is asked to consider the update provided on the Supporting Families First (SFF) Service.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families has been invited to attend the meeting.

#### **Background**

3. SFF was first developed in January 2020 as a multidisciplinary service providing intense support to families to prevent family breakdown and thus preventing the need for care.
4. The service is managed by the Director for Early Help, Children in Need and Family Front Door and has a dedicated Group Manager. The three locality teams are each managed by a Team Manager supported by three Advanced Social Work practitioners who manage and supervise the front line multidisciplinary team that includes Outreach Workers, Money Mentor, Emotional Health and Well-being workers for children, Substance Misuse workers and Youth Workers.
5. The first-year evaluation report was presented to the Panel in July 2021.
6. The SFF service was further developed in its second year to adopt the learning and effectiveness of the “Edge of Care” model into prevention of escalating risk and need for child protection and as such to use this as a model of approach for the Children in Need cohort.
7. From May to September 2021, this multidisciplinary approach to ways of working with Children in Need was piloted. Following the pilot, the service was implemented in September 2021 as the model of intervention for Children in Need (CIN) i.e Edge of Care and Edge of Child Protection.
8. The new staffing structure allowed for both progression and new skills and opportunities for the workforce within Worcestershire Children First (WCF) as well as external recruitment, supporting retention of staff. The full permanent establishment of SFF was appointed to by December 2021 with geographical alignment to the Family Front Door (FFD) and locality services to ensure seamless services for children and to build on professional partnerships.

#### **Summary of Outcome for Children and Service User Feedback**

9. The Supporting Families Overview report for Quarter 4 is attached as Appendix 1.

10. As of March 22, the team are working with 322 children and the table in Section 2 of Appendix 1 shows quarter on quarter increase in demand reflected across the service.

11. In respect of the chronological age, children aged 1-10 years equates to 135 children. The largest proportion of children are teenagers aged between 13 – 16 years old and the climb in numbers starts aged 11 years and peaks at 15 years. This data correlates with young people who will be experiencing adolescence and the challenges for the child and parents/carers at that time. 4-year-olds are the lowest numbers of children the team works with, and 15-year-olds are the highest.

12. Mental Health is the predominate risk factor identified but financial challenges and substance misuse are also significant contributors to family breakdown.

13. As of March 2022, 8% of children became Looked After or escalated to Child Protection (CP). This equates to 29 children being escalated to Child Protection and 6 becoming looked after, giving a positive intervention outcome rate of 92%.

14. There has been an increase in the complexity of cases and a small increase in cases escalating to child protection in Q3 from Q2. This is reflective of the increased risk and need seen generally in children's social care resulting from the impact of Covid-19 on families, including the well reported impact of inconsistency in school attendance, financial hardship and poor mental health.

15. WebStar is implemented to measure impact and outcomes for children and parents/carers. The Webstar focuses on 8 key questions which are scaled between 0-10. Children and parents are asked individually to talk to staff about how they feel and where they would score themselves at the beginning and end of intervention in terms of their;

- Happiness, Health and Safety
- Education, Work and Community Engagement
- Emotional Health & Well-Being
- Substance Misuse and Finances

#### **Webstar data for Children March 2022**

- 40% of children told us they felt happier.
- 32% of children told us they felt safer, with 48% reporting no change.
- 40% of children told us that their access to Education/Training had improved.
- 28% of children told us their financial situation had improved.
- 48% of children felt more in control of substance misuse, 12% by 5 or more scores

#### **Webstar data for Adults March 2022**

- 61% of adults said their happiness had improved.
- 54% of adults reported feeling safer.
- 54% of adults reported their physical health had improved.
- 35% of adult reported no change, which is a comparable percentage with the feedback from children (32%).

- 57% of adults told us their Emotional Health & Well-Being had improved.
- 50% of adults said substance misuse was less of an impact in their family.
- 43% of adults reported improvements in their financial position.

16. In May 2022, WCF undertook a targeted feedback survey with parents on their experiences of the Supporting Families First Service following case closure to the service. In total, feedback was gained from **59 parents**; this report (attached at Appendix 2) summarises their feedback on the overall impact and biggest improved change. The majority of families identified a range of positive outcomes having been supported by the service, the most significant were parent/child relationships, improved whole family relationships and emotional wellbeing.

17. Demonstrating the effectiveness and sustainable outcomes in the original work with Edge of Care tracking, of the 51 original Edge of Care cases **twenty-five months on from the original outcome** there is overall, a high percentage of cases with sustained outcomes. **35 remain closed to social care, a 69% sustained success rate**. 8 children are open to social care at a CIN/CP level and 8 have become “looked after” during this period.

18. As the new SFF model works with a much larger and more diverse cohort, new quarterly tracking is being conducted for a new group of the first 50 Children in Need from May 2021 (the “control group”) to monitor long-term sustainability in prevention of escalated risk. At February 2022, (8 months after SFF allocation), 20 children’s cases successfully closed, 1 became looked after and 6 escalated to Child Protection. This again provides evidence of sustained positive outcomes for children and young people.

19. It is recognised that the relationship between home and school is significant for children and the risk of family breakdown can impact upon their education, but also challenges in school can impact not only on relationships at home, but parenting capacity. Risk and vulnerability for children not in school can be significantly increased; therefore, the learning will strengthen the approaches taken in SFF and education settings.

20. The SFF team have worked on a “Education project” with the Virtual Headteacher, looking at the education needs and experiences of CIN and edge of care children and how these impacts upon the child at home and in education and the correlations between this; and what as a partnership can be learnt and developed in terms of understanding and practice. The evaluation of this project is underway but the data on children missing in education shows an improving picture of those who are open to social care and missing education reducing, with only 1 child open to CP or CIN being missing since April 2021, when there were six.

21. Given the high demand WCF have invested £96k in 2022/23 as part-year funding and for 2023/24 the figure will be £165k as three additional Advanced Social Work Practitioners (ASWP) have been added to enable them to effectively manage a workable caseload of 45 children per ASWP using the pod management approach.

## **Purpose of the meeting**

22. The Panel is asked to:

- Consider and comment on the approach and effectiveness of the SFF services
- Determine whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

## **Supporting Information**

**Appendix 1:** Quarter 4 Supporting Families First service outcome report March 22

**Appendix 2:** Supporting Families First Service User feedback report May 22

## **Specific Contact Points for this report**

Emma Brittain, Director of Early Help, Children In need and the Family Front Door.  
Kevin Bryan: Group Manager, Worcestershire children First

Alyson Grice/Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers Tel: 01905 844962/846607  
Email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and Minutes of the Children and Families O&S Panel July 2021.  
[Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel 16th July, 2021.](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)





# Quarter 4 Supporting Families Overview Report

January 2022 to March 2022

## Contents

1) Executive Summary .....	3
2) Impact and outcome for Children and Young People.....	3
3) District demand into Supporting Families First for children.....	4
4) Children and Young People Demographics.....	5
5) Age demographics .....	5
6) Ethnicity demographics .....	6
7) Presenting risk and needs of our edge of care cases in Quarter 4 .....	6
8) Presenting risk and needs of our Children in Need in Quarter 4.....	7
9) Intervention outcomes for families .....	8
10) Children who have escalating needs as an outcome.....	9
11) Webstar impact and outcomes for families .....	10
Webstar Scoring for Children upon closure.....	10
Webstar scoring for Adult’s upon closure .....	11
a) Service impact - Money Mentor .....	12
b) Service Impact – Substance Misuse Worker.....	12
c) Service Impact – Emotional Health and Wellbeing team .....	12
12) Learning from complaints and compliments .....	13
a) Complaints.....	13
b) Compliments:.....	13
13) The Supporting Families First Team.....	15
14) Service Impact – Section 17 spend data .....	15
15) Tracking the Original Cohort of edge of care Children .....	16
16) Tracking the CIN cohort .....	17
17) Next Steps for Supporting Families First.....	18

## 1) Executive Summary

Supporting Families First (S.F.F) remains one team. There are three pods within it to manage a county wide service split into geographical areas. Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove, Worcester and Malvern and Redditch and Wychavon. This model allows Supporting families First to continue to have a close working relationship with our partners and community resources in each geographical area and respond effectively to needs and risks.

Since May 2021 Supporting Families First widened its remit from that of Edge of Care to include children in need as a pilot up until September 2021; the success of this pilot led to a permanent expansion of the service as a multi-disciplinary approach to working with both child in need and edge of care. Currently S.F. F's principal and largest cohort of children is supporting children who are subject to Child in Need plans (CIN). S.F.F with the second cohort being children at risk of family breakdown and on the edge of care.

The team remain predominantly permanently staffed across all disciplines. The clinical lead will be leaving us in June 2022, and we have a vacancy for our Autism parenting support worker, admin and Advanced social Work practitioner at this time. Active recruitment is taking place to fill these positions.

In quarter 4 we worked with 449 children 201 were new referrals in this quarter and we have seen a slightly higher demand in the Worcester / Malvern area. Our cohort of children is predominantly boys by a slight margin, white British children with the highest age range being 13–16-year-olds.

Quarter 4 has seen us working with the largest cohort of children since the change in remit in May 2021. 99% of these children have remained at home with their families with 29 children escalating to child protection and 6 becoming Looked After. The rise in child protection and looked after children in this quarter is an unusual and unpredicted change in outcomes for children and the outcomes achieved for supporting families first therefore further analysis is being undertaken to understand this.

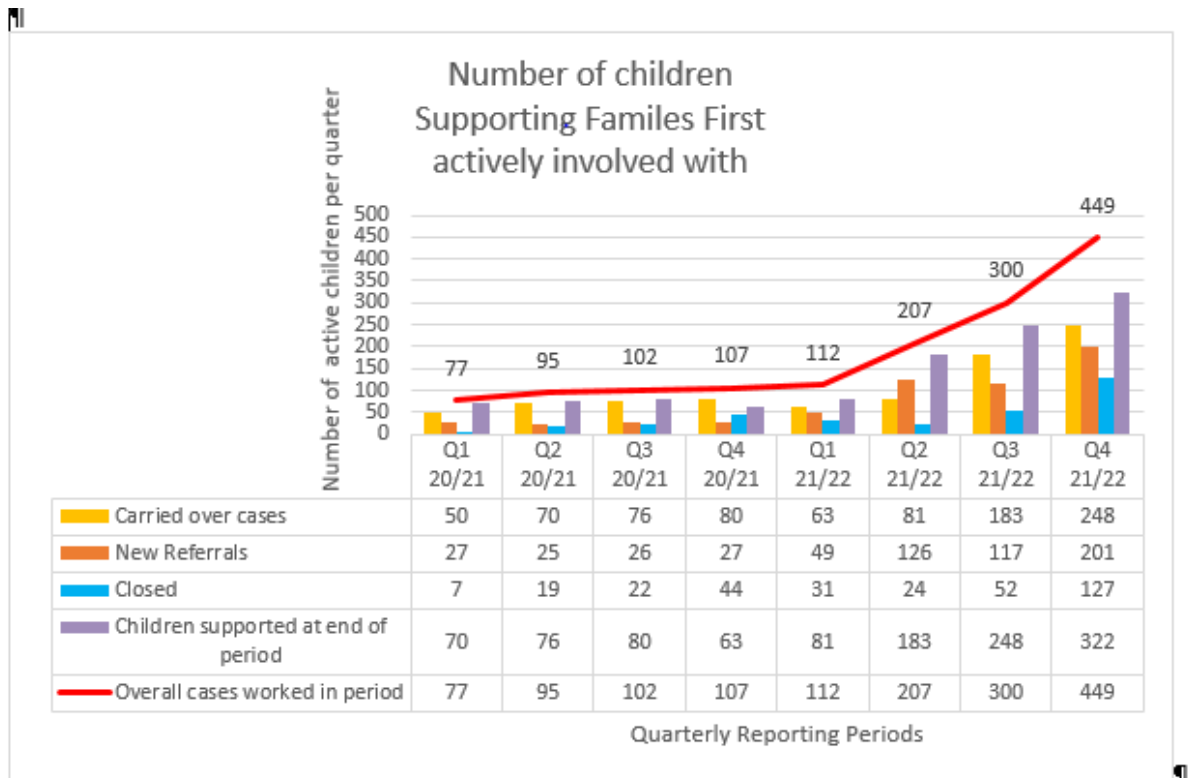
## 2) Impact and outcome for Children and Young People

Supporting Families First received 201 new cases in quarter 4: 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

The graph below shows the increase over the quarters of children entering S.F.F under its revised criteria, cases exiting and those remaining open within the service. The cases worked overall since the previous quarter has risen by 149 children. Which correlates with the timeframe of working with families over a period of time and the expansion of the recruitment into the team. We do see a significant increase in social work assessment outcomes for families meeting the threshold for child in need by quarter 4 from 117 in quarter 3 to 201 in quarter 4; an increase of 84 children.

The Supporting Families First team have been able to continue to step down and move families from level 4 needs to early help in the community. The rise in quarter 4 highlights the first 6 months of intervention outcomes for family's who needed the longer term multi-disciplinary support. In quarter 3; 52 children were stepped down in quarter 4; 127 children, showing an increase of 75 children which was expected given the complexities families are presenting with. This would relate to the 6 months of intervention by Supporting Families First for those cases that came into the pilot in May /

June and July, so an expected trend and reassuring that families are exiting positively following intervention.



