













Appendix A - Performance Management Framework Report – Education and Children’s Services Committee

Education and Lifelong Learning

1. Citizen

Table 1. Service Level Measures – 2024-25 Service Standards (Education)

Performance Measure	Year to Date Value	2024/25 Target	Status	Long Trend - Annual
We will meet all eligible requests for early learning and childcare placements within one month.	100%	100%		
We will meet all mainstream requests for a primary and secondary school placement within one month.	100%	100%		
ACC managed/funded Early Learning and Childcare settings will meet the National Standard (average evaluation of 'good'- 12 month rolling data)	98.8%	100%		
Primary, secondary, and special schools will achieve an average evaluation of 'good' in formal evaluations of core Quality Indicators by Education Scotland (12 month rolling data)	91.7%	100%		
We will work to ensure that school attendance is as good or better than the national average.	92.9%	=/> 91.2%*		
We will process requests for additional support to meet the wellbeing needs of children and young people within 40 days	100%	100%		

*Based on national data calculations for 2023/24

Service Commentary – Service Standards

The metric suite above offers evidence against the Service Level Standards which were agreed at the Budget meeting of Council on 6th March 2024, and apply to the current academic year. In some instances, the phrasing around these may differ marginally from that expressed in the Appendix of the budget report to enable conversion of the statements in the Standards for presentation as reportable measures.





[ELC National Standard – Day Care of Children and Out of School Care](#)

Coinciding with the new academic session, reporting against the Standard metric, which was being captured as a fixed measure, has been brought in line with the averaged evaluation scoring below (Table 3.) to demonstrate the capacity for continuous improvement and direction of travel by the Authority towards the expressed objective.

Education Scotland Inspections

There has been a single publication of Education Scotland inspection activity in the current academic year. This exceeded the Service Standard across each organiser and the Overall Quality Indicator average, The average rolling year to date figure of 91.7% is improved on the reported to the September meeting (84.4%) which represented the outcome at conclusion of the previous academic year.

Table 2. Service Level Measures – 2024-25 Service Standards (Lifelong Learning)

Performance Measure	Year to Date Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
We will provide CLD services to a level that achieves a rating of good or better through external inspection.	100%		
We will ensure library Item Requests are satisfied within 21 days – 12 month rolling value	74%		

Service Commentary – Service Standards (Lifelong Learning)

Community Learning and Development

Education Scotland visited the local authority week beginning 13 May 2024. This was a positive visit with work with partners, understanding of leaders and partners and well supported volunteers being key strengths. The family learning team has increased the reach to include families with children beyond 5 and has become an integral part of our Edge of Care offer.

Table 3. Service Level Measure - Quality of Early Learning Centre Provision (Care Inspectorate)

Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators
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Core Quality Indicator Scope	How good is our care, play and learning?	How good is our setting?	How good is our leadership?	How good is our staff team?	Overall Quality Indicator Outcome
Percentage of assessments achieving National Standard (average score of Good) *	94.4%	99.1%	98.3%	103.1%	98.8%

Service Commentary - Table 3

As at early November 2024, the rolling 12-month average score for Care Inspectorate (CI) evaluations, were improved on those reported to the July meeting of this Committee when the Overall QI (OQI) score figure was 94.5% and similar to the last reported rolling period (August 2023 to July 2024), which was 98.9%.

Average scoring against Leadership and Staff indicator evaluations met or exceeded the National Standard, with assessments of Care, Play and Learning environments being slightly below the Service Standard based expectations. The service continues to focus on these areas.

This data encompasses published inspections against 30 settings with the average scores of both local authority and partner provider settings being comparative to each other. An additional five inspections have been published in the period from August to October 2024, three of which attained outcomes of Good or better across all four Indicator themes, fully achieving or exceeding the National Standard, with an average OQI score of 96.3% across the five settings.

