

Children's Services data overview – 2020

Children's Social Care

Children and Families Scrutiny Committee

27th January 2021.



Improving
LIVES

Purpose of presentation

For the Committee:

- to consider Children's Services data and partnership qualitative information to identify areas of possible concern and success in the strategic leadership of the Somerset children's partnership.
- to explore potential hypotheses from the information provided, about the effectiveness of specific aspects of that leadership in improving children's lives.
- to prioritise the hypotheses the committee would like to test, through work integrated into the Forward Plan



Improving
LIVES

Content

4 sections

- Early Help
- Children in need of help and protection
- Children looked after
- Care leavers

Each section broken down into:

- Background
- Data
- What the data indicates
- Potential hypotheses (for further scrutiny by the committee as part of forward plan)



Early help

Background

The early help assessment (EHA) is the multi-agency assessment and referral tool for early help in Somerset.

All organisations, other than the police, use it to assess and record any early help work they do and to refer to the Council's family intervention service/ disabled children's early support team and other services

Early help data is not collected nationally or regionally so it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of local early help support compared to other areas.

There have been 3 child safeguarding practice reviews in the last 2 years which have raised concerns about early help and multi-agency work with children under one.

Health visitors, parent family support advisors in schools and community based third sector support activities are a valuable source of early support for many families.



Early help

Early Help in the last 6 months

from 06/07/2020
to 05/01/2021

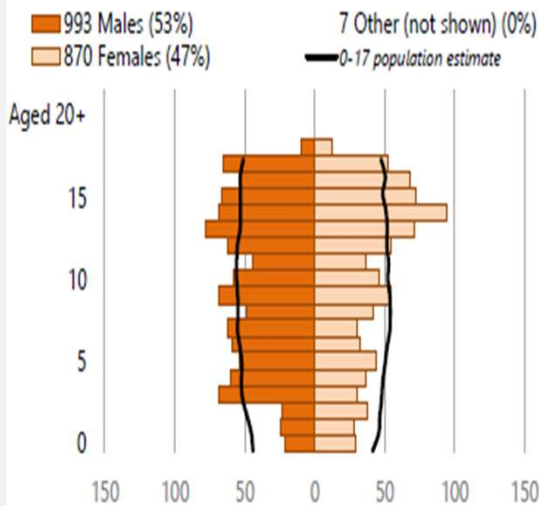
1870 Early Help / Common / Targeted Assessments

Early Help cases that also appear on the Referrals list

■ Yes ■ No



Age and gender



Other' includes not recorded, not stated, or neither M/F

Organisation completing assessment



Early help

The data indicates

- There are fewer children under 8 receiving professionally led early help than would be expected for the population, particularly for girls.
- More children aged 12 to 16 are receiving early help than would be expected for the population; this is more marked for girls.
- For those early help assessments logged, the majority are completed by our Family intervention service

Potential hypotheses

- Communities and professionals appear to be able to support most younger children well at a very early stage of need but where it does not work well some children have been significantly harmed
- Why does the early help approach appear less effective as children reach adolescence?



Children in need of help and protection

Children who need help (s.17 Children Act 1989)

- (a)he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this Part;
- (b)his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or
- (c)he is disabled

Children who need protection (S.47 Children Act 1989)

Local authority's duty to investigate

- Where a local authority–
- (a)are informed that a child who lives, or is found, in their area–
 - (i)is the subject of an emergency protection order; or
 - (ii)is in police protection;
- (b)have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm,



Children in need of help

Background

The data relates to children in need who have a social worker.

This means that a social worker will have led and recorded a multi-agency assessment of the child and family situation. Children in need have a social worker to coordinate support for them for a period beyond the assessment, in order for them to develop and achieve well.

Families can choose whether or not to accept this level of support.

The Family Safeguarding model of social work and motivational interviewing techniques which are integral to it, are currently being rolled out in Somerset.