### 3) District demand into Supporting Families First for children.

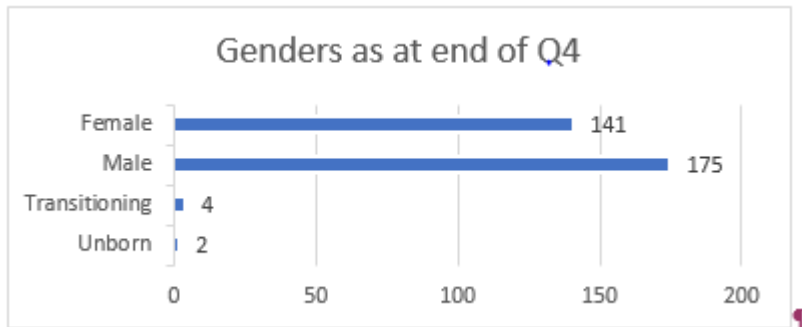
Part of the monitoring looks at the demand into the three district pod's. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 there 322 children open to Supporting Families First with the breakdown by district as follows:

District pod	Number of children
Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove	102
Redditch and Wychavon	98
Worcester and Malvern	122
<b>Total for q4 only</b>	<b>322</b>

The difference between the teams is part of the service demand monitoring and needs to be looked at in terms of the needs of families, length the SFF service is involved with a family, the outcomes achieved and the closure rates and the control cohort outcomes in the longer term.

## 4) Children and Young People Demographics

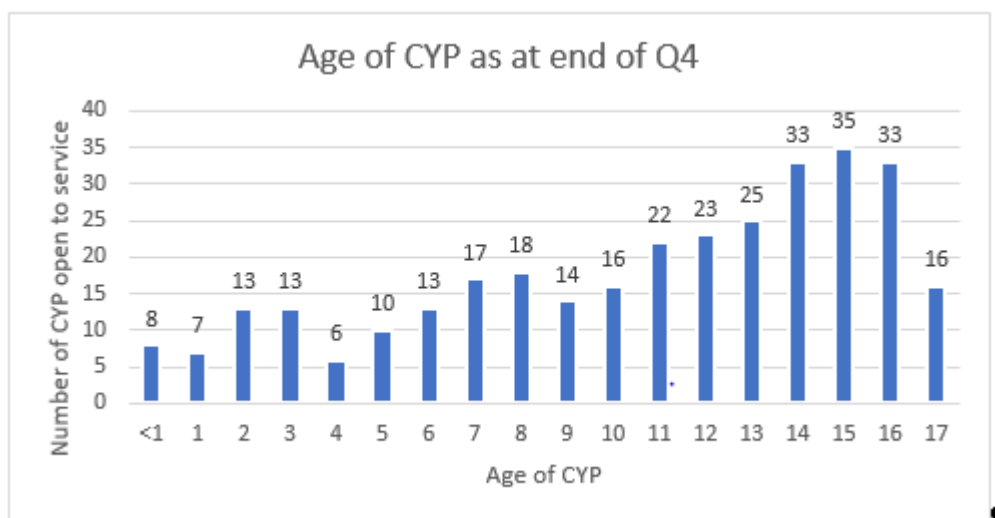
In respect of gender Supporting Families First has consistently worked with more male children than females, 175 and 141 respectively. Two unborn and four young people who are transitioning. Further analysis of genders in relation to edge of care v's children in need plans and the control cohort will help our understanding of needs and early intervention.



## 5) Age demographics

In respect of the chronological age, children aged 1-10 years equates to 135. The largest proportion of children are those aged 11 – 17 years old totalling 187. 4-year-olds are the lowest numbers of children the team works with, and 15-year-olds are the highest.

The largest proportion of children are teenagers aged between 13 – 16 years old for each age there is over 30 children in this cohort. The climb in numbers starts aged 11 years and peaks at 15 years. This data correlates with young people who will be experiencing adolescence and the challenges for the child and parents/ carers at that time. In quarter 1 we will now have our first year of Supporting families first CIN and edge of care data where we can identify patterns and trends in ages, genders, and needs.



## 6) Ethnicity demographics

The tables below show the ethnicity and nationality of the children and young people who S.F.F have worked with throughout 2021-22.

**Note:** There are a number of records where ethnicity and nationality data are not captured, 136 are not identified. In order to rectify this, the administration team within Supporting Families First are screening all cases to ensure we have this where families will / have shared this personal data.

The largest ethnic group which S.F.F works with is White British at 67% and the smallest is any other Asian background at 0.2%. British is the largest nationality with Portuguese and Latvian being the smallest with 0.2% respectively. The accessibility and inclusion of families is very important, and the team use interpreters and ensure our work is culturally sensitive and diverse in our delivery.

Ethnicity	% of CYP
White British	67 %
Any other White background	3.2 %
Any other mixed background	2.5 %
White and Asian	2 %
White and Black Caribbean	1.8 %
Gypsy / Roma	1.3 %
Indian	0.4 %
Pakistani	0.4 %
Any other Asian background	0.2 %
Refused	0.2 %
Not recorded	21.2 %

Nationality	% of CYP
British	73.6 %
Polish	0.9 %
Latvian	0.4 %
Other Nationality	0.4 %
Portuguese	0.2 %
Sri Lankan	0.2 %
not recorded	24.4 %

## 7) Presenting risk and needs of our edge of care cases in Quarter 4

In quarter 4 we were working with 27 edge of care children. When looking at the factors in respect of children being deemed to be edge of care the top three in order were:

Presenting factor	% of edge of care children
Mental Health	31%
Domestic Abuse	15%
GET SAFE concerns	12%
Neglect was the lowest factor	2%

The next table gives a more global overview of all the presenting needs and risks for the edge of care children worked with in quarter 4.

## Edge of Care Children and Young People open to SFF in Q4 – Assessment Factors

Assessment Factor (Please note that some children will have more than one factor)	Number of Children and Young People
Abuse	4
Domestic Violent	8
GETSAFE	6
Learning Disability	5
Mental Health	16
Neglect	1
Physical Disability	3
Substance	5
Other	4

## 8) Presenting risk and needs of our Children in Need in Quarter 4

In quarter 4 we had 295 children in need, mental health and domestic abuse both feature; but we see a rise in substance misuse for this cohort of families and a drop in Get safe factors although we know these factors can increase vulnerability to exploitation for these children. The factors are specified in percentages below:

Presenting factor	% of CIN Children
Mental Health	24%
Domestic abuse	17%
Substance Misuse	17%
Neglect is the lowest factor	4%

## Children in Need, Children and Young People open to SFF in Q4 by Assessment Factors

Assessment Factor (Please note that some children will have more than one factor)	Number of Children and Young People
Abuse	88
Domestic Violent	136
GETSAFE	72
Learning Disability	49
Mental Health	191
Neglect	35
Physical Disability	38
Substance	137
Other	62

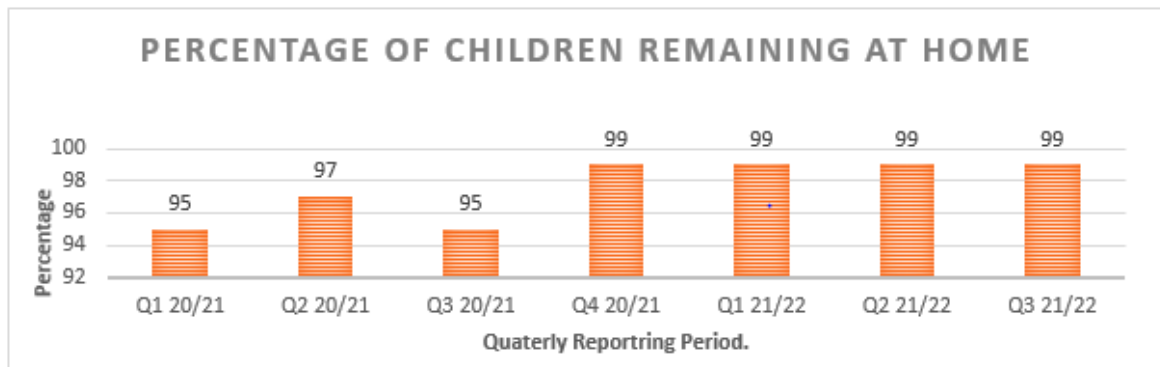
When we look at the data set above, the factors below must also be taken into consideration:

- *Tables represent a count of factors, not children – children may have multiple factors so some factors will be greater than number of children.*
- *Some factors may be identified against child, parent or other householder.*

- Factors are taken from the most recent assessment on entry to SFF and not needs identified during intervention or closure outcomes.
- Factors in the above tables may have been amalgamated from more granular data on the child's records and in assessment forms, e.g., "Getsafe" consists of Missing, CSE, Trafficking, Gangs, socially unacceptable behaviour, FGM, Abuse linked to faith or belief, Child criminal exploitation

## 9) Intervention outcomes for families

The percentage of children remaining at home who are open to S.F.F in Quarter 4 remains at 99%. Quarter 4 is the largest cohort the team have been working with as the service has developed in its first year. The figure continues to demonstrate that this intensive multi-disciplinary targeted approach to edge of care and Children in need can create changes and prevent escalation to child protection and becoming looked after for the majority of children and families. The control tracking of the 50 Children in need cases will start to inform us of the longer-term outcomes for these children.



## 10) Children who have escalating needs as an outcome

**The percentage of children becoming Looked After or escalating to Child Protection in Quarter 4 is 8% of 449 children.** Although this percentage is the highest out of the previous quarters the numbers it is significant in that the numbers of children worked with in quarter 4 is significantly higher than the other quarters and the work undertaken by the team to prevent escalation of risk will for some families have been longer and more intensive.

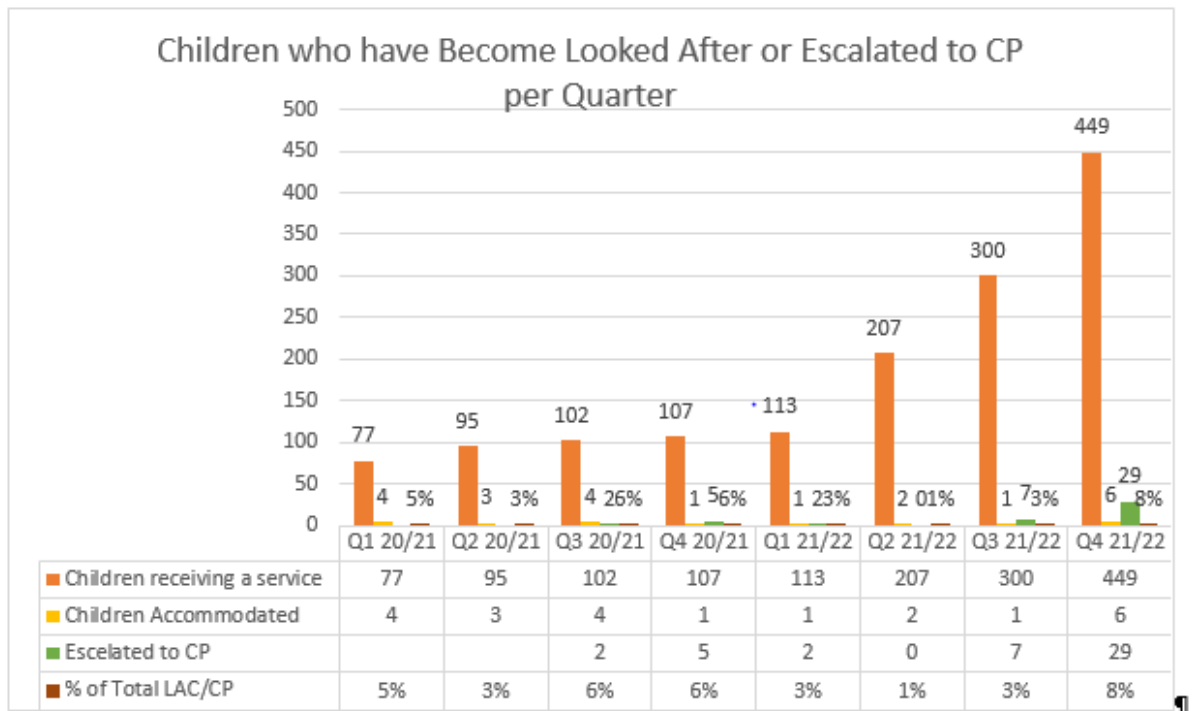
Therefore, quarter 4 we can see that six children/young people became looked after. Four of these children were part of a sibling group where issues of parental neglect were a factor.

The other two young people were accommodated due to an irretrievable breakdown in relationships with their parents and no wider family members being able to / not wanting to care for them.

The escalation to child protection plans is very significant in this quarter and there is a joint audit planned between the Group Manager for Supporting Families First and the Group Manager for the Assessment teams to look at this cohort to analysis and understand this further for both service areas learning and development. Management of risk and prevention of risk is part of these teams work and we need to respond as appropriate when it is not safe for children and therefore, we will



expect to see some children escalate in these areas, but we need to understand this and look at this in more detail.



## 11) Webstar impact and outcomes for families

### Webstar Data at end of Quarter 4

Supporting Families First continues to use Webstar to understand the impact and effectiveness of the intervention on families experiences in working with us. A Webstar is utilised at the beginning and at the end of intervention, it is a visual tool which assists the people within the family to see change/progress and any areas that require further development:

- 167 active Webstars were completed with 75 families in quarter 4.
- 93 Webstars were undertaken with adults.
- 74 Webstars were undertaken with children.
- 25 Closure Webstar were completed with Children.
- 28 Closure Webstars were completed with Adults.