*Percentage of Care Inspectorate Evaluations of Core Quality Indicators receiving an average score of Good (12 month rolling average to 31st October 2024)

Table 4. Service Level Quarterly Measure – Library Services









Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value	
% of library Item Requests satisfied within 21 days	72.0%	75.0%	73.0%	74.0%	

Table 5. Corporate Measures – 2024-25 Cluster Level Indicators (Quarterly)

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	2024/25 Target	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
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	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education & Lifelong Learning	31	33	33	16			
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	58.1%	78.8%	75.8%	75.0%	75.0%		
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	16.1%	6.1%	9.1%	0.0%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – Education & Lifelong Learning	3	2	1	3			


Service Commentary –

The total number of complaints have halved from Quarter 1 to Quarter 2 however the complexity of complaints has increased, which has had some impact on resolution timescales in comparison with the two previous quarters.

The percentage of complaints resolved within timescale remains within the target of 75% and this measure, in common with each of the other measures is, displaying an improving long-term trend, producing an improved overall position for Complaints handling in aggregate.

While there have not been any complaints upheld in Quarter 2, learnings have still been identified, showing that feedback has been taken on board and processes have been improved where possible.

Table 6. Service Level Measure - Visits in Person to Library Service Premises

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value	
Total Number of visits in person to library service premises	115,334	130,661	135,708	140,364	

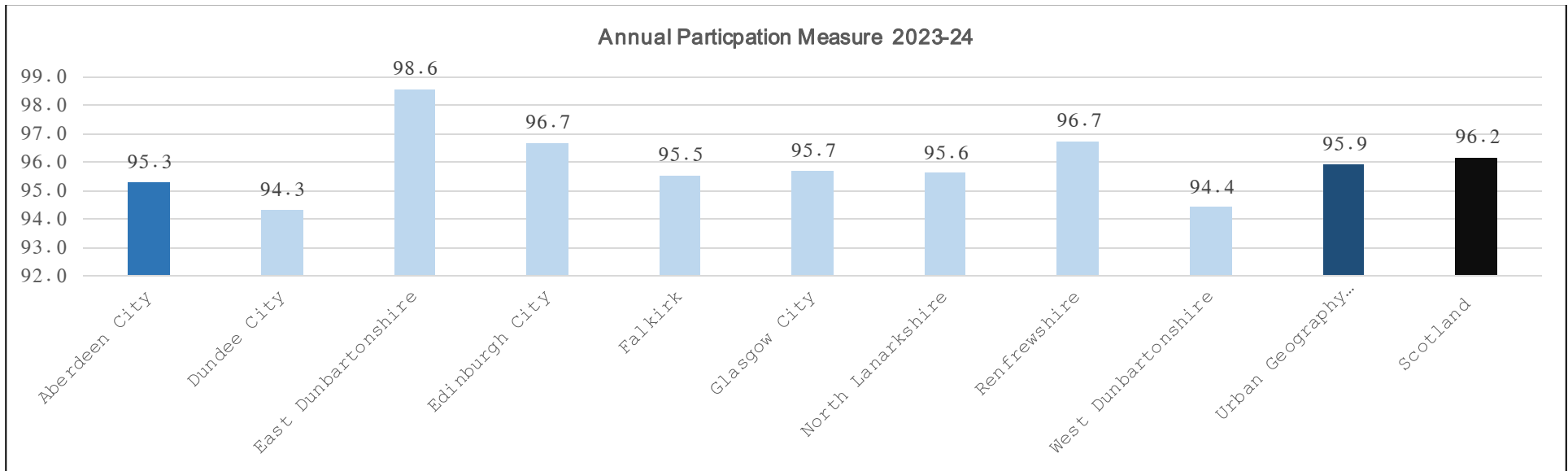
Service Commentary

Table 6

Visits in person to Library Service premises have been on a continuous upwards trend (taking account of seasonal influences) for a period of 24 months. The value of visits at Quarter 2 is the highest in the post pandemic period, is c.14,500 greater (+11.5%) than in the same comparable period in 2023/24 and just under 40% greater than Quarter 2 data for 2022/23.

2. Process

Chart 1. Annual Participation Measure for 16–19-year-olds by Benchmarks – Adjusted for Unconfirmed Status Responses



Service Commentary

Chart 1

This strategic level measure is jointly delivered by City Development & Regeneration, Education & Lifelong Learning and Children’s Social Work and Families Clusters, alongside a series of other internal (e.g. People and Citizen Cluster) and external partners, including Skills Development Scotland which acts as the regional lead for this outcome.

