

# 24/25 Month 4 Budget Monitoring Report

Children & Families Scrutiny Committee -  
18 September 2024



**Somerset**  
Council

# Childrens Services Month 4 2024/25

General fund  
£141.9m net  
budget

£6.4m forecast  
overspend  
(4.5% of  
budget)

	Budget 24/25 £m	Month 4 24/25 £m	Variance £m	Movement from month 3 (Fav) / Adv £m
Children & Families	98.0	104.3	6.3	1.2
Commissioning & Performance	11.1	10.8	(0.3)	0.1
Education & Transport	32.4	32.8	0.4	(0.3)
Childrens Services Team	0.4	0.4	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>141.9</b>	<b>148.3</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>

# External Placements Month 4 24/25

The table opposite provides a breakdown of the external placements budget by placement type.

The main areas of overspend are:

- Residential placements - £4.8m gross overspend, £6.7m overspend (net of DSG and NHS income)
- Unregistered placements - £1.8m gross overspend

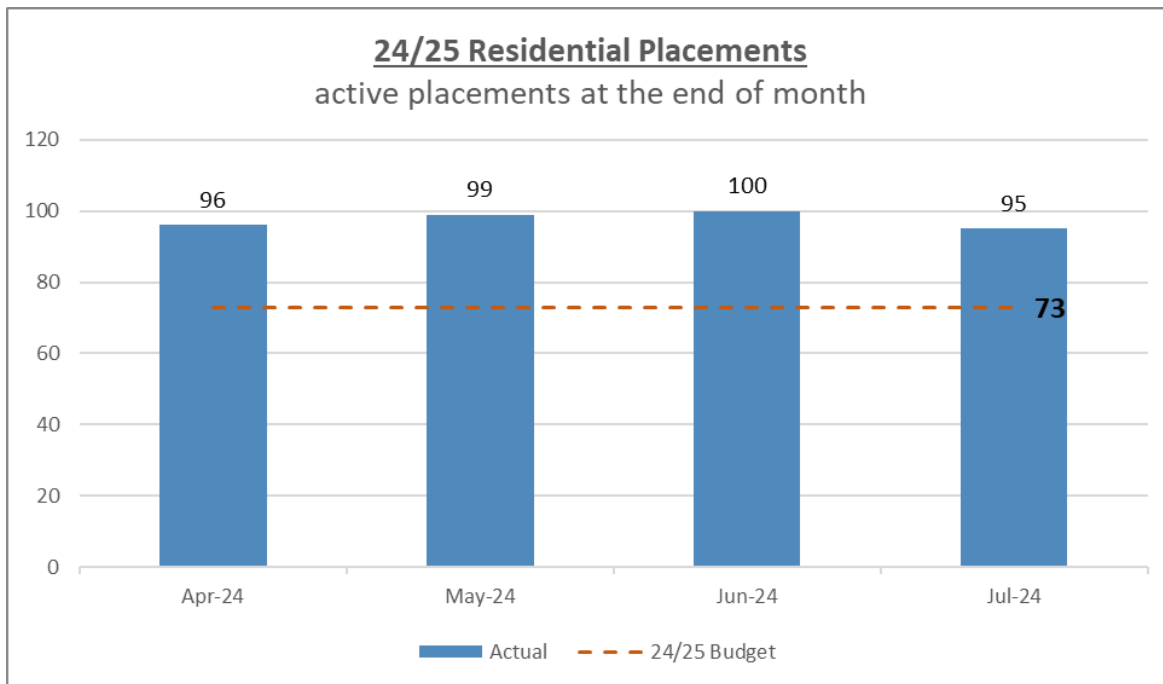
\* 'Other' spend relates to a combination of smaller budgeted placement types – IFA Staying Put, IFA Parent & Child, Remand, Leaving Care Accommodation

External Placements	24/25 Budget	Full Year Outturn	Overall Variance	Movement from Month 3
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Residential Placements	29.7	34.5	4.8	(0.0)
Independent Fostering Agencies	7.9	8.1	0.2	(0.1)
16+ Supported Accommodation	5.6	4.1	(1.6)	0.5
Homes & Horizons	5.9	5.9	0.0	0.0
Unregistered Placements	0.8	2.7	1.8	0.5
UASC Placements	2.5	3.2	0.7	0.1
Residential Parent & Child	0.7	2.1	1.3	(0.3)
Secure	1.3	0.7	(0.6)	0.4
Thrive 16+	4.1	4.1	0.0	0.0
Other	1.4	2.8	1.4	0.1
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>
DSG Grant	(6.5)	(5.3)	1.2	0.0
UASC Grant	(2.3)	(2.4)	(0.1)	(0.0)
NHS Funding	(4.5)	(3.8)	0.7	(0.3)
Other	(0.8)	(0.8)	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(14.1)</b>	<b>(12.4)</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>0.8</b>