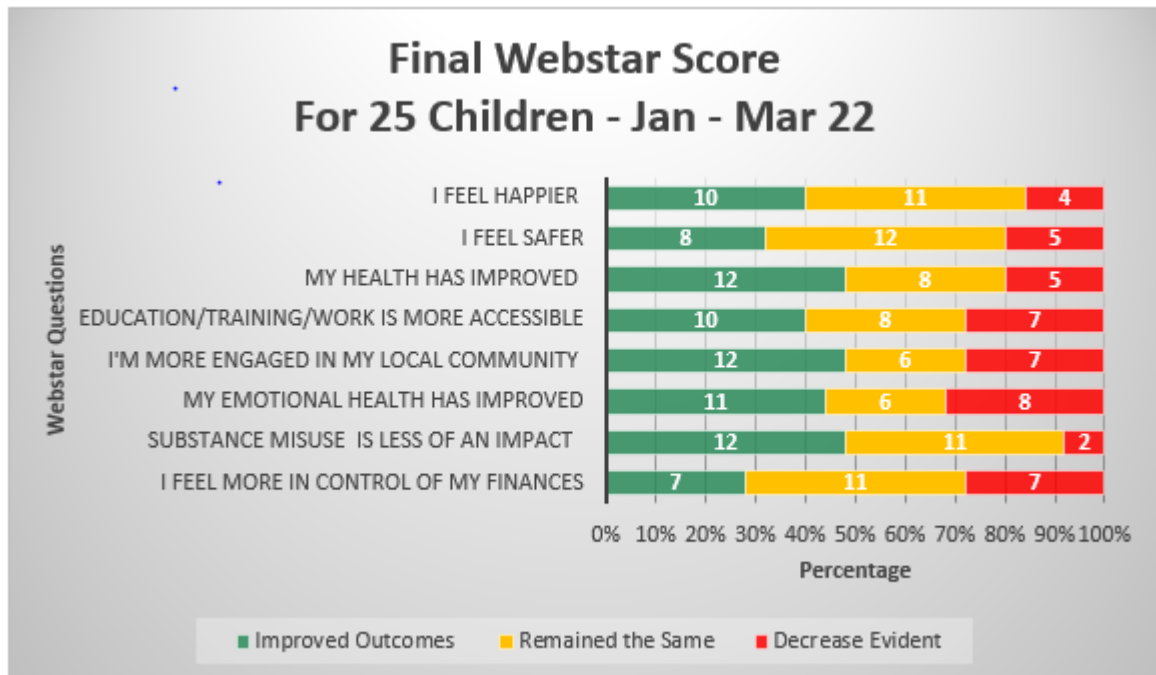
### Webstar Scoring for Children upon closure

This tells us that children felt:

- 40% of children told us they felt happier.
- 32% of children told us they felt safer, with 48% reporting no change.
- 40% of children told us that their access to Education/Training had improved.
- 28% of children told us their financial situation had improved.

- 48% of children felt more in control of substance misuse, 12% by 5 or more scores.

For some children they have decreased their score from their initial score, and this needs further understanding and therefore we have also planned a direct conversation through service user feedback which will take place in quarter 1 of this year to understand in more detail children and young people’s experiences now. The details and findings of this will be published in quarter 1 report.



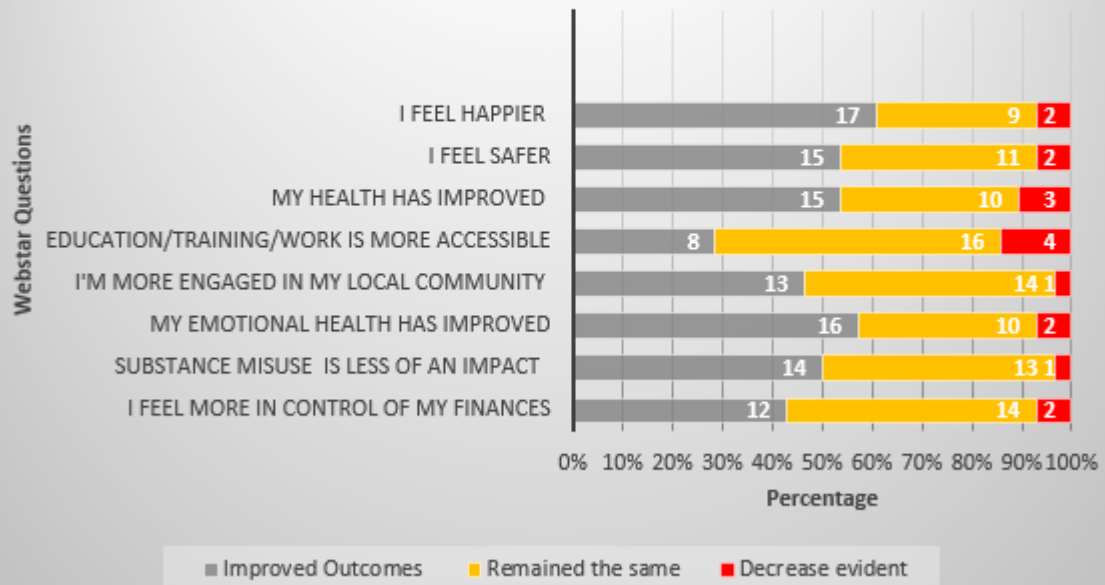
## Webstar scoring for Adult’s upon closure

This tells us that adults felt:

- 61% of adults said their happiness has improved.
- 54% of adults reported feeling safer.
- 54% of adults reported their physical health had improved.
- 35% of adult reported no change, which is a comparable percentage with the feedback from children (32%).
- 57% of adults told us their Emotional Health & Well-Being had improved.
- 50% of adults said substance misuse was less of an impact in their family.
- 43% of adults reported improvements in their financial position.

Based on the presenting needs of families and the Webstar outcomes in this quarterly report we have focused on the impact and outcome of certain roles with supporting families first and the learning we have seen:

## Final Webstar Score For 28 Adults - Jan to Mar 22



## a) Service impact - Money Mentor

2022 continues to be a challenging climate economically due to a number of factors, the rising cost of living, and inflation being at 9% which is the highest in 40 years. In terms of increased prices of food, energy prices and petrol/diesel the situation is set to continue for some time.

There have been changes in personnel for this role and we now have 2x full time Money Mentors who have been in post since March 2022 and will undoubtedly see increased demand for their help and support.

In 2021/22, Supporting Families First has issued 53 foodbank vouchers to 20 families in need during their intervention and support. Ten of these were families that the money mentor had identified needed urgent help and they started working with them.

Involvement from Money Mentors has started to now evidence a reduced need for foodbank vouchers, with 70% of families not needing a further voucher post their involvement.

The Webstar data shows that 21% attributed improvement as a result of Money Mentor input.

## b) Service Impact – Substance Misuse Worker

Substance misuse continues to be one of the top risks and needs of our Child in Need cohort of children and young people.

In our 2021/22 initial Webstar data, 51 children reported that substance misuse impacted their lives, 25 reported it was impacting themselves and 26 reported their family's substance misuse impacted them. 64 parents/carers reported substance misuse impacted their lives, with 11 referring to their children and young people's substance misuse as impacting on them.

Based on the final Webstar data for this period, 18 children and young people reported an improvement on the impact of substance misuse on their lives. 10 of these (55% of all increased scores) were attributed to the work of a substance misuse worker, with 3 Children and Young people reporting an increase of 9 points. 10 adults (45% of the 32 scores showing an increase) reported improvements following working with a substance misuse worker, with 4 parents scaling an improvement by 5 or more points.

## c) Service Impact – Emotional Health and Wellbeing team

In 2021/22, 54% of 378 children and parents scaled their emotional health and wellbeing as 5 or below on their initial Webstar data.

In our 2021/22 final Webstar data, 25 children and 32 parents reported an improvement in their emotional health and wellbeing.

Of those final scores, 6 young people reported an improvement to their own emotional health and wellbeing after their parents had received a service.

38% of the improvements of adult's emotional health and wellbeing scoring was following intervention from the emotional health and well-being team.

## 12) Learning from complaints and compliments

### a) Complaints

In Quarter 4 there were two formal complaints in respect of Supporting Families First representing 3.5%. In total there were 57 complaints investigated at stage 1 across WCF. The complaints were both dealt with at stage one with only one point being upheld in respect of the timeliness of a CIN meeting not being convened within timescales (6-8 weeks). One complaint was a parent stating that they felt that the CIN plan ended prematurely, the other was the complaint where one point was upheld. This complaint was made by a Special Guardian (Maternal Grandmother) who wanted her Granddaughter accommodated.

### b) Compliments:

Compliments received by the team in quarter 4 have been from both professionals and families and are captured below as examples.

#### Feedback from our families:

**From a Young Person:** *“Everything was done well, I was in a dark place, the help I got from people helped me get out of it”*

**From a Parent:** *“Luke and Caroline helped a lot, always answered my calls and they came out regularly and I saw Luke once or twice a week. Caroline visited once a week and twice a week towards the end. I did build up a good bond with both of them especially Luke.”*

**From a Parent:** *“I don't think she could have done anything better, she listened and talked me through things, and she helped. I found it helpful, and it helped a lot. Becki was lovely and she listened, but she let me talk as well which was good.”*

**From a Parent:** *“Whole team were brilliant, mum now has more confidence and feels things are moving forward, she doesn't feel like anything could have been done better”*

**From a Parent:** *“N has really benefitted from Rebecca's support, and this has helped her to open up more at home”*

**From a Parent:** *“AW said she has valued having someone independent and non-judgemental to talk to about the impact on her wellbeing, she has said that she has found talking to someone who understands from a personal perspective has helped her to feel that someone 'gets it'. This she says has helped her to understand L better and attempt to make adjustments to her own behaviour to better support him.”*

**From a Parent:** *"Thank you so much u let me open up to u and it's all down to u that we can now get on with our lives"*

**From a Parent:** *"I just wanted to say it was such a lovely visit today and I can't believe C took to you so well, I finally feel listened to and that means a lot"*

**From a Parent:** *"I never thought I would see the day when I could be rid of so much #%!@, thank you for always believing in me and making me realise I am worth it, from the bottom of my heart you have made such a difference to all of us and if I win the lottery you will be the first person I give a million too"*

**From a Parent:** *"Thank you for your patience and understanding with us all as a family, you will be missed"*

#### **Partner agency feedback:**

**From a TM (LSG):** *"I just wanted to send my compliments to Anna – Anna has been involved with a number of my workers where FGM's have taken place. All my workers have advised me that Anna has been brilliant. She's calm, supportive, considerate and helps facilitate what are often difficult meetings and all the prep that goes along with this. We look forward to working with Anna in future."*

**From an ASWP:** *"Mum spoke incredibly highly of the support that we have put in place, which I believe has mainly be completed by Dave and Holly. She could not thank us enough for everything we have and are doing. Also, it was clear the children have an amazing relationship with Dave which was really lovely to see. "*

### 13) The Supporting Families First Team

In quarter 3 we had achieved our establishment in the main but had some changes within the workforce creating a vacancy for an advanced social work practitioner, Administrator and the Clinical lead informing us of his intention to move onto private practice. The development of an Autism parenting worker was put on hold as the person who was identified had a change of circumstances and Worcestershire Children first wants to look at this role across both Supporting Families First and SEND. There is planned recruitment drives to fill all these vacant positions.

### 14) Service Impact – Section 17 spend data

The team work effectively with community-based partners and resources to promote the needs of children e.g., the use of the Half term holidays and activities fund (HAF) to ensure families have access to the right support in their community for longer term outcomes and sustainability for them. Supporting Families First do have a section 17 support budget and the needs identified that this has been used of is as follows:

The summary of how this was distributed in 21/22

Type of Cost	Value
Allocated Workers Direct Work	£217
Childminding/Nursery Fees	£14
Household & Personal Items	£2,001
Sport & Leisure Activities	£1,289
Travel Costs	£1,478
Total	£4,999

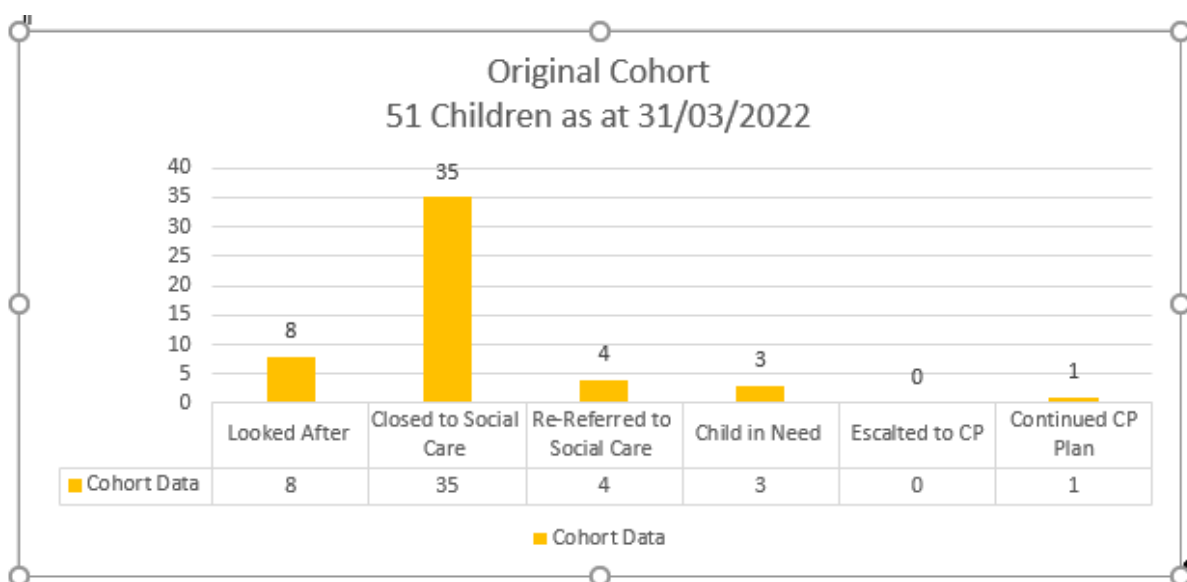
## 15) Tracking the Original Cohort of edge of care Children

The original cohort data is developed from the 51 children who were deemed on the edge of care at the "Go Live" date in January 2020 and were open to Supporting Families First.

