Bracknell
Forest
Council

Equalities Monitoring – Services
B – Children's Social Care

Annual Report - 2019-20

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Contents

1. Introduction

The purpose of equalities monitoring is to ensure the Council is providing a fair and equitable service to all residents. This report provides information in relation to equalities monitoring in Children's Social Care, which sits within the Children, Young People and Learning Department in the Council.

Children's Social Care has a statutory responsibility for assessing the help and support needed for children and their families with specialist needs, including Child Protection, Children Looked After, Youth Offending and Special Educational Needs. It is also responsible for planning, developing and commissioning specialist services to meet changing needs. The Children Act 1989 and The Children Act 2004 provide the legislative framework for Children's Social Care.

Further information on the work of Children's Social Care can be accessed at:

http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/childrenandfamilycare

A range of information is collected by Children's Social Care which helps us to understand the following:

- Access to the service
- Outcomes from our intervention
- Satisfaction with the service
- Complaints and steps towards resolution
- Performance information

From the information gathered analysis has been undertaken in relation to the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Race
- Sex

The data used to complete this analysis has been taken from the following statutory returns:

- Children in Need Census (CIN) completed annually, and the data refers to activity between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020.

- SSDA903 return – the data refers to activity with Looked After Children (1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020), and provides a snapshot as at 31 March 2020.

(The above originally collated from data held in Mosaic – this is the Integrated Children's System (ICS) which records data for Children's Social Care).

2. Access to the service

Access to Children's Social Care is based on a statutory threshold, however we continually aim to ensure people are treated fairly and that those who are most in need receive the greatest help. As a department we work towards ensuring children

and families with the greatest assessed need receive a service in a timely way. There are occasions where the law says Children's Social Care must get involved with a family, even if the family do not want this and our practitioners will strive to treat all people coming into contact with our service with dignity and respect.

For further information the following documents can be accessed at:

https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/jobs/childrens-social-care-jobs/childrens-social-care-teams

https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/keeping-adults-and-children-safe/protecting-children/safeguarding-children-board

3. Outcomes

Following a referral, Children's Social Care will undertake an assessment to help understand what the strengths/difficulties the family are facing and to determine the help and support that can be offered.

The outcome will depend on the needs identified through assessment, but they fall into two main groupings:

- Urgent intervention – where it is identified that a child has high level or complex needs which requires an immediate and ongoing response, for example where a child is in need of protection.

- Specialist help – where it is identified that the welfare of the child will be significantly impaired without the provision of services, for example a child who is looked after, or a child who has severe disabilities.

Analysis in the tables below includes:

- Referrals to Children's Social Care by age, sex, and race.
- Single Assessments by age, sex and race.
- Legal status of Looked After children by age, sex and race.
- Type of placement for Looked After Children by age, sex and race.

It is important to note that Children's Social Care provide support to children, young people and families within a clear statutory framework. Many families who become subject to Social Care intervention may not actively seek to be engaged, however there are times that we have a duty to do so. It is not a universal service which has open access to all members of the public, it is a specialist service, and therefore access to the service is based on clear criteria focused on ensuring the welfare of any child or young person is the priority of the service.

4. Referrals to Children's Social Care by age, sex, and race

Referrals by Age (2019/20)

The table below shows the highest % referrals of Children in Need in the duration April 2019 to March 2020 is age 10 – 15, the pattern of referrals by age can vary from year to year, although this remains the same as previous two years.

Children in Need (CIN) - % referrals by age group			
Age Groups	% Referrals	% Bracknell Forest population (0 - 17 years)[1]	Variance
Unborn	4.3%	-	-
Under 1	4.1%	4.8%	-0.7%
1 – 4	17.5%	20.8%	-3.3%
5 – 9	23.6%	29.0%	-5.4%
10 – 15	39.8%	34.7%	5.1%
16+	10.7%	10.7%	-%

Referrals by Sex (2019/20)
The table below shows the sex of referrals for Children in Need in the duration April 2019 to March 2020. It shows that in this period a slightly higher proportion of referrals for females were received. This pattern of referral by sex can vary from year to year. *There is no statistical significance in the variance against the Bracknell Forest population (0-17 years).*

Children in Need (CIN) - % referrals by sex			
Sex	% Referrals *(exc. 'not known')*	% Bracknell Forest population (0 - 17 years)[1]	Variance
Female	50.8%	48.4%	2.4%
Male	49.2%	51.6%	-2.4%

Referrals by Race (2019/20)
The table below shows the race of referrals of Children in Need in the duration April 2019 to March 2020. It shows the referrals are largely in line with or below the Bracknell Forest population (0-17 years) and there has been no significant change on previous year data. *It should be noted that this is a needs led service and there is no statistical significance in the variance shown.*