Overall, the outcomes for Aberdeen City are marginally lower than the majority of its Urban Geography Local Authority comparators, and the National figure, but closer to the Urban Geography Average and above both Dundee and West Dunbartonshire. There is limited statistically significant change in the absolute value of the Aberdeen City Measure from 2022/23, but this stable position has resulted in some weakening of the city’s relative standing, with an extending of the distance to its benchmark authorities from 2021/22.

These data are locally adjusted to exclude those 16–19-year-olds where an Unconfirmed Status was recorded from the SDS surveying, In 2023/24, this particular Status represented 5.4% of the estimated survey cohort (392 individuals) which was higher than most other local authority areas.

The Service is currently working with partners to gain additional insight into this outlying position (and re-validate the present understanding of influences behind this) and is strengthening its oversight of tracking data at school level to assist SDS to reduce the numbers of individuals whose destinations are Unconfirmed within the current survey model.

Table 7. Service Level Measures – 2023-24 Annual Participation Measure (%)

Year	Total Cohort (16-19)	Participating (16-19)	Participating in Education (16-19)	Participating in Employment (16-19)	Participating in Other Training & Development (16-19)	Not participating Unemployed Seeking (16-19)	Not participating Unemployed not Seeking (16-19)	Unconfirmed Status (16-19)
2023/24	7,234	90.1	73.2	15.0	1.9	2.4	2.1	5.4
2022/23	6,880	90.2	72.7	15.8	1.7	2.0	2.1	5.6
2021/22	6,551	91.2	74.8	14.6	1.9	2.8	2.1	3.9

Service Commentary

Table 7

Data Description

The Annual Participation Measure (APM) survey, conducted by Skills Development Scotland and published in Autumn of each year, reflects the survey destination outcomes of all 16–19-year-olds across a full 12-month period from April to March of the following year. The survey methodology is based on

continuous monitoring of clients known to Skills Development Scotland, as opposed to the snapshot surveying that populates the related statistics around school leaver destinations and the Interim Participation Measure that were reported to the September meeting of this Committee.

Analysis

In 2023/24 the number of city APM survey participants has risen significantly from 6,880 to 7,234, (+5.1%) a movement replicated nationally but at a faster rate than that of the majority of other local authorities and the Scottish figure (+3.1%). This increased sample size, although with a similar survey response rate, can influence the sensitivity of direct comparisons with prior year data.


The Annual Participation Measure, in common with related data reported to previous Committee's, shows statistically limited year-on-year variation in either the proportion of 16–19-year-olds in a participative destination overall or the spread of outcomes. Education remains the City's most prevalent destination at 73.2% of all surveyed, placing Aberdeen City in the upper quartile for all Scottish Local Authorities, and above the national establishment figure of 71.2%.

As a destination, Employment remains at a level which is below that of most other authorities. This needs to be considered in the context of the higher proportion of individuals in the city positively electing to remain in an education destination rather than representing an absolute lack of opportunities in employment.

At the same time, there may be a dynamic correlation between the proportion of 16–19-year-olds Seeking Employment, which has risen marginally on 2022/23, and the state of the current job market for this age group. This aspect is continuously considered in detail, and in the context of the wider employability data ecosystem, by individual services, the corporate ACC body and in partnership through ABZ Works.

Presently, the proportion of 16–19-year-olds who, in combination, were not in a participative destination (4.5%) is above the Scotland figure of 3.7% and that of the Urban Geography average (4.0%), although these variations are within the +/- 1p.p tolerances that would naturally apply to both inter-authority and year-on-year comparisons

Table 8. Service Level 2023/24 Annual Measures

Performance Indicator	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Status	2023-24 National Figure
	Value	Value	Value		
% of City schools which are evaluated as being in Good (A) or Satisfactory (B) condition	98.4%	96.7%	96.7%		92.0%

Service Commentary

Table 8

National Statistics around the condition of schools' estates are published annually, with the most recent release being in September 2024.

In 2023/24, 59 out of 61 evaluated school premises were rated as Good or Satisfactory for condition with 20 (32.8%) schools being rated Good (29.5% in 2022/23) and 39 (63.9%) graded as being Satisfactory condition based on the most recent condition surveys. The combined measure is unchanged from the prior year but with a higher proportion of premises rated as Good than in 2023/23.