The original edge of care cohort is tracked and report on in each quarterly report to provide the latest evaluation of care prevention sustainability within those families.

We can see here that in twenty-five months on of the 51 children 35 /69% remain closed to Children's Social Care. Four have been re-referred, one was escalated and remains on a child protection plan. Three are open to Child In Need Plans. Eight children (16%) are Looked after.

This demonstrates positive long-term outcomes for 69% of edge of care children who have remained at home safely with their families without the need of further statutory support at level 4 needs. This demonstrates that this model of multi-disciplinary work is effective in care and child protection prevention in both the short and longer term for edge of care children.





## 16) Tracking the CIN cohort

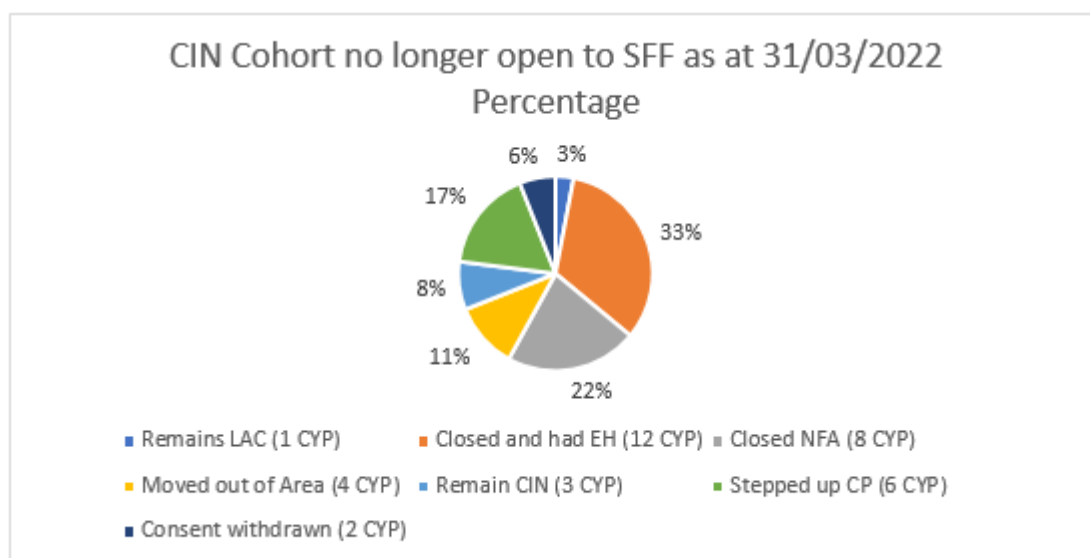
To continue to learn and monitor the impact and effectiveness of this approach with children in need; we have also set up tracking of 50 new CIN cases that entered Supporting Families First in Quarter One 2021 which was the start of the pilot phase May 2021.

In terms of this cohort of 50 identified children currently:

- 14 Children (28%) remain open to Supporting Families First,
- 20 children have been closed and / or stepped down to early help/universal services.
- 1 child has become Looked After,
- 3 children are open as children in need in Locality Safeguarding as it no longer met the remit of SFF e.g., privately fostered.
- 6 children have escalated to Child Protection,
- 4 children moved out of Worcestershire during the Supporting Families engagement.
- 2 children's parents did not consent to a child in need plan and support from Supporting Families First.

Closed no further action is defined as no follow up by any Worcestershire Children First social care teams including our early help teams as the family are accessing community-based early help support.

Therefore, this control group will continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis to look at longer term impact and outcomes for the children.



## 17) Next Steps for Supporting Families First

1) In quarter one 2022, we are one year on from the pilot stage starting so going forward we will be tracking the patterns and trends we have experienced in this first year for our families and taking that learning into our practice but also how it can inform early help in the community. An example of this is the audit of cases that escalated to child protection and LAC in quarter 4 by the Group Managers and the gender and age range trends for CIN and edge of care.

2) The Webstar outcomes continue to shape the impact and effectiveness of the service for both CIN and Edge of care children by analysing the changes made across the intervention period aligned with the tracking of outcomes both in the short and longer term.

3) The control group of CIN and edge of care children will continue to be monitored 6 monthly to understand the longer-term impact and outcomes after closure to Supporting Families First.

4) The pivotal support around supporting children with their emotional health and wellbeing in school continues. This further development will look at how we work collaboratively in terms of education offer for children who are subject to Child in need at level 4 need but in need with a focus on the emerging needs outlined below:

- Existing emotional health/wellbeing and mental health needs
- Challenge to care.
- Get Safe risks/vulnerability
- Excluded or not subject to a full-time timetable
- Diagnosed Autistic or on the umbrella pathway
- SEND
- GRT children

5) Continue the work with the virtual head on educational outcomes for children on the edge of care and children in need and how we work with educational settings and WCF team.

6) Service user feedback on what made a difference to families after closure. This will help us understand the impact of the different roles and functions within the team and their effectiveness for families.

7) Further work on the development of the models of practice, tools and direct work the multi-disciplinary team uses.

8) recruit to the Clinical lead and any new multi-disciplinary vacancies.

**Report produced by:**

**Kevin Bryan, Group Manager, Supporting Families First**

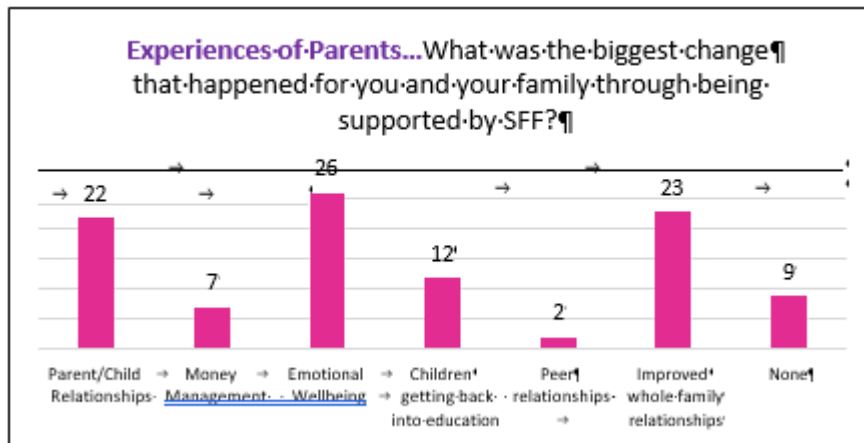
**Dated: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

## Impact & Analysis of Supporting Families First Service

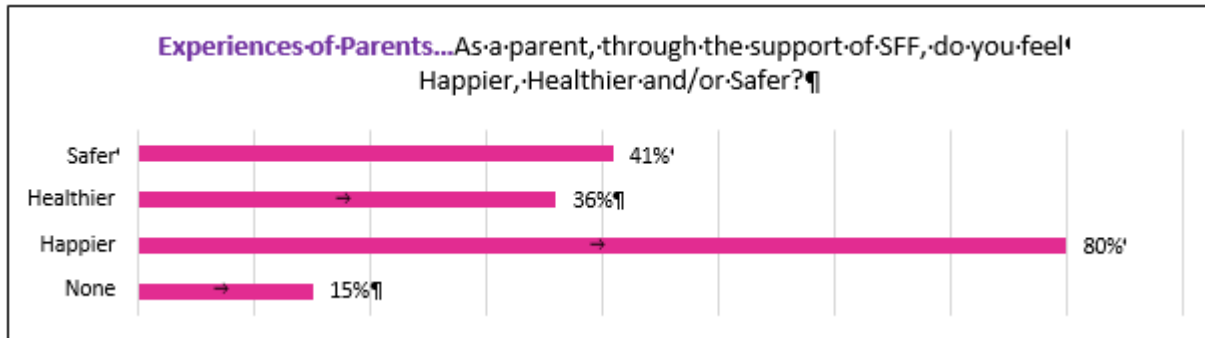
### Feedback from Families

Across May 2022 we have undertaken a targeted feedback survey with parents on their experiences of the multi-disciplinary Supporting Families First Service – following case closure to the service. In total we gained feedback from **59 parents**; this report summarises their feedback.

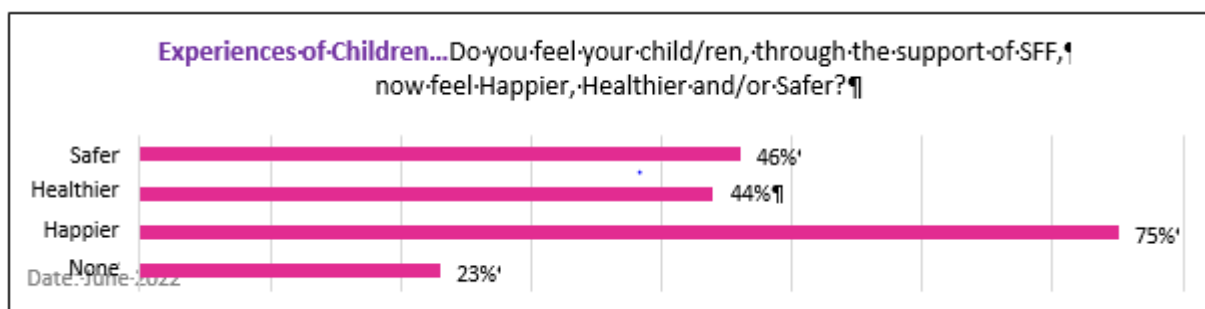
The majority of families identified a range of positive outcomes having been supported by the service, the most significant were parent/child relationships and emotional wellbeing. The lowest response was peer relationships, 9 families reported no change.



Our Vision for children & young people in Worcestershire is for children to be happy, healthy, and safe. Parents reported 80% were happier, 41% felt safer and 36% felt healthier. 15% reported no changes for them as parents.



The majority of families felt there had been positive impact for their families – 75% reporting children were happier, 14 families/23% felt there was no impact for the child.



## We can see through the range of feedback from families that the multi-disciplinary Child in Need model of intervention is having a range of impacts for both parents and children

If you could tell the team how you experienced their work/support...what would you tell them?

*"I feel that I have received more stability, as Mark has supported R for a good period of time and really helped him"*

*"I was struggling parent correctly and you all helped me in changing how I do this"*

*"You also made a big difference in getting things moving at school, so he has the level of support that he needs"*

*"Amazing!!!"*

*"You've all been amazing I have never felt judged. I feel supported"*

*"I am so very happy with the support we have had from SFF team. They have gone above and beyond to help support all family members and how they have helped to bring some stability and happiness back into the family home. They were caring, kind and compassionate"*

*"I would tell them I am thankful for all the help, knowing there is support out there"*

*"Visits have been very valuable. Helped get me back on track - support given has been good"*

*"I have felt 100% supported from my outreach worker, i feel that she has supported me to complete tasks that I know i would have struggled with and helped me look forward to a brighter future"*

*"That as a family, we have all been supported with dad drinking and the violence, the boys are a lot better and have been supported with knowing right from wrong, we feel more comfortable to put in sanctions"*

*"It was very difficult to get help we needed in the first instance, it was during Covid, it was difficult to get everyone to listen and under severity of how we were living, but once SFF were involved things quickly moved along and Abi, Social Worker was really helpful and supportive"*

**If you were to tell another family who was going to start work with SFF, what would you tell them?**

*“Don't give up, you would recommend having support from SFF. It's a good thing and helpful, they are here to help”*

*“Take on board what is being said to you, don't get your back up, the support will make a difference”*

*“Be honest and upfront, don't hide anything because it's no good. No one can help you if you aren't honest. Listen to what they are saying as they are doing it for the right reasons”*

*“It does help and you shouldn't just assume that it is bad, any help is good help!*

*“I have had a lot of bad experiences from social services over the past 20 years and this is the first time I've had proper help and support for me and my family”*

*“Stick at the process – things will happen positively eventually. To be open, honest and be trusting of them”*

*“Don't think they're here to judge you or take your kids away. I have been massively helped”*

This page is intentionally left blank

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**20 SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **PERFORMANCE AND IN-YEAR BUDGET MONITORING**

---

#### **Summary**

1. The Panel will be updated on performance and financial information for services relating to Children and Families.
2. The Cabinet Members with Responsibility (CMRs) for Children and Families and for Education and the Chief Executive and Directors of Worcestershire Children First have been invited to attend the meeting to respond to any queries from Panel Members.

#### **Performance Information**

3. Attached at Appendix 1 is a dashboard of performance information which covers the indicators from the Directorate level scorecard which relate to services relevant to this Scrutiny Panel's remit, relating to Quarter 1 (April to June 2022).
4. The Scrutiny Panels consider this information on a quarterly basis and then report by exception to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board any suggestions for further scrutiny or areas of concern.

#### **Financial Information**

5. The Panel also receives in-year budget information. The information provided is the 2022/23 Forecast Outturn at the end July (Period 4) and is attached in the form of presentation slides at Appendix 2.