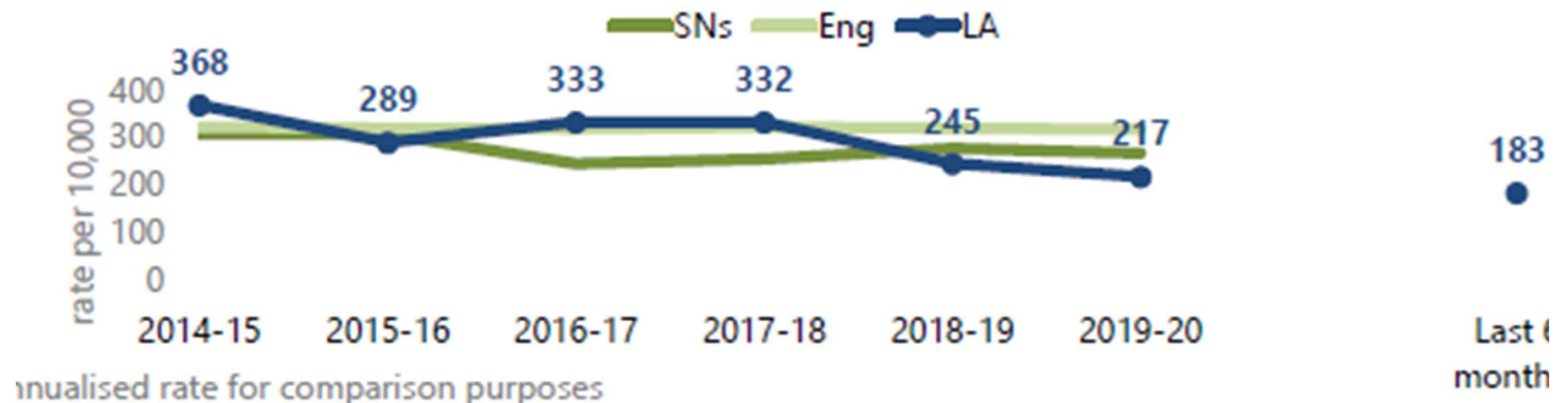
This model focusses on support to families to lead the changes their families need to make to improve their children's lives.



Children in need of help

1018 CIN started in 6 months

Rate of children who started an episode of need per 10,000 children aged 0-5



Children in need of help



Rate of children in need per 10,000

Quarter 2 - 2020-21



Children in need of help

The data indicates

Over the last 5 years the rate of children in need of help from a social worker has reduced across Somerset, stabilizing since 2018.

There is a lower rate of children in need in Somerset than in much of the South West, which is in itself lower than the England average and the average for good and outstanding Children's Services across the country.

There is a further reduction in rate in the last 6 months - national data is not yet available for comparison

Potential hypotheses

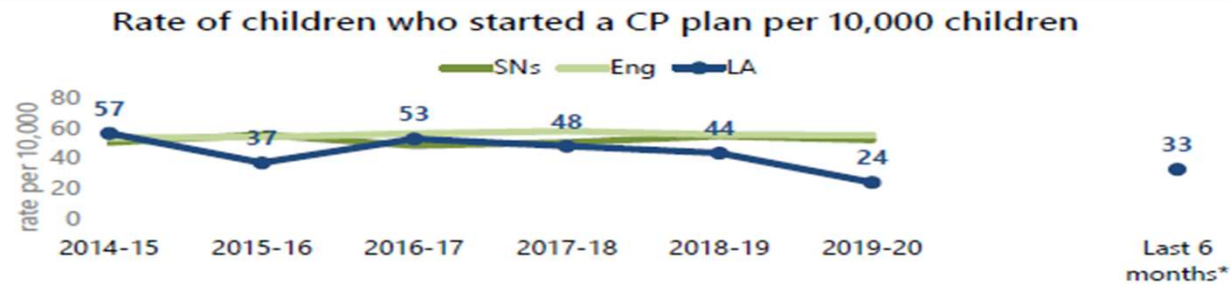
Early help support in Somerset is largely effective in reducing the need for children to access help from a social worker.

The further recent reduction in rates of children in need may be due to reduced referral rates during the Covid pandemic.