2 school premises were graded as Poor (St Peters RC School and Hazlehead Academy) and no schools were graded as being in Bad condition. The school estate reports recently considered at this, and other Committees, around St. Peter's RC School and Hazlehead Academy (which were subject to scheduled condition evaluations in the 2022/23 condition census period) have outlined the proposals for addressing the condition gradings of these premises through redevelopment of these sites.

Aberdeen City Council's school estate has consistently been graded more highly for the combined Good and Satisfactory measure than the national outcome over an extended timescale. The overall number and percentage of pupils being educated in settings with a rating of Good and Satisfactory was 24.885* (95.1%). In comparison, the Scotland figure for 2023/24 sat at 92.0%.

*Based on 2023 Pupil Census data

Table 9. School Attendance Measure 2024-25 – Academic Year to Date (Term 1)

School Type	% Present Openings	% Authorised Openings	% Unauthorised Openings	% Exclusions Openings	% Total Absence
Primary	94.4	3.5	2.1	0.00	5.6
Secondary	90.8	5.6	3.5	0.04	9.2
Special	90.7	7.7	1.6	0.00	9.3
All Phases	92.9	4.4	2.7	0.02	7.1

Service Commentary

Table 9

This data serves as a local baseline in the context of the Service Standard around school attendance above and informs review actions reflected within Aberdeen City Council's National Improvement Framework Plan for 2024/25.

Although not wholly comparable to the National Attendance Measure reported against the same term in the report to the November 2023 meeting of this Committee (as a consequence of statistical adjustments made by the Scottish Government to the published NAM prior to release), the local data is very closely

matched to the 2024 August – October datasets. As of October 2023, attendance rates for Primary were 94.8%, Secondary 90.5%, Special Schools 92.0% and overall attendance was 93.0%.

The Education Analytical Services, Scottish Government fortnightly data source for the National Attendance Measure has not been made available in the current academic session.

3. Staff

Corporate Measures – 2024/25 Service Level Indicators

Table 10. Establishment (Education and Lifelong Learning)







Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning)	3.147	3,148	3,248	3,233		

Table 11. Accidents and Incidents (Education and Lifelong Learning)

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
H&S Employee Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	3	5	2	2		
H&S Employee Non-Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education and Lifelong Learning	256	416	286	228		

Service Commentary

Table 11

The Corporate Health and Safety Quarterly Update report considered at the meeting of the [Staff Governance Committee](#) on 9th September 2024 offered detailed analysis of accident and near miss data across Clusters and at Primary and Secondary school levels.

Although there was an initial expectation that the number of incidents could rise as a consequence of an increased focus on recording, the present data trend does not, at this point, strongly support this. This may be a consequence of improved guidance and understanding of the processes of reporting incidents/accidents at a front-line level but will be carefully monitored for any outlying data.

Table 12. Absence Due to Illness (Education and Lifelong Learning) 12 month rolling average.

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 2 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	6.9	6.5	6.0	5.1	5.4		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (12-month rolling figure at quarter end) *	6.7	6.25	6.4	5.8	5.4		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	9.7	8.8	7.9	5.8	5.4		

Table 13. Absence Due to Illness (Education and Lifelong Learning) Monthly Average

Management Measure	July 2024/25	August 2024/25	September 2024/25
	Value	Value	Value
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education and Lifelong Learning (monthly)	0.83	0.72	1.08
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (monthly)	0.88	0.76	1.2
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (monthly)	1.27	1.13	1.36

Service Commentary

Table 12

Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing an improving quarterly trend that, taking account of natural seasonal variations, indicates material impacts are being evidenced from both Service Management’s focus on actions to support employees back to work after periods of illness, and as a result of corporate data and operational workstreams around this theme.

Across the four quarterly periods, the pace of change around Early Learning and Childcare settings is the fastest improving and now aligns more closely to those for the Cluster and within Schools, which both record similar rates of improvement to each other. Each of the measures now sit within range of the corporate figure and are comparable to the levels recorded in other more front-facing clusters/services.



*Work around constructing new system-based absence data at an individual school level is currently being progressed which will offer a revised benchmark for this measure. It is anticipated that this will reduce the recorded levels of absence against this metric to a level that is lower than the corporate level outcome. Currently, the early data for 2024/25 (based on 15 establishments incorporated to date) indicates a comparable outcome of just over 2 days average absence per FTE within schools for the rolling measure, based on staff budgets directly attributed to, and managed at, school level.