# Residential Placements Month 4 24/25

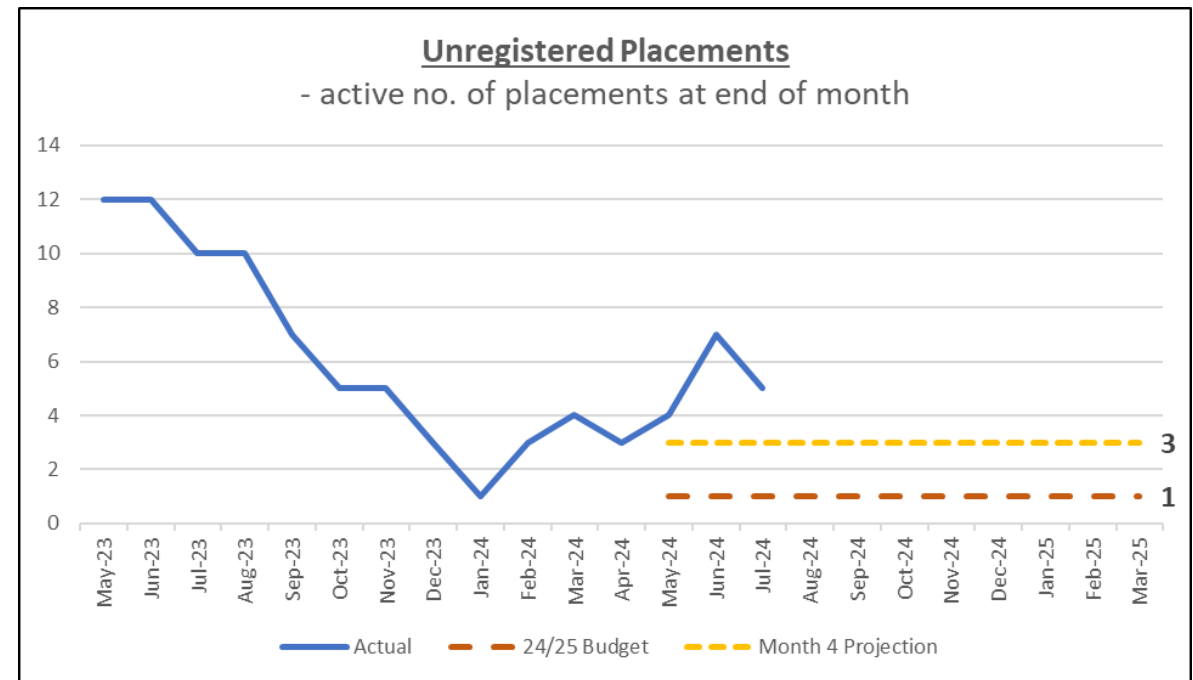
The graph below shows the trend in the **number of active residential placements** at the end of each month during 24/25.

The budgeted number of residential placements for 24/25 is 73.



After seeing an increase in unregistered placements from January 24, numbers are starting to level off and decline slightly with current active numbers at the end of July being 5.

The budgeted number of unregistered placements for 24/25 is 1.