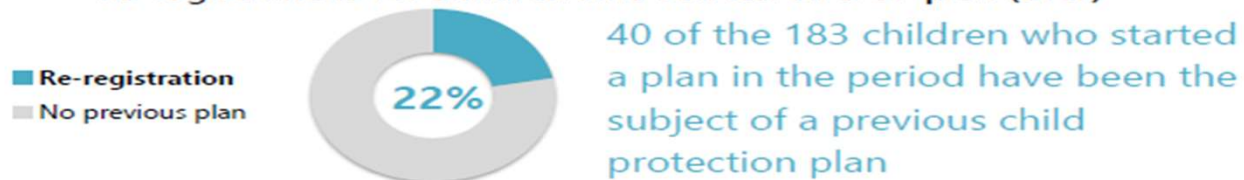
Children in need of protection

183 CPP started in 6 months



Annualised rate for comparison purposes

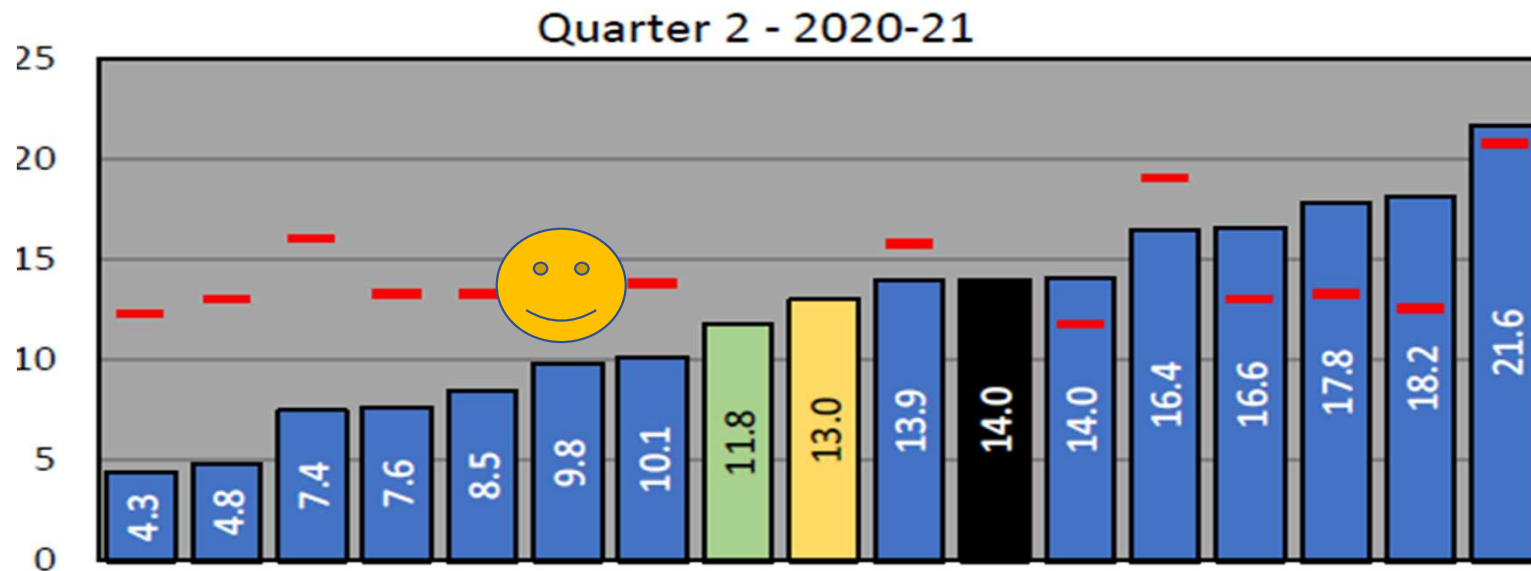
Re-registrations for children who started on a CP plan (ever)





Children in need of protection

Rate of children becoming subject to child protection plans per 10,000



Children in need of protection

The data relates to the rate of children who have a child protection plan.

Every child who has a child protection plan will be open to children's social care and has an allocated social worker.

Child protection planning is a statutory responsibility for Children's Services, police, health and education providers.

The success of child protection plans in keeping children safe depends largely on the skills of all professionals in working well together and with families to improve children's lives



Children in need of protection

The data indicates

The rate of children subject to a child protection plan in Somerset has reduced gradually over the last 4 years, increasing slightly in the last 6 months. This rate is now below the England and statistical neighbour average

The rate of children who need a second child protection plan at some point in their childhood in Somerset tracks the statistical neighbour and England averages

Potential hypotheses

What might this data mean about the effectiveness of services to protect children?



Children Looked After

Background

Children can come into the care of the local authority at any time from the day they are born until their 18th birthday, when they leave care. Social workers work hard to keep children in their family or with relatives where this is safe as research indicates most children do best at home. Living in care long term often results in poor academic results, poor mental health and increased likelihood of being involved in the criminal justice system.

Research would indicate that children in care have better life chances when they live with a foster family than in residential care long term.

Children in our care say that they want to live in Somerset as it is the area they know and they can stay in touch with family and friends more easily.