Table 13

Month to month data is particularly statistically sensitive to limited changes in baseline drivers and is offered only as supportive management information on this basis.

4. Finance & Controls

Table 14. Staff Expenditure (Education and Lifelong Learning)

Performance Indicator	Quarter 1 2024/25		Quarter 2 2024/25		Quarter 3 2024/25		Quarter 4 2024/25	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to YTD budget profile – Education and Lifelong Learning *	26.75%		51.3%					

Service Commentary

Table 14

The Management Commentary provided within the Q2 2024/25 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 5th of November, outlined the financial position of the children’s services overall. It noted a year-end forecast of a significant overspend against the full year budget for the Cluster, incorporating that related to staff costs, because of demand pressures noted below.

Within this and more recent quarterly commentaries, reflection on the sustained 24-month period of inflation of school rolls, although this is now rising at a slightly lower pace, and costs relating to long term absence, were highlighted. This latter pressure, and absence levels overall (as noted in Table 12 above) are being actively addressed by the Service, and there are expectations that this, excluding the impacts above, will lead to closer expenditure to budget profile ratios over the course of the fiscal year.

* Reported data does not take account of subsequent re-charges into and out of the Staff Expenditure budget line which may result in revisions to the projected trajectory to year-end financial forecasts as each periodic re-charge exercise is concluded

Children’s Social Work and Family Support

Corporate Measures – 2023-24 Cluster Level Indicators (Quarterly)

5. Citizen

Table 15. Complaints Handling

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. of Complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	11	12	12	11			
% of Complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	63.6%	100.0%	75.0%	90.9%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	9.1%	37.5%	41.7%	0%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Children’s Social Work	0	0	0	0			









Service Commentary

Table 15.

The number of complaints in Quarter 2 was similar to that in each prior quarter. There has been a significant improvement in the proportion of complaints resolved within the required timescale on Quarter 1.









Across the scope of measures contributing to the service's effective delivery of complaints handling, there are long term improvement trends, and increasing averaged outcomes of over the course of the current annual period (October 2023 to September 2024) in comparison with the previous 12-month data cycle.

Table 16. Service Level Standards 2024/25 (Children's Social Work)

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of care provided in Council children's homes, fostering and adoption services achieve a care standard of Good or better	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
We will ensure care provided by the Council's fostering service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
We will ensure care provided by the Council's adoption service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
% of children open to Children's Social Work supported to live at home, where safe to do so	75%	75%	75%	75%		75%	

6. Process

Table 17. Service Level Standards 2024/25 (Children's Social Work)

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of initial screenings undertaken, and action decided, on new referrals within 7 days.	97%	99%	98%	98%		100%	
% initial Child Protection Planning Meetings held within timescale	71%	32%	53%	67%		80%	
% of Care experienced children and young people with three or more placements in 12 months	1%	1%	2%	2%		<7.5%	
% Care Experienced Children and Young People with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years	68%	73%	58%	74%		95%	

Service Commentary

Table 17.

Screenings and CPPM Timescales

As noted in the report to the previous meeting of this Committee, the importance of undertaking initial screenings in a timely manner is critical to ensuring that those referrals which indicate a children and young people are at significant risk are responded to in a timely manner. This measure continues to perform at a very high level from quarter to quarter.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure Child Protection Planning Meetings are held timeously, all children considered at a CPPM have a multi-agency safety plan in place ensuring their protection until a CPPM is held. There is a continued focus on reducing the timescales involved where this is within the direct control of the Service, which is producing an improved quarterly Quarter 2 outcome and a reversed long-term trend from that noted in the previous report.

Pathway Plans

The recent focus around improving the accuracy of recording of pathway plan implementation is producing an improving trend against this measure. This system related influence on the data will continue to be monitored with a view to raising the recorded proportion of CEYP with a pathway plan further.