#### **Purpose of the Meeting**

6. Following discussion of the information provided, the Scrutiny Panel is asked to determine:
  - any comments to highlight to the CMRs at the meeting and/or to Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board at its meeting on 29 September 2022
  - whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

#### **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 – Children and Families Performance Information Dashboard  
Appendix 2 – 2022/23 In-year Budget Monitoring information (Presentation Slides) *To Follow*

## Contact Points

Alyson Grice/Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844962/ 846607  
Email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

## Background Papers

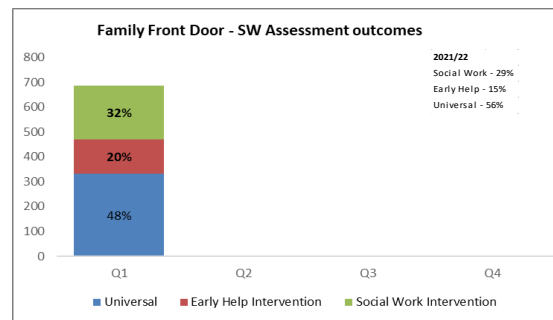
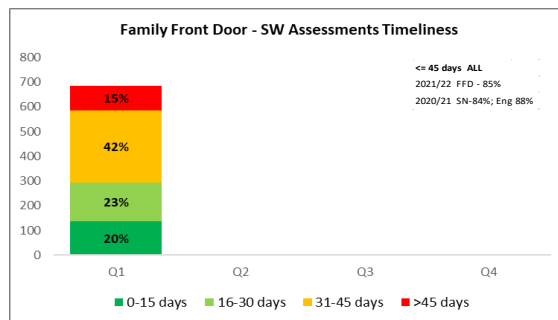
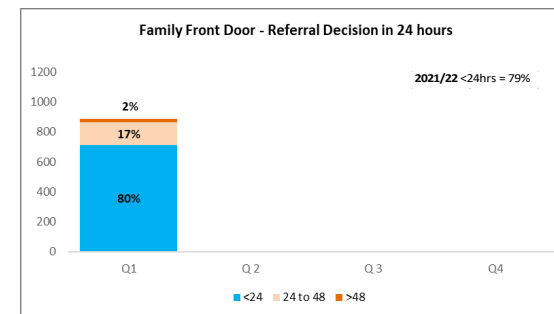
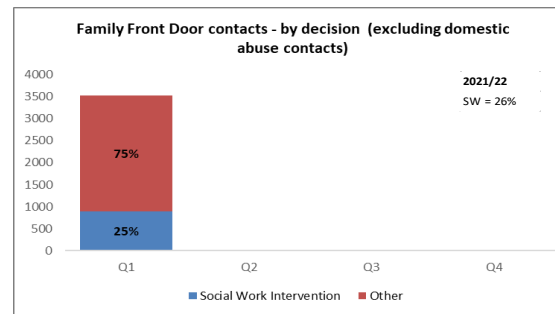
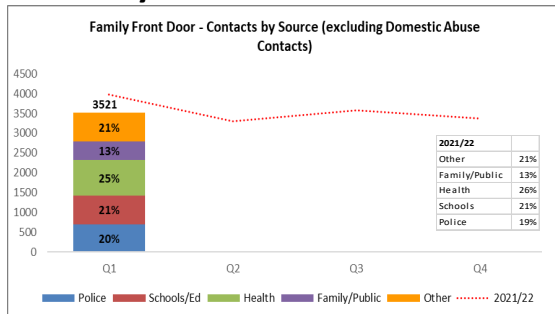
In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agendas and minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 20 July, 23 March 2022, 17 November, 30 September, and 21 July 2021
- Agendas and minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 11 January and 7 July 2022, 16 July, 22 September, and 12 November 2021

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)



## Family Front Door



### Family Front Door

Contacts at the family front door have re-established a relatively consistent pattern in qtr. 1 to that of qtr. 2/3/4 last year with an average of 3500 per quarter, indicating a stable and reduced number of incoming contacts from qtr. 1 in 21/22 (3981) However this reduction is still consistently 1000 per qtr. above what we saw pre covid at 2500.

25% of contacts converted to a social work assessment a slightly reducing trend from averages of 27-29%. However audit shows us that whilst these contacts do not require a SWA the information shared within them is an appropriate and benefits from the ability to triangulate that info/incident with other known factors which may build a picture to raise the level of concern.

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership have agreed funding for increased SW/staffing capacity at FFD to enable us to manage high levels of information sharing.

The Early Help portal is being accessed by professional and 60% of referrals accepted at level 3 but a much lower % accepted at level 2 where universal early help was assessed to be able to meet need. Therefore we continue to challenge our partnership on the accessibility and effectiveness of early help at universal / level 2 for families.

Parents "struggling with parenting" has risen to our top concern for Contacts, above parental Mental Health, and is a change we need to consider as we look at the offer of Early Help but also impact for social care families.

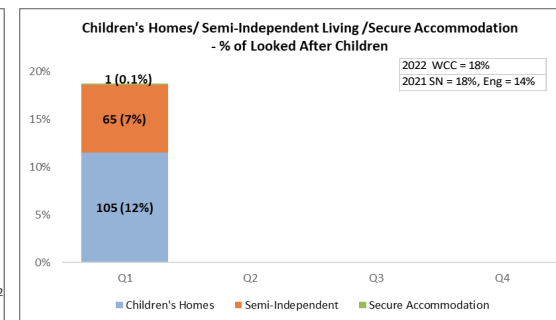
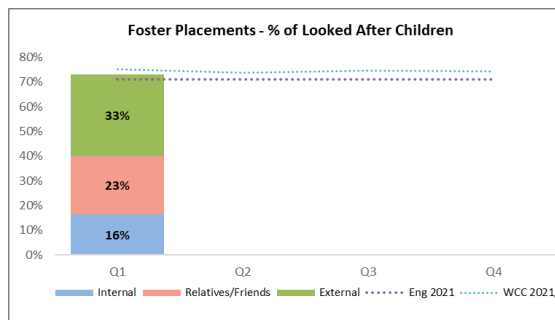
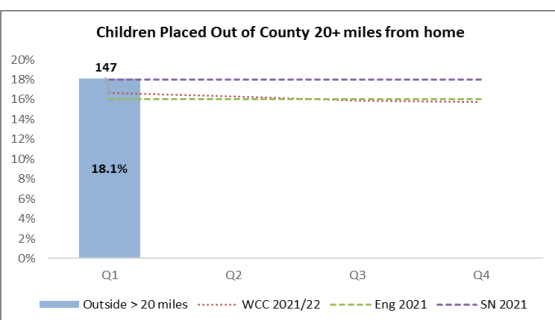
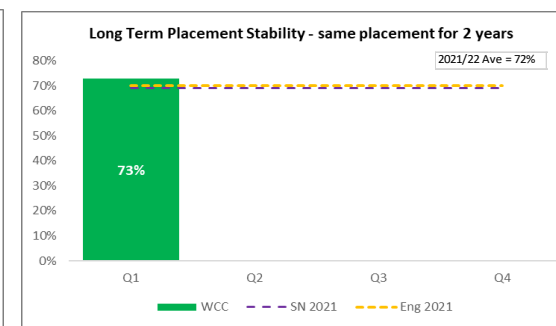
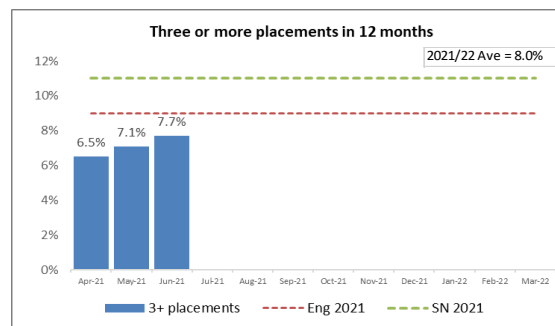
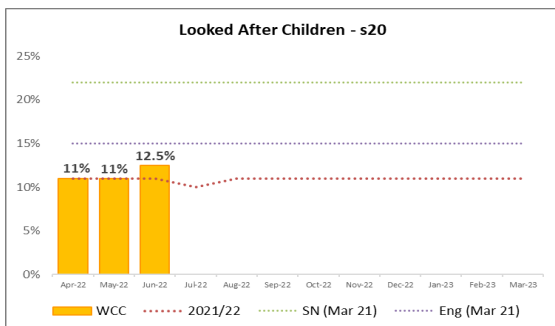
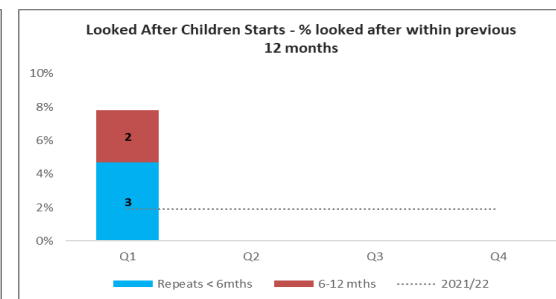
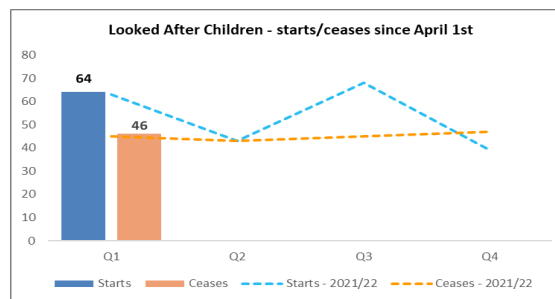
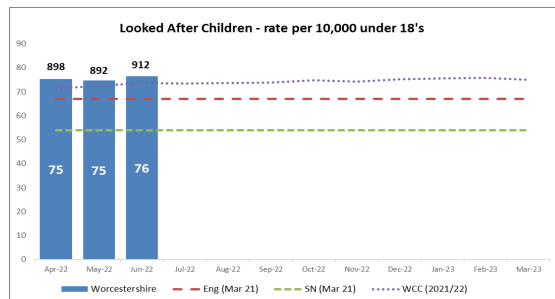
A new targeted parenting course is now available for families open to Childrens Social Care offering the course in smaller groups and with direct support, we need to evaluate take up and outcome of this new approach.

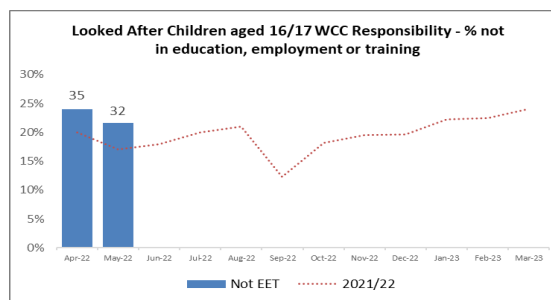
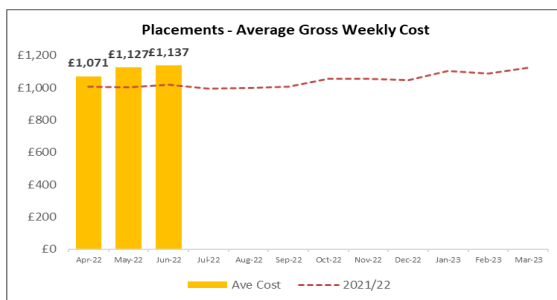
Workflow on Social Work Assessments is good with only 2% now being open over 45days, a significant drop from the unusual rise to 17% in Feb 21 when we took action to add capacity from our staff. This worked well and normal workflow has resumed with 85% of SWA being completed in best practice timescale.

Strategy discussion outcomes remain consistent with the largest number having a joint S47 enquiry and agency contributions to these strategy discussions remain good.

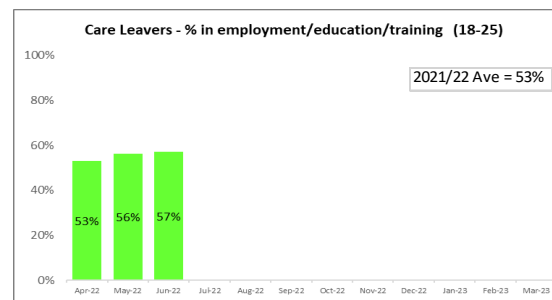
We are preparing for a likely increase in FFD contacts and SWA's in October 22 when our local child death goes to trial and will receive significant media coverage. Adding SW and Admin capacity to manage this proactively will be important to ensure staff remain able to manage the workflow.

### Through Care - Looked After Children and Care Leavers





No comparator data is available for this indicator



Care Leavers 19-21 in Employment, Education or Training as at 30 Jun 2022: **60%**. Latest comparative figure for age 19-21 using national annual snapshot methodology (2020/21) - Statistical Neighbours: **50%**, England: **52%**

**Looked After Children**

The quarterly data is a snapshot of the flow of children into and out of care. The overall annual figure and "duration" of time in care show the impact of our work to prevent care and achieve permanency for those children who need to be received into care for the safety and welfare. In qtr. 1 we have seen **64 new care and 46 exits**, the same number as last year. We see a slight increase in the number of **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children entering our care** as we have continued to accommodate unplanned arrivals and be a part of the now mandatory National Transfer scheme. However at 3.7% of our Looked After population we remain below the England average of 5%. We are also below the population target of 0.07% as we currently sit at 0.03%

**Placements** : At 72% we have slightly more children in foster care of our overall looked After population (Eng. Ave 71%), however we have a decreasing number of children in our internal(WCF) foster care provision now at 39%, a continued declining trend seen through 21/22. This is a major area of our work but is seeing insufficient outcomes as foster carers leave the profession to retire or find it too challenging and we are unable to recruit new carers for the complex children entering care.

**However Kinship Carers are increasing and represent 59% of our WCF children in foster care population.** We also see better stability for young people in Kinship placements with a minority breaking down requiring residential care.