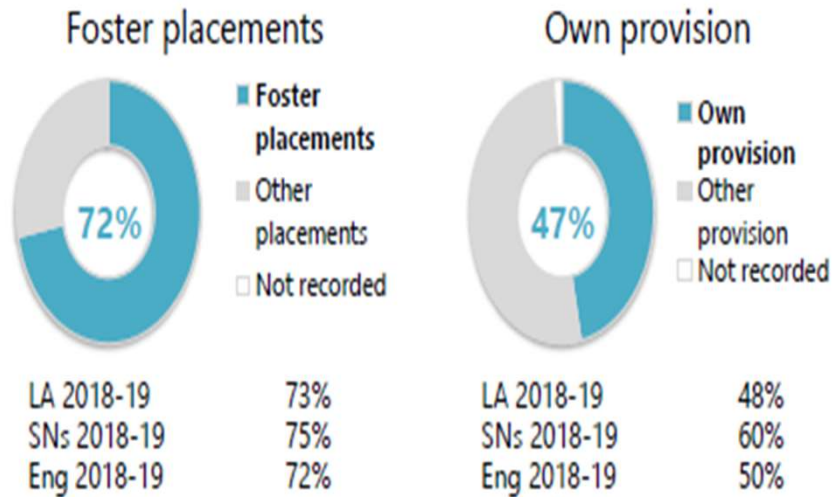
Historically the placement stability rate in Somerset has been poor for children who have been in care for 2.5 years and in the same placement for 2 years. The 2018-19 figure in the data of 63% had increased to 68.5% by the end of 2020.



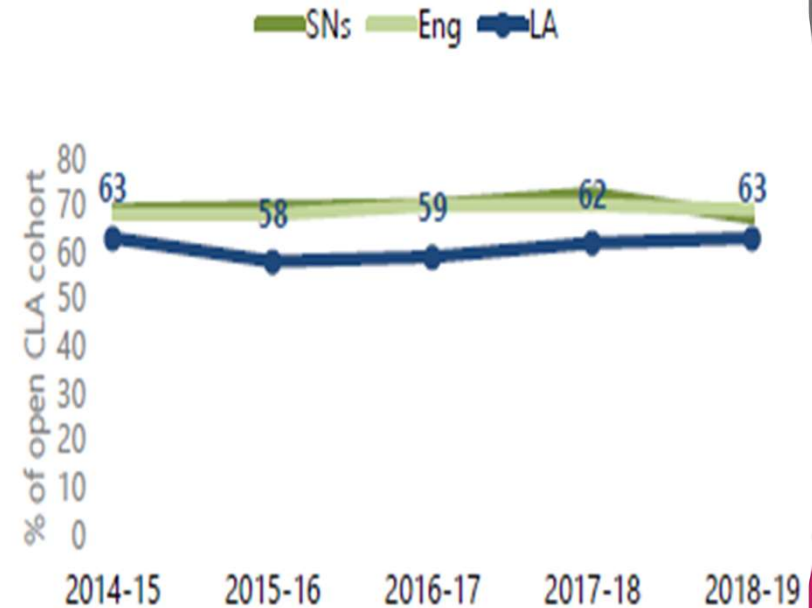
Children Looked After

Children Looked After (CLA) placements

CLA placements by type and provision



Comparing long term placement stability



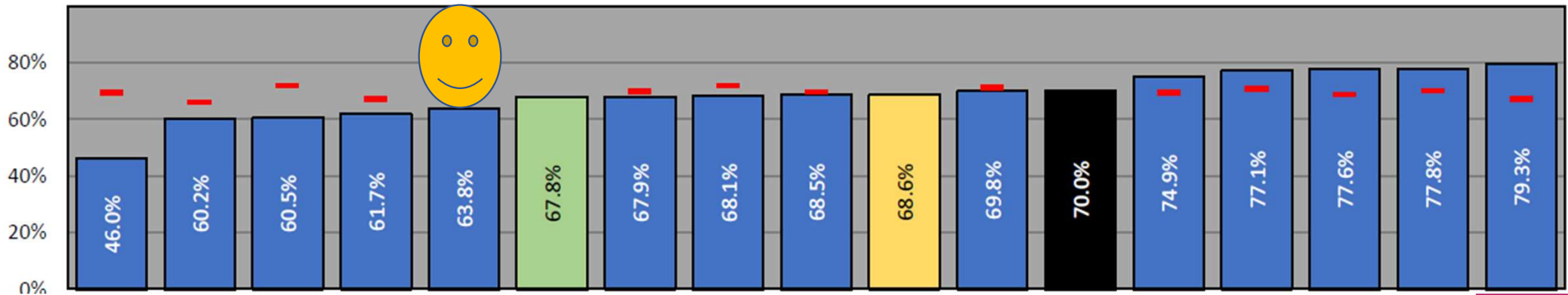


Children Looked After

Of the Number of children who have been looked after for at least 2.5 years, percentage who have been in the same placement for the last 2 years

Good = High

Quarter 2 - 2020-21



Children Looked After

The data indicates

The current position in Somerset is that 72% of children in our care live in a foster family.