Chart 2. Service Level Measures – Average Number of Looked After Children and Young People by Placement Type Timeseries

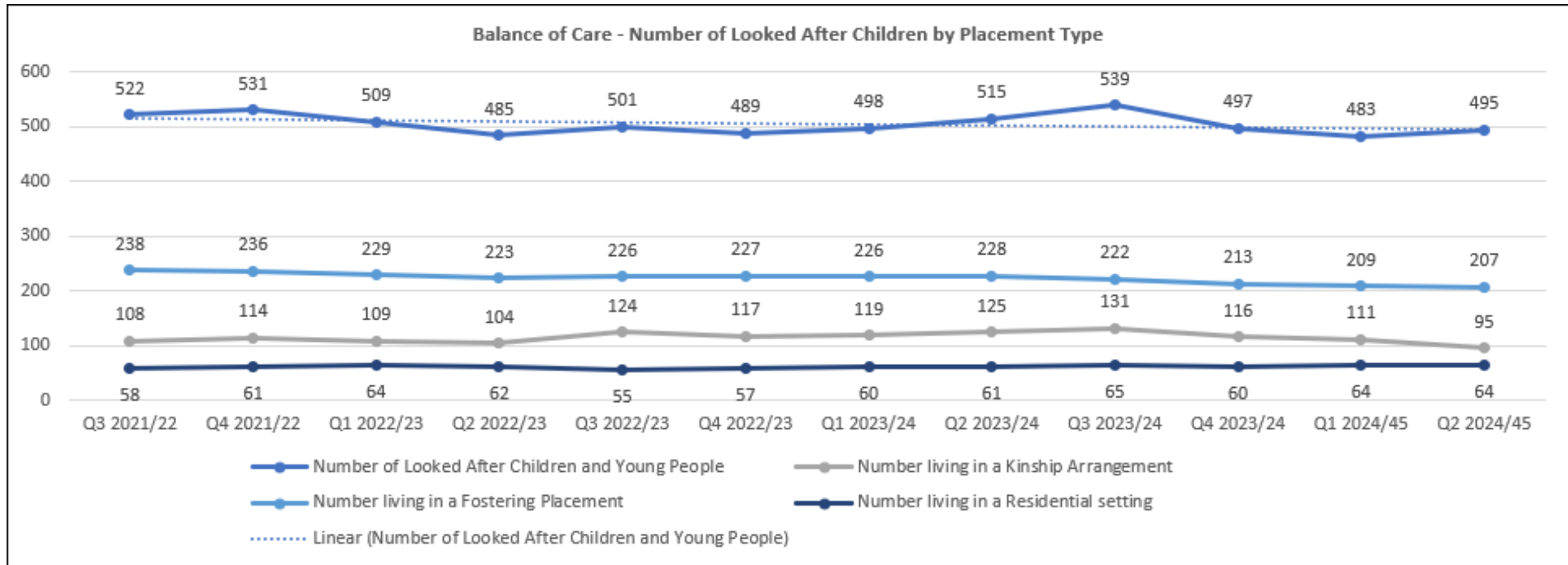


Table 18. Balance of Care -% of Looked After Children by Placement (Rolling 12-month average by Quarter)

Period	% Looked After living in a Kinship Arrangement	% Looked After Children living in a Fostering Placement	% Looked After Children living in a Residential setting
Q2 2022/23	21.3%	45.3%	12.0%
Q2 2023/24	24.2%	45.3%	11.6%
Q2 2024/25	22.4%	42.3%	12.6%

Service Commentary

Chart 2 and Table 18

The number of Looked After Children has been on a consistently reducing monthly trend over the period of the last 12 months which is reflected in the quarterly average data in Chart 2.

The % of Looked After children and young people in the respective placements by both fixed and 12 month rolling quarters shows some limited change in comparison with prior periods. As at Quarter 2, there is evidence of some migration of the proportion of placements from Kinship and Fostering to other care settings (e.g. Living with parents, continuing care, other community including residential care, and prospective adopters*) which are acting as a dynamic deflationary influence on these main placement types.

The numbers of children and young people behind these changes are small but in the context of a reducing number of Looked After Children and Young People, these movements are consistent with the strategic direction of travel outlined for the Balance of Care, whilst maintaining the Promise objective that those in living in the care system maintain safe and caring relationships that are important to them.

In combination with Data and Insight colleagues, we will look at how we provide a clearer breakdown of all placement types within future reporting recognising that these smaller placement settings contribute around 20 – 25% of all looked after children for whom the local authority has corporate parenting responsibilities.