Whilst we have overall **18% of children in Residential/Semi Indp and Secure provision in line with our SN, we are above the Eng. of 14%**. When we break that down we see a slight increase to 7% of young people in supported semi-independent living up from 6% at year-end reflecting our work to support YP aged 17 to have supported year of living as they transition from residential care to young adults. We can also see a **increased number of children in residential care at 12% up from 11% at year-end 21/22.**

The sufficiency challenge exists where we see birth family and or placement breakdown and a lack of foster care provision able to meet needs and a demand for Residential care. **During 21/22 a total of 61 young people needed a residential placement :**

**33% came from an existing residential provision**

**34% from Foster Care:** 5 children from WCF (only 1 being a kinship foster care placement) and **16 (26%) coming from Independent Foster Agency (IFA) breakdown**

**22% breakdowns from home with 8/14 being Children With Disability /SEND**

**Qtr. 1 we see a similar pattern emerging with 22 young people requiring residential placements (6 from agency residential, 5 from home and 4 from IFA.**

**Residential care is commonly not providing stability or positive outcomes for young people and as such our placement sufficiency strategy continues to look at reducing the need for residential**

**Stability and Duration**

Our children placement experience continues to show a positive picture with **only 7.1% of children experiencing three or more placements in 12 months** below our own 21/22 figure of 8% and below Eng. and SN 9 and 11% respectively. We also have positive **outcomes for long term stability with 73% of our children remaining in the same placement for over two years** compared to Eng. 70% and SN at 69%.

We can see in our "duration" in care a continuing improved picture with **31% of children in care achieving permanence out of care in less than 12months (29% last year) and 48% in less than 2 years consistent for two year, despite Covid.** Reflecting the timeliness of our permanency planning through care proceedings. The rising higher figure of 43% of those leaving care after three years reflects the cohort of children who have been stable in their long term care arrangements moving to independence at 18. **Our End of Care data shows an increased number of children achieving permanency** and those being successfully rehabilitated to parental care following PWP or Care Order revocation, both our targeted groups

**Care Leavers**

**The increase in care leavers in touch and open for a service is a positive reflection of our relationships and good care leaver offer to our young people as they attain adulthood.**

**Quarter 1 brings us to the end of an unstable period in care leavers management .**

This had caused some anxiety within the staff team and a period of more limited managerial oversight which has negatively impacted on the accuracy of data inputting to our 903 statutory returns. Work to ensure our data is reflective of the work undertaken and the outcomes being achieved in Education and Housing is underway.

**A review of the service end of 21/22 has increased management capacity from 2.5 to 4fte Team Managers and an additional experienced senior practice manager who joined the service in June to coordinate service developments and stabilise the service.** We have a planned QA deep dive as part of the WCF programme underway reporting October 22

In 2021/22 we developed and launched a programme of seeking feedback from Care Leavers of how they experience our services, the below section summaries their views...**170 young people gave their feedback and views.**

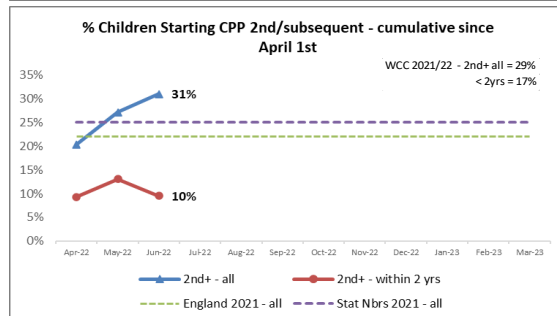
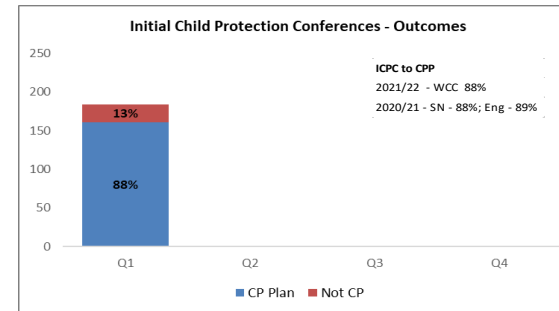
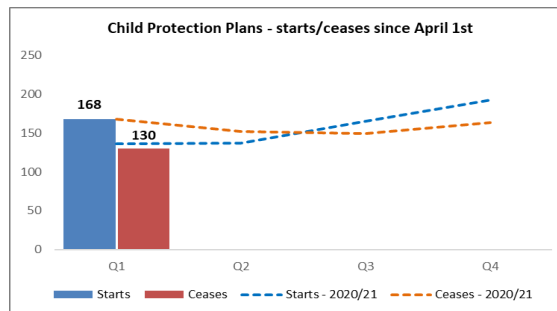
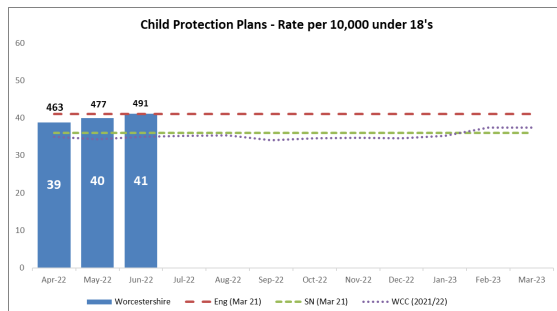
**95% felt listened to and understood by their PA,**

**88% felt included in their Pathway Planning, however, 67% said they had received a copy of their plan.**

**90% said that it was easy to contact their PA.**

**November 22 we are launching our "Connect" scheme to match care leavers with volunteer WCF staff to act as befrienders to those who feel isolated - Aug 22 we have a staff raffle to raise funds for the launch and Care Leaver activities through 22/23 and to raise the profile and needs of these young adults**

### Child Protection



Page 32

Our rate of child protection at 41 per 10,000 has been a rising trend and take us now to being in line with Eng. average. We have seen through the latter part of 21/22 an increase in the complexity of cases coming into the safeguarding system and is a reflection of the continued impact of COVID where risk factors in assessments have identified domestic abuse / parental mental health as our top two risk factors and child mental health rising from the fourth the third most common factor.

However it remains the case that it is parental, drug misuse / alcohol misuse / Domestic Abuse and mental health and the combination of those that remain in the top five high risk factors leading to children needing protection.

This increased complexity has resulted not only in a rise in the number of children starting with a plan but a reduction in those ceasing on a plan. This combination of issues is harder to "turn around" and we have seen an increase in the numbers of cases progressing to PLO and care proceedings in the first qtr. of this year than in previous years.

We have also seen an increase in those children on a plan due to emotional abuse to 30% from an average of 27% and this predominantly reflective of risk associated with the mental health of parents and children and young people

The number of 47 enquiries starting is in line with our own averages for 21/22 but was generally against the regional trend which has seen a down turn until qtr. 4 when seven LA also showed an increase from a previous quarterly rate. Eng. national data is at 164 per 10k whereas WCF is at 206.

As our rate of S47's is higher than Eng./SN and our rate of those progressing to ICPC is lower this suggests we are doing too many S47. We need to look at a joint Police/CSC audit across FFD and Locality to look at this issue.

Our timeliness and outcome of conference are good and consistently in line with SN/Eng. averages.

Child Participation : we have very good outcomes with 17% of young people attending their own conferences (up from an qtr. average of 10%) and 12 % speaking for themselves at conferences up from 5% averages last year.

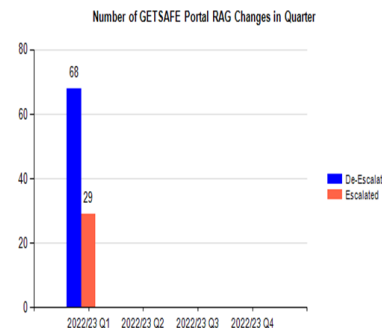
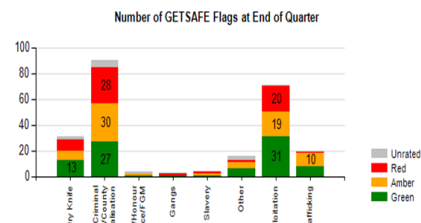
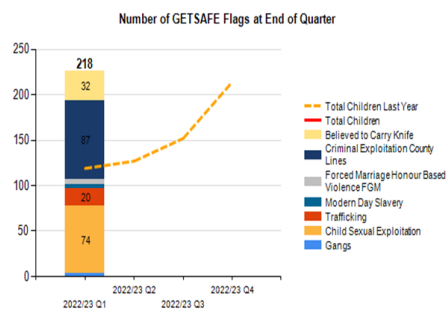
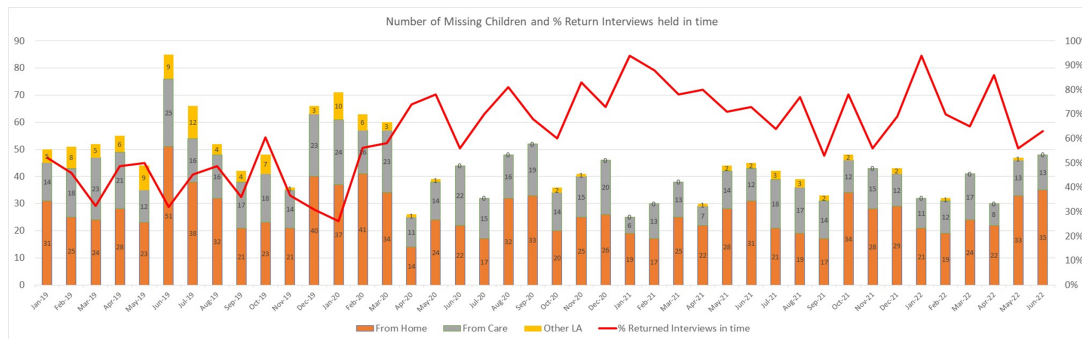
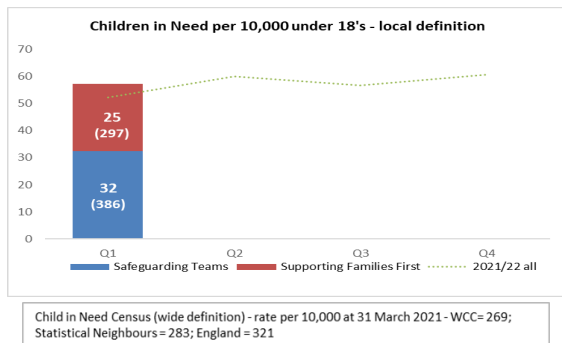
Children subject to a repeat plan within two years at 10% in Qtr. 1 needs to be understood as a full year for true comparison.

The number of children subject to repeat plan at any point in time at 31% is higher and above SN / Eng. averages. Regional data shows that this is a very up and down indicator across the local authorities with disparity also between quarters.

Audit of our repeat plans shows us appropriate threshold decision making with new needs and risk emerging in families that have historically made sustained changes and the impact of Covid is a real factor in how these risk have re-emerged.

These complexities are leading to the rising number of children still on a plan at 12 months where changes has been harder to achieve and "threshold still met" decisions at Review Child Protection Conferences.

### Children In Need



Page 33

**Children in Need**

Our overall CIN cohort at 261 per 10k is in line with SN and a little below Eng. average of 314. Qtr. 1 “new “ CIN shows a higher rate than we saw in qtr. 1 last year.

Qtr. 1 we see 16% of our CIN “step up” to CP or Care, consistent 20/21 that 10-18%. That’s an 84% success rate to “step down”

A focus on our CIN (as of May 21) is the expansion of our Supporting Families First, our “Edge of Care/Child Protection” multi-disciplinary team.

In qtr. 1 we continue to see positive outcomes with 66% of cases closing after and intervention,

The service user experience tells us the majority of families and children and parents feel happier, healthier and safer following intervention.

Only 3% of children becoming looked after and 26% progressing to child protection. The team manage a range of complex risks that exist within these families and a % escalation to CP/Care is to be expected if we are working at the right threshold

Outcomes for 50 (sustainability cohort) now 12 months on, sees that 40% children have remained closed sustaining the positive outcomes and a further 26% remain at the children need level only. Only one child has since become looked after and six escalated to child protection

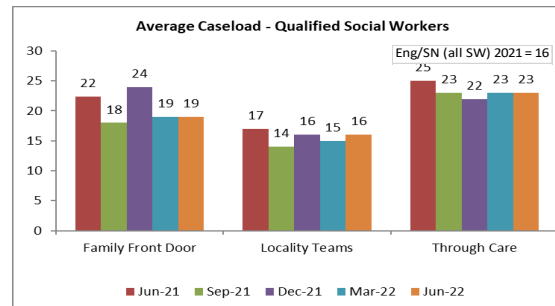
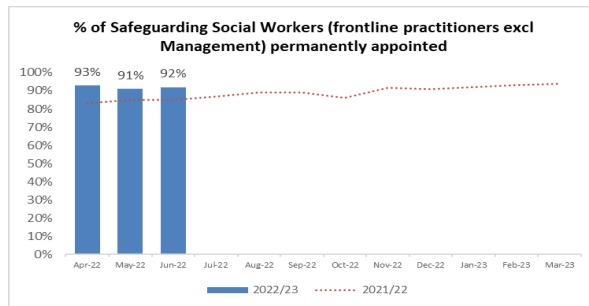
**Missing**

We continue to see a seasonal influenced pattern of missing children per qtr. with Qtr. 1 21/22 being similar to the same period last year. Timeliness of return interviews in timescale is relatively constant with a small number out of timescale.

**Get Safe**

We have significantly developed our Get Safe data and profile to understand the picture of exploitation and see through the three charts what that profile of risk looks like. With top categories of risk being criminal exploitation county lines and child sexual exploitation. We track individual children the second chart shows how we have identified those children as; Red as "experiencing"; an immediate plan of intervention, Amber "believed to be experiencing" and liaison with partners around a plan of proactive support a Green where we identify the child to engaging them in universal level 2 support and diversionary activities. The last chart shows the number of children who we have successfully stepped down in their risk rating during the Qtr. or been stepped up.