Just under half of the children in foster care live with a foster carer who is supported by Somerset County Council. The other children live with foster carers provided by independent fostering agencies. Some live in Somerset and some further away.

The rate of children who have been able to remain living in their placement long term is lower in Somerset than the England and statistical neighbour average.

Potential hypotheses

There are not enough foster carers or residential care homes in Somerset with the right skills to be able to care for children long term.

There are insufficient foster homes and residential care providers for Somerset children to be cared for locally.





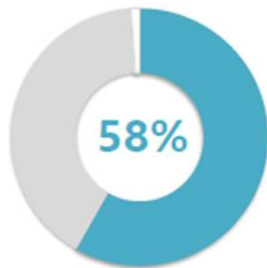
Care leavers

Care leavers activity (Education, Employment, or Training)

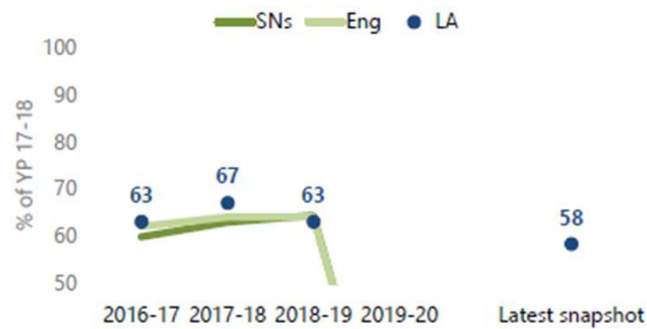
Snapshot 05/01/2021

Education, Employment, or Training (EET) of 17-18 year olds

ChAT	Aged 17	Aged 18	Total
Numbers in cohort	4	87	91
In EET	0%	61%	58%

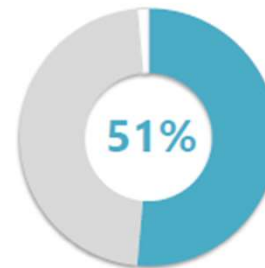


■ YP in EET ■ NEET
□ No info

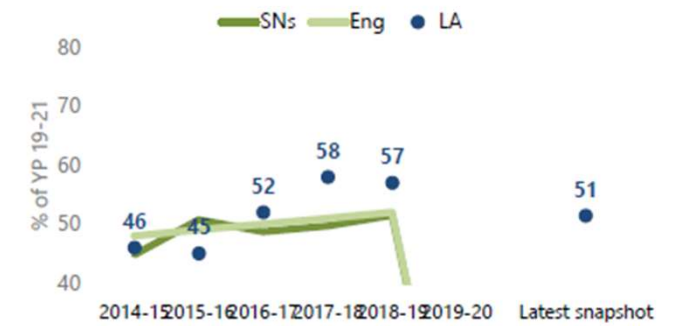


Education, Employment, or Training (EET) of 19-21 year olds

ChAT	Aged 19	Aged 20	Aged 21	Total
Numbers in cohort	76	66	0	142
In EET	46%	58%	-	51%



■ YP in EET ■ NEET
□ No info



Care leavers

The data indicates

58% of care leavers aged 17 and 18 are in training, education or employment. Historically this has been above the statistical neighbour and England average but is reducing over time.

51% of older care leavers are in training, education or employment. Historically this has been above the statistical neighbour and England average but is reducing over time.

Potential hypotheses

There is a need for greater focus on meeting the education, training and employment needs of care leavers



Summary of hypotheses

Early help

1. Communities and professionals appear to be able to support most younger children well at a very early stage of need but where it does not work well children have been hurt
2. Why does the early help approach appear less effective as children reach adolescence?

Children looked after

1. There are not enough foster carers or residential care homes in Somerset with the right skills to be able to care for children long term.
2. There are insufficient foster homes and residential care providers for Somerset children to be cared for locally.

Children in need of help and protection

1. What might this data mean about the effectiveness of services to protect children?

Care Leavers

1. There is a need for greater focus on meeting the education, training and employment needs of care leavers