However, we need to recognise that it is less appropriate that some of this data is framed and presented by quarterly reporting frequencies within public performance reporting in terms of both GDPR principles and the capacity for developing intelligence led evaluation. Consequently, these data may require to be reflected in an alternative format from that laid out in Chart 2, which excludes these particular settings, but which can still offer meaningful oversight to Committee.

7. Staff

Corporate Measures – 2024/25 Service Level Indicators

Table 19. Establishment Levels



Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Children’s Social Work	342.0	335.8	343.63	354.77		

Table 20. Accidents and Incidents

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Status	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Children’s Social Work	0	0	0	0		
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Children’s Social Work	0	3	0	0		

Table 21. Absence Due to Illness (Children’s Social Work) 12 month rolling average.

Performance Measure	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 4 2023/24	Quarter 1 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children’s Social Work	7.8	6.5	5.3	3.9	5.4		

Table 22. Absence Due to Illness (Children’s Social Work) Monthly Average

Management Measure	July 2024/25	August 2024/25	September 2024/25
	Value	Value	Value
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children’s Social Work (monthly)	1.23	0.75	0.95

Service Commentary

Table 21



Levels of employee absence due to illness are showing an improving quarterly trend that, taking account of natural seasonal variations, indicates material impacts are being evidenced from both Service Management’s focus on actions to support employees back to work after periods of illness, and as a result of corporate data and operational activity around this theme.

Table 22

Month to month data is particularly statistically sensitive to limited changes in baseline drivers and is offered only as supportive management information on this basis.

8. Finance & Controls

Table 23. Staff Expenditure (Children' Social Work)

Performance Indicator	Quarter 1 2024/25		Quarter 2 2024/25		Quarter 3 2024/25		Quarter 4 2024/25	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to YTD budget profile – Children's Social Work	31.4%		54.4%					

Service Commentary

Table 23

As above, the Q2 2024/25 Budget report to Finance and Resources Committee on 5th November 2024, noted the pressures, and forecast potential for an end of year budget overspend encompassing children's services delivery.




The Management Commentary section of the Quarter 1 2024/25 Budget report to Finance and Resources Committee in September outlined (i) a continued and potentially an extended period of pressure on staff expenditure arising from the increased levels of need and vulnerability amongst our children and young people, a legacy issue from the past four years, and (ii) the consequences of meeting the often significant demands on specialist staff arising from supporting the young asylum/refugee community, the size of which, although now more stable, continues to require considerable inputs by Children's Social Work teams on a sustained basis.





These influences remain as the most significant variable drivers of budgetary pressures within Children's Social Work Services, although the Year-to-Date budget at present is only marginally out with the Period 6 profile.

* Reported data does not take account of subsequent re-charges into and out of the Staff Expenditure budget line which may result in revisions to the projected trajectory to year-end financial forecasts as each periodic re-charge exercise is concluded

Appendix Data Notes

- Target Setting: Where no target is applied against Service Standards, the 'Business-as-Usual' objective is that these services will be delivered on a consistent basis within the available resource.
- Data Trend Directions: Unless stated to the contrary, Long-Term Data Trends are based against the average of 12 monthly, 4 quarterly and 3 annual consecutive periods, respectively.
- Absence Management: (i) Absence data throughout this report reflects robust calculations of FTE based absence but with recognition that minimal variances in accuracy can arise in longitudinal and service comparisons where part time/variable hours working contracts are more common. The impact of this technical/statistical issue has been assessed as producing a marginal inflationary effect on absence levels within Services where a greater proportion of these types of contracts are appropriate to effective service delivery. (ii) An element of caution requires to be applied around interpretation of the trend data relating to increases in absence data around those services with smaller FTE complements as a minimal number of medium to long term absences can materially affect the average working days lost at Service levels.
- Staff Costs: Staffing costs referred to throughout this Appendix exclude adjustments for the corporate vacancy factor.

Long Term Data Trends	
	Improving/Increasing
	No or Limited Change/Stable
	Getting Worse/Decreasing

PI Status	
	Alert (figure more than 20% below target and being actively pursued)
	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target and being monitored)
	OK (figure within target or better)
	Data Only