## Staffing



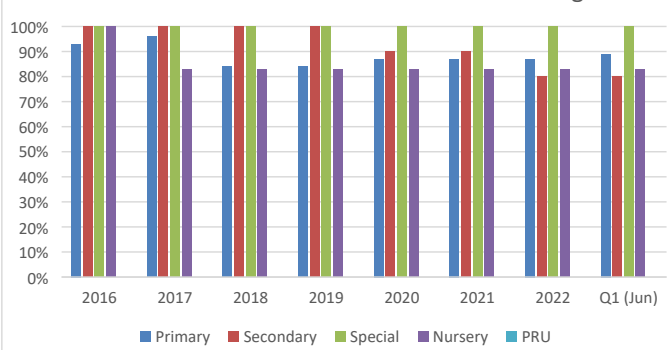
Whilst qtr. 1 data shows 92% permanency in safeguarding staff, **we know of qtr. 2 data will show a drop in this as June/July we saw a higher than usual number of staff leaving.** Analysis of this shows the greatest percentage going to **agency for higher pay or leaving the profession.**

High caseloads and repeated staff turnover impacts on the capacity of social workers to do the required day to day work but also targeted work such as assessment planning for rehabilitation. It also impacts on confidence in risk management and from our partners is they experience multiple SW changes.

To address pressures we have secured an **additional three Advanced Social Work Practitioners to take pod caseloads responsibilities down in Supporting Families First.** We have also **increased managerial capacity to reduce supervisory ratio's in Care Leavers.**

We also recognise the likelihood of increased work from Oct as our own Child Death goes to trial and becomes publicly reported, and likely to increase of professional and public anxiety for the safety of children. We have identified one off funding for an **increase in support workers across the services to manage demand and support SW in field work visits during this high profile period.**

Ofsted Performance % Good or Outstanding

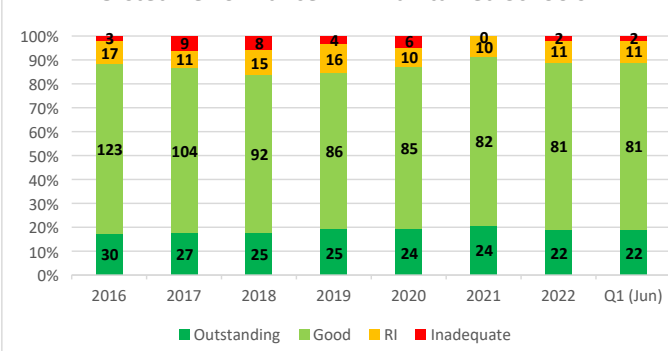


Ofsted Performance - % Good or Outstanding - All Schools by phase

Please note Q1 shows June End and 2022 shows July end for year on year comparative purposes

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Primary	89%	88%	83%	83%	83%	83%	81%	81%
Secondary	93%	96%	84%	84%	87%	87%	87%	89%
Special	100%	100%	100%	100%	90%	90%	80%	80%
Nursery	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
PRU	100%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
All Worcs.	90%	90%	86%	84%	84%	84%	82%	82%
England	89%	89%	84%	86%	86%	86%	88%	88%

Ofsted Performance - LA Maintained Schools



Ofsted grades - LA Maintained Schools

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Outstanding	30	27	25	25	24	24	22	22
Good	123	104	92	86	85	82	81	81
RI	17	11	15	16	10	10	11	11
Inadequate	3	9	8	4	6	0	2	2
Total	173	151	140	131	125	116	116	116
% O & G	88.4%	86.8%	83.6%	84.7%	87.2%	91.4%	88.8%	88.8%

Ofsted - Free Schools and Academies - ALL SCHOOLS

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Outstanding	17	21	22	20	17	17	18	18
Good	43	62	66	73	77	79	79	79
RI	2	2	6	8	10	10	11	10
Inadequate	1	2	9	11	14	20	18	19
No Ofsted Judgement	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Total	63	87	103	112	119	127	127	127
% O & G	95.2%	95.4%	85.4%	83.0%	79.0%	75.6%	76.4%	76.4%

Ofsted - Free Schools and Academies - Inspected since conversion

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
% O & G	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	89.0%	89.0%

School Attendance

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Primary	96.1%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%	95.7%	96.3%	95.7%	95.2%
Middle	95.0%	94.4%	95.5%	96.0%	95.1%	94.8%	95.1%	94.8%
Secondary	95.2%	95.1%	94.7%	94.7%	93.7%	90.3%	92.0%	90.4%
PRU	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	65.4%	52.2%	51.8%
Special Schools	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.3%	84.6%	85.3%

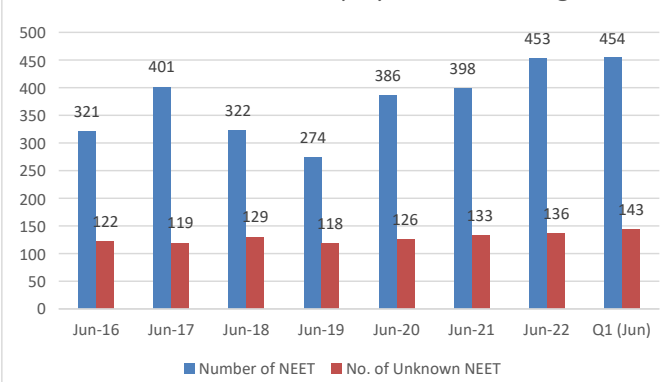
National

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Primary	96.0%	96.0%	95.8%	96.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Secondary	94.8%	94.6%	94.5%	94.5%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Missing Education

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
CME Under Investigation	n/a	n/a	78	204	169	191	372	395
CME Registered	90	56	40	36	53	41	5	6
CME Regd & Closed	n/a	n/a	116	134	158	123	54	53
EHE Registered	556	561	718	737	707	894	920	901
Permanent Exclusions	106	140	127	90	80	86	146	139

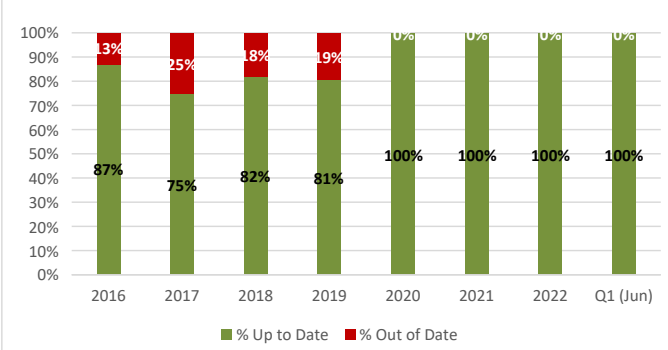
Not in Education, Employment or Training



Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET - 16 to 18 Year olds)

	Jun-16	Jun-17	Jun-18	Jun-19	Jun-20	Jun-21	Jun-22	Q1 (Jun)
Number of NEET	321	401	322	274	386	398	453	454
No. of Unknown NEET	122	119	129	118	126	133	136	143

% CLA with an up to date Personal Education Plan



% School age Children Looked After with an up to date Personal Education Plan

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
% Up to Date	87%	75%	82%	81%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Out of Date	13%	25%	18%	19%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**Commentary****Ofsted Performance to June 2022 end**

As expected, routine Ofsted inspections recommenced from September 2021. Since September there have been 41 published inspection reports:

Improved from Inadequate to Good = 1  
Improved from Requires Improvement to Good = 1  
Retained Good or Outstanding = 30

Declined to Requires Improvement = 3  
Declined to Inadequate = 4  
Retained Requires Improvement = 2

Of the forty one inspections, 27 were of primary/first schools, 5 were of special schools, 7 were of secondary schools and 2 were of PRU's.

All maintained schools judged to be less than 'Good' receive intensive support from the School Improvement Team that will include half termly 'team around the school' meetings to provide support and challenge regarding the school's improvement action plan.

We have seen a particular focus in inspections on the curriculum and phonics provision, and also SEND provision aligning to the outcomes of the LA SEND reinspection. Of the reports, 31 referred to SEND provision. 27 of these references described positive SEND practice with 4 identifying SEND practice as an area requiring development. Each of these 4 schools are working proactively with the School Improvement Team to improve their practice.

**Commentary****School Attendance**

Pre-Covid, year on year, attendance had been the same or better for each phase and this is also reflected in National figures. 2021-22 has shown a drop in attendance across all phases of education and this is continuing into Q1. This is mainly due to wider mental health/anxiety issues in both students and families initially caused by the affects of the pandemic. Across the academic year, one in four children have less than 90% attendance (persistently absent) with 28 of our mainstream schools having less than 90% attendance (114 have less than 93%) and 15 of our Special Schools and PRU's having less than 90% attendance. The newly published 'Working together to Improve School Attendance' DFE guidance for September 2022 requires schools and LA's and partners to prioritise a focus and resources to support attendance. Every Worcestershire school (currently 267) will be expected to work with the LA to improve school attendance. \*Please note: figures in this report are based on attendance codes not on whether a student was physically in school during lockdown.

**Commentary****Children Missing Education**

The 2022 data illustrates the highest recorded number of investigations for CME in Worcestershire, almost doubling from the previous year. Continued efforts to encourage schools, partners, external agencies and the public to utilise the centralised reporting mechanisms for the LA to identify, track, monitor and support CME are evident within this data. A further increase in CME reporting for 2022-2023 as schools ensure their adherence to refreshed statutory guidance is anticipated.

CME cases continue to remain more complex in nature, post covid, with children/YP. The longevity of required casework support, alongside increasing CME numbers continues to impact capacity.

The Missing Mondays multi agency forum continues to meet weekly to strategically support progression for the most complex CME cases and keep oversight of those children that move out of area but require tracking until destination identified. The forum aims to collectively secure the best outcomes for each vulnerable learner and lessen their days lost from education.

**Elective Home Education (EHE)**

The number of EHE pupils in Worcestershire at the end of the academic year 2022 was 920. Of these, 140 cases were registered as GRT EHE. This number showed a slight decrease in the number of children and young people registered as EHE. EHE families continue to be supported through the EHE process. Support is also given for any EHE pupils who may wish to return to school.

**Exclusions**

The number of permanent exclusions across Worcestershire at the end of the academic year 2022 was 146. Of these 26 were primary cases and 120 secondary. The Exclusions Officer and Vulnerable Learner Team continues to offer support to Schools and families to take action at the earliest point possible when notified of a permanent exclusion and evidence is growing of successful exclusion prevention interventions by schools.

**Commentary****Not in Education, Employment or Training**

Pre-Covid, NEET figures had been falling year on year through a multi-agency approach to identify and remove barriers to participation where possible. The first Covid lockdown had an immediate impact on figures with a significant rise in June 2020. This has continued through 2021 with Q1 continuing to show this increase and is also affecting the 2021/22 academic year with Q4 continuing to show higher NEET figures. This increase has remained due to a decreasing pool of provision for employment /training opps and young people who in cases are suffering severe mental health issues exacerbated by the pandemic's periods of lockdown and isolation. The NEET team - WCF and WCC staff are collaborating to support and minimise this issue.

Please note: September Unknown Peak - Due to young people moving provision in September, there are a large number of unknowns that until WCF is notified by providers that yp are EET they flag as 'unknown status'. Until these individuals are identified, the unknown figure remains high and is at its peak in September. This peak is understood by the DFE and Ofsted and as the month on month data shows reduces throughout the year.

**Commentary****Pre -school and Statutory School Age Personal Education Plan**

All CLA Pre-school to Year 11 receive three Personal Education Plan (PEP) contacts from a Virtual School Learning Advocate each year. This supports our children/young people who attend school both in and out of Worcestershire. The (PEP) meeting is undertaken via Microsoft Teams or face to face, this is dependent on the needs of the CLA and the context. The Designated Teacher (DT) and Social Worker (in consultation with the carer) are expected to upload relevant information to the (PEP) **prior to the meeting** and attend the meeting/consultation call. This enables effective conversations, focusing on evaluation of strategies to specifically meet the needs of individual CLA and methods of monitoring outcomes to measure success. Additional contacts are made throughout the term, with the DT, where transitions are imminent, complexity of situation or those identified as a result of (VS) pupil progress meetings. **There is a high rate of (PEP) completion each term (100%)**. All (PEP) meetings scheduled to take place are completed. There is an improving quality of information in the (PEP) document due to: professional development for Designated Teachers and Social Care colleagues, clarity of information and expectations from the Virtual School (VS) and support / guidance offered by (VS) staff which impacts on the quality of information shared in the (PEP) process. The VS quality assures various aspects of the PEP process and content.

**Post 16 Personal Progression Plans (PPPs)**

All year 12 and 13 CLA have a scheduled (PPP). **There is a high rate of (PEP) completion each term (100%)**. These are facilitated by VS Post 16 Learning Advocates. This is a new role within the VS this academic year. The Designated Practitioner/Teacher (DT) and Social Worker (in consultation with the carer) upload relevant information to the (PPP) **prior to the meeting** and attend the meeting/consultation call.