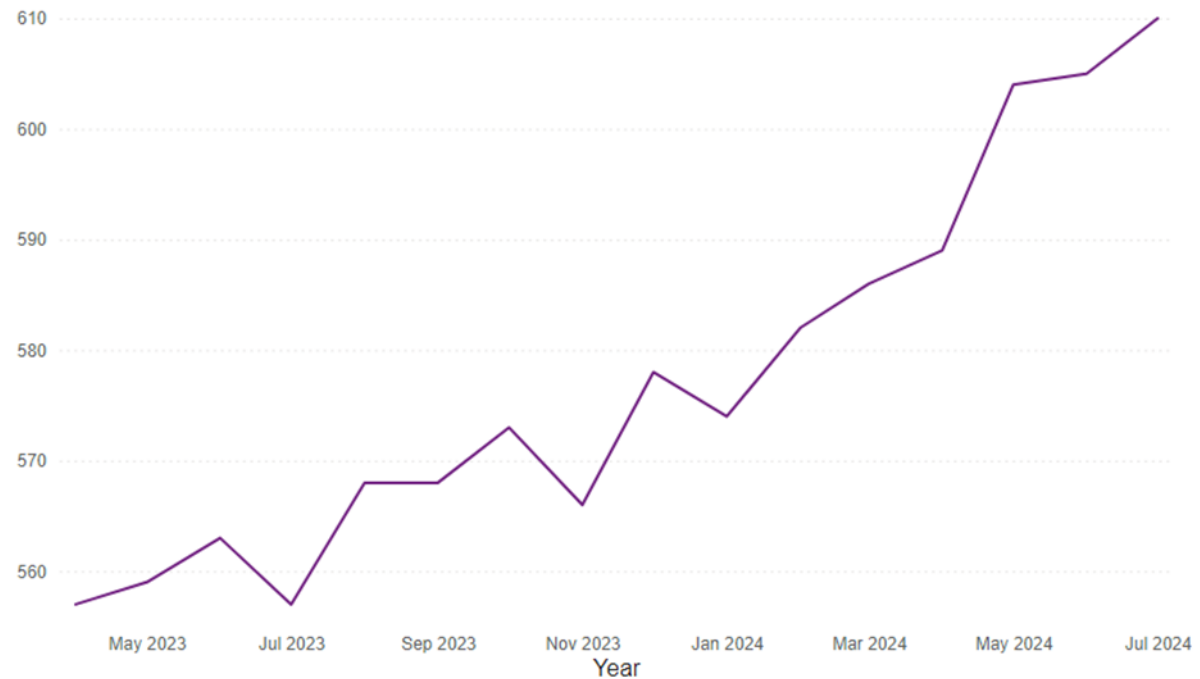


# Children Looked After Numbers

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The graphs opposite shows the total children looked after (CLA) numbers over the last 12 months. There has been a rise of 53 CLA with the more recent numbers coming into care moving into high-cost residential placements.

CLA Total by Month



# Education & Transport Forecast Month 4 24/25

Area – all in £m	Budget 24/25	Forecast 24/25	Variance A/(F)	Movement from month 3 (Fav) / Adv £m
Education	6.0	7.0	1.0	(0.2)
Home to School Transport	13.0	12.4	(0.6)	(0.1)
SEND Transport	13.4	13.4	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>



Education pressure due to various factors:

- Inflation increases not fully passed on
- Reduction in customer base
- Pressure on LA spend due to MTFP savings not fully expected to be achieved

The favourable variance of £0.6m in Home to School transport largely relates to the Extended Rights to Travel grant, which was budgeted as £0.6m however the actual grant is £1.1m, the difference of £0.5m is shown as a favourable variance.

# DSG High Needs Block forecast Month 4 24/25

Category	2024/25 Budgeted Pupils	2024/25 Current Budget £m	2024/25 Forecast £m	Variance A/(F) £m	
Special schools places & top up	1,147	24.6	25.1	0.5	
INMS & Pre 16	508	32.8	34.4	1.6	→ INMS placements DMP average – 415 Forecast - 449
Post 16	845	8.9	8.9	-	
Mainstream top up & costed plans	2,119	12.5	15.8	3.3	→ Increase due to rise in mainstream costed plans and top ups
Pupil Referral Units	348	8.9	8.9	-	
Autism Spectrum Disorder Bases	177	2.2	2.2	-	
Advisory Services & Virtual School	-	4.1	4.1	-	
SEN Transformation & Other Services	-	2.3	2.3	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,144</b>	<b>96.3</b>	<b>101.7</b>	<b>5.4</b>	
Net funding after recoupment		77.4	77.4	-	
<b>Forecast in-year deficit</b>		<b>18.9</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>5.4</b>	→ Month 3 forecast £4.2m adverse

# Acronyms

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- CLA – children looked after
- UASC – unaccompanied asylum seeker children
- IFA – independent foster agency
- DSG – dedicated school's grant
- DMP – deficit management plan
- INMS – independent non-maintained schools
- SEND – special educational needs and disabilities
- EHCP – education, health and care plan



# Questions