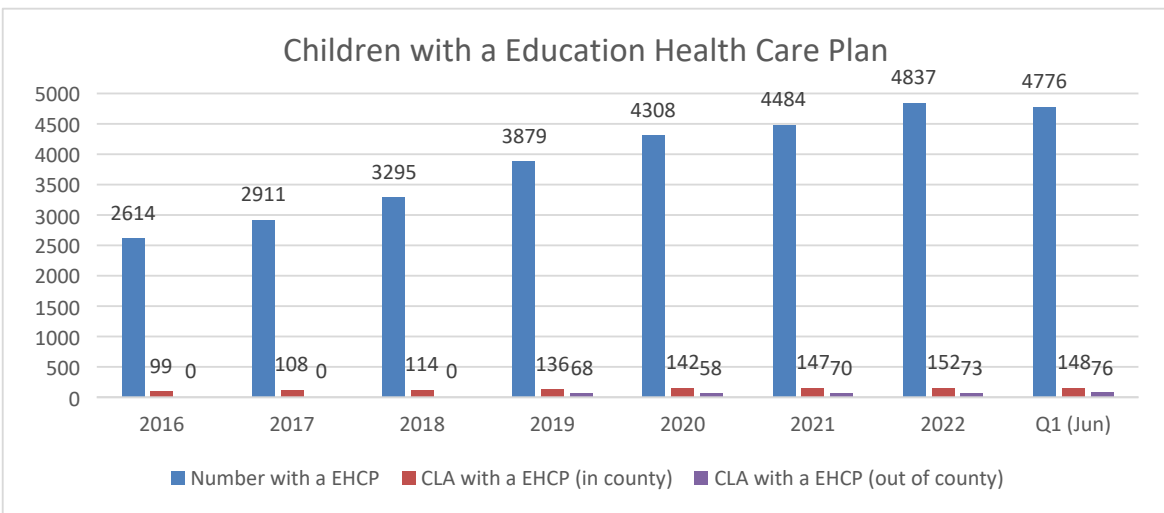
**Pupils Causing Concern**

There are regular meetings with Social Care to discuss pupils at risk of CME, less than 25 hours of education and those where there is a delay in placing in school provision. Termly pupil progress meetings are held within the (VS), these focus on pupils who are not making progress against their own challenging targets and those who have a negative approach to their learning. The discussions result in individual plans of action for prioritised CLA.

**Quality Assurance**

Half termly quality assurance activities focus on specific groups of CLA or themes, these reflect the priorities within the Virtual School Improvement Plan. VSHT and VS Education Co-ordinator attend PEP/PPP meetings on a regular basis to offer support, advice and guidance to VS Learning Advocates and to monitor the quality of the interaction.

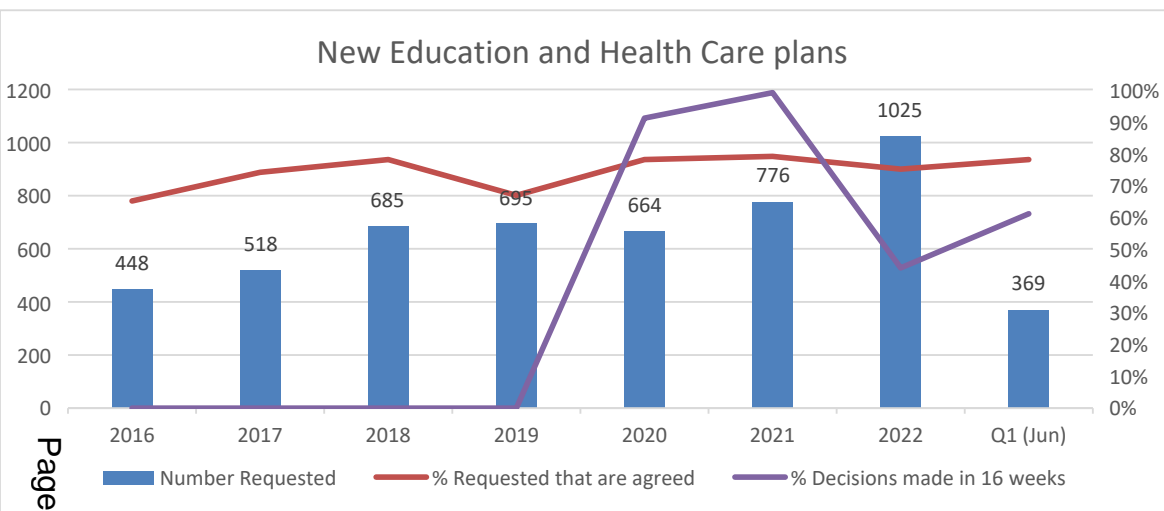




### Children with a Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

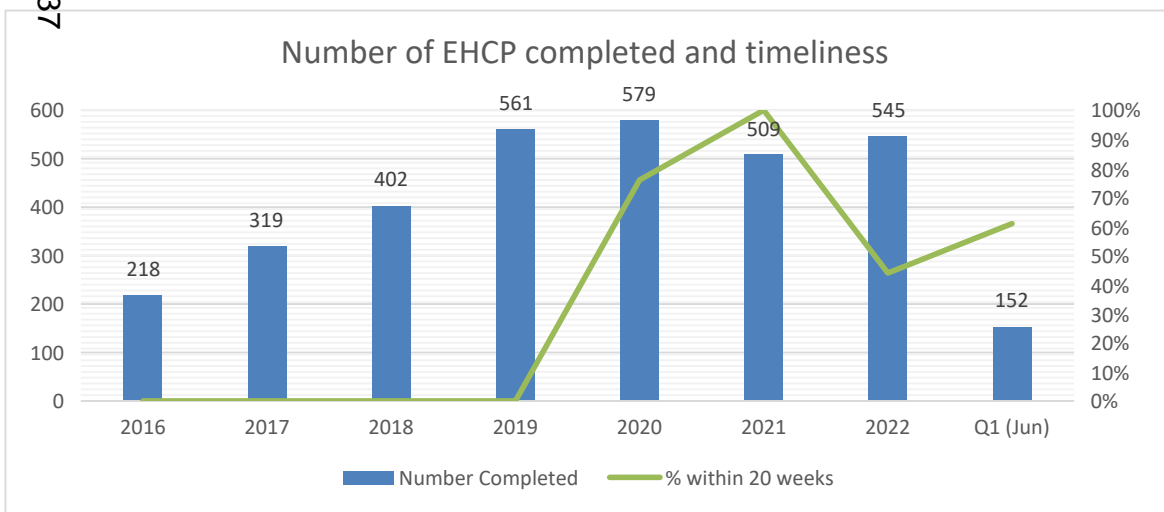
**Please note Q1 shows June End and 2022 shows July end for year on year comparative purposes**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Number with a EHCP	2614	2911	3295	3879	4308	4484	4837	4776
CLA with a EHCP (in county)	99	108	114	136	142	147	152	148
CLA with a EHCP (out of county)	n/a	n/a	n/a	68	58	70	73	76
CIN with a EHCP	n/a	n/a	n/a	74	113	65	119	123
CPP with a EHCP	n/a	n/a	n/a	16	22	24	38	32
EH plans with a EHCP	n/a	n/a	n/a	43	0 (covid)	31	31	34



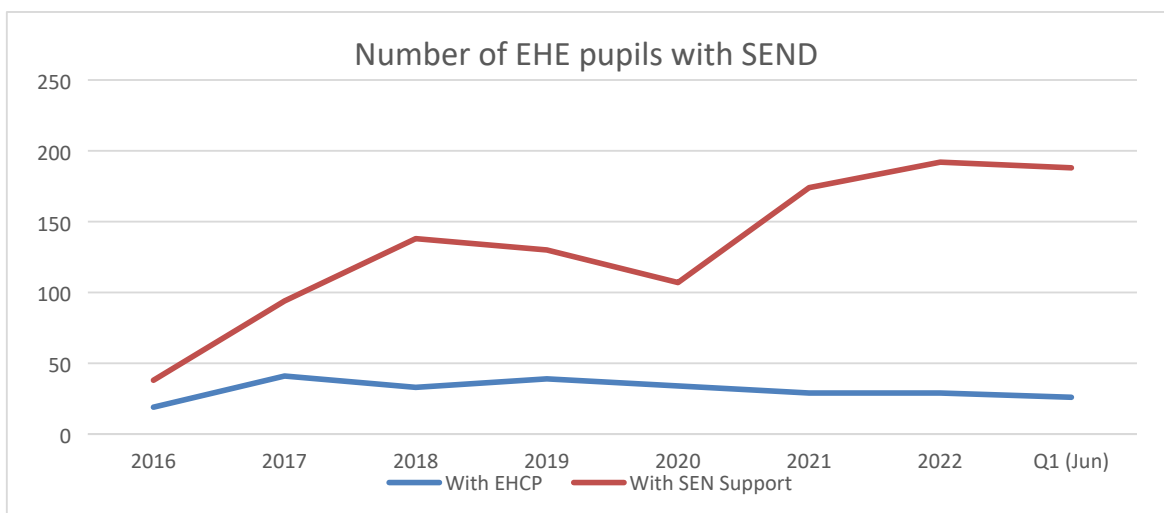
### New Education and Health Care Plans (Statutory Timescales minus exceptions)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Number Requested	448	518	685	695	664	776	1025	369
% Requested that are agreed	65%	74%	78%	67%	78%	79%	75%	78%
% Decisions made in 16 weeks (minus exceptions)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	91%	99%	44%	61%



### Number of EHCPs completed and % within 20 weeks (Statutory Timescales minus exceptions)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
Number Completed	218	319	402	561	579	509	545	152
% within 20 weeks (minus exceptions)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	76%	100%	44%	61%



### Number of Elective Home Educated pupils with SEND

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Q1 (Jun)
With EHCP	19	41	33	39	34	29	29	26
With SEN Support	38	94	138	130	107	174	192	188

**Commentary****Number of EHCP's**

For 20221/22 the monthly average number of requests for EHC needs assessments is 85. The highest month being May and June with 141 and 133 respectively. There continues to be increased demand and we expect the numbers of children with an EHCP will exceed the 2022 figures at year end.

The analysis of children and young people with additional needs, identified as Children looked After (CLA) in and out of county, subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP), Children in Need (CIN) and Early Help (EH) remains fairly consistent.

**EHCP's requested and timeliness**

As documented the number of EHC needs assessments requested continues to increase. The number of EHC needs assessments that have been agreed over the last 2 years as a percentage is fairly consistent and in line with the national average.

The performance over the last quarter of decisions being made within 16 weeks and the % of assessments completed within 20 weeks has shown some improvement. Maintaining and continuing the improvement will be a significant challenge due to increased demand and the capacity of Educational Psychologists and health colleagues to, meet the demand, within the required statutory timescales. For Educational Psychologists a number of actions have and will be taken to try and mitigate the risk. There are concerns regarding the health systems ability and capacity to meet the ongoing demands and the impact of increasing waiting lists for children to be seen by health colleagues. This issue has been escalated and will be discussed at Worcestershire Joint Commissioning Group.

The delay in Educational Psychologists and health advice being received places pressure on the SEND team to review the advice, make a decision and create the plan within statutory timescales.

**Commentary****Elective Home Educated Children with SEND**

The number of children with an EHCP who are electively home educated (EHE) has seen a very slight decrease. However as reported previously since 2020 there has been an upward trend which is likely to be linked to the covid pandemic. This has also been seen nationally. This will continue to be monitored and individual reasons analysed to understand the reasons for the return to school following a period of home education.

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**20 SEPTEMBER 2022**

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

---

#### **Summary**

1. From time to time the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

#### **Background**

2. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutiny of:

- Children's Social Care and Families
- Public Health relating to Families
- Education and Skills

3. The Work Programme (attached at Appendix 1), is part of the Council's rolling Annual Work Programme which was discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) on 29 June 2022 and agreed by Council on 14 July 2022.

#### **Dates of 2022 Meetings**

- 3 November at 10am

#### **Purpose of the Meeting**

4. The Panel is asked to consider the 2022/23 Work Programme and agree whether it would like to make any amendments. The Panel will wish to retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

#### **Supporting Information**

- Appendix 1 – Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2022/23

#### **Contact Points**

Alyson Grice/ Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844962 / 846607  
Email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

#### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

[Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board 29th June 2022](#)

[Agenda for Council on 14th July 2022.](#)

## Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Issue for Scrutiny</b>	<b>Date of Last Report</b>	<b>Notes/Follow-up Action</b>
20 September 2022	Supporting Families First and an update on the decision making for children entering the Care System		
	Performance (Q1 April to June) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
3 November 2022	Quality Assurance in children's services including complaints and voice of the child		
	Domestic Abuse – Children and Young People		
	Performance (Q2 July to September) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
January 2023	Scrutiny of 2023/24 Budget		
	Delivery Model for Medical Education Provision – Update	16 March 2021	
March 2023	Annual Update on Educational Performance Outcomes		
	Performance (Q3 October to December) and In-Year Budget Monitoring		
May 2023	Update on GET SAFE and GET THERE		Requested by Panel 10 May 2022
June/July 2023	All Age Disability (0-25) Service (ongoing Scrutiny of the transformation of the Service)	11 January 2021	(Jointly with Adult Care and Well Being O&S Panel) To provide feedback on consultation, timeline, KPIs.

TBC	Update on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Accelerated Progress Plan	23 February 2022	
TBC	Worcestershire Children First Independent Fostering Service Ofsted Inspection (reinspection)	23 February 2022	Following next inspection
TBC	Ofsted Inspecting local authority children's services (ILACS) Inspection – Feedback	11 September 2019	ILACS inspection due post July 2022
TBC	Current organisation of Education within the County (2 tier/3 tier)		Requested by Panel 16 July 2021 To be considered when further KS2 data available
TBC	Vulnerable Learners (to include children missing education, Elective Home Education, Young People not in education, employment of training (NEETS), exclusions and alternative provision)		To remain on the work programme (Requested 12 Nov 2021). More up to date data requested
TBC	Update on the Assessment Pathway for children who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).		Requested by Panel 11 January 2022
TBC	Autism provision and the availability of places within education settings		Requested by Panel 10 May 2022.
TBC	Nursery provision for 2-year-olds		
TBC	School Nurse Service and Emotional & Well Being Practitioners		Requested by Panel 7 July 2022. To cover current provision and plans for the future.
<b>Standing Items</b>			
March	Education Performance outcomes		Annually
July	WSCP Annual Safeguarding Report		Annually
November/January	Budget Scrutiny		

March/July/September/November	Quarterly Performance and In-Year Budget Monitoring		

This page is intentionally left blank