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[1] 2019 Population Estimates Unit, ONS

Children in Need (CIN) - % referrals by race			
Race	% Referrals *(exc. 'not given')*	% Bracknell Forest population (0 - 17 years)[1]	Variance
White	81.3%	86.6%	-5.3%
Mixed	7.3%	4.5%	2.8%
Asian	4.7%	6.0%	-1.3%
Black	5.0%	2.5%	2.5%
Other	1.6%	0.4%	1.2%

5. Single Assessments by age, sex and race

Single assessments completed by Age (2019/20)
Single (or continuous) assessments were introduced in Bracknell Forest with effect from 1st May 2013 and are now the way in which Social Workers gather information regarding the circumstances of a child or young person to help determine what action or support will be offered to the child, young person or family.

All single assessments **completed** in the duration April 2019 to March 2020, by age, are broadly in line with the % of referrals completed. *It should be noted that not all referrals made to Children's Social Care will result in a single assessment.*

Children in Need (CIN) - % Single assessments completed by age group			
Age Groups	% Single Assessments completed	% Referrals	Variance
Unborn	4.3%	4.3%	-
Under 1	3.5%	4.1%	-0.6%
1 – 4	17.9%	17.5%	0.4%
5 – 9	23.6%	23.6%	-
10 - 15	39.7%	39.8%	-0.1%
16+	10.9%	10.7%	0.2%

Single assessments completed by Sex (2019/20)
All single assessments **completed** in the duration April 2019 to March 2020, by sex, are in line with the % of referrals completed. *It should be noted that not all referrals made to Children's Social Care will result in a single assessment.*

Children in Need (CIN) - % Single Assessments completed by Sex			
Sex	% Single Assessments completed *(exc. 'not known')*	% Referrals (*exc. 'not known'*)	Variance

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[1] Population data taken from NOMIS (DC2101EW) Census 2011

Female	51.0%	50.8%	0.2%
Male	49.0%	49.2%	-0.2%

Single assessments completed by Race (2019/20)
All single assessments *completed* in the duration April 2019 to March 2020, by race, are broadly in line with the % of referrals completed. *It should be noted that not all referrals made to Children's Social Care will result in a single assessment.*

Children in Need - % Single assessments completed by Race			
Race	% Assessments *(exc. 'not given')*	% Referrals *(exc. 'not given')*	Variance
White	82.7%	81.3%	1.4%
Mixed	5.8%	7.3%	-1.5%
Asian	4.8%	4.7%	0.1%
Black	4.6%	5.0%	-0.4%
Other	2.1%	1.6%	0.5%

6. Legal status of Children Looked After by sex and race

Legal Status of Children Looked After by sex and race (as at 31/03/20)
Children who become looked after by the local authority are classified by their legal status which ranges from being Looked After on a Full Care Order [issued by the Courts] or being Looked After on a Voluntary basis [with Parental consent].

The table below shows the category of C2 [Full Care Orders] is the highest category of children who are Looked After at 31st March 2020 and this shows a similar picture between male and female.

SSDA903 return - % Legal Status by Sex			
Sex	Female	Male	All CLA
C1 - Interim Care Orders	3.2%	11.3%	7.7%
C2 - Full Care Orders	75.8%	68.8%	71.8%
E1 - Placement orders	3.2%	-	1.4%
V2 - Section 20	17.7%	20.0%	19.0%
Total in each group	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

NB: It is important to note that numbers are small and therefore need to be viewed with caution.

The table below shows that of the proportion of Children Looked After by legal status by race, those classified as BME groups is comparable to those classified as White. *It should be noted that whilst it may appear that the BME group have a higher representation this is because of small numbers in the cohort which when represented as a percentage appear greater.*

SSDA903 return - % Legal Status by Race			
Race	**White** *(inc. White Irish and White Other)*	**Black & Minority Ethnic groups***	**All CLA**
C1 - Interim Care Orders	8.3%	34.4%	14.2%
C2 - Full Care Orders	76.1%	59.4%	72.3%
E1 - Placement orders	0.9%	3.1%	1.4%
V2 - Section 20	14.7%	3.1%	12.1%
Total in group	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

*Due to small numbers of BME children the percentage can be high and therefore should be viewed with caution.

7. Type of placement for Children Looked After by age, sex and race

Type of Placement for Children Looked After by Age

It is important to note that when a decision is made that a child or young person becomes Looked After every effort is made to ensure the child or young person is placed in the most appropriate environment to meet his or her needs. For some children and young people it may be in their interests to be placed out of the area; some may require more specialist support, which may only be available out of the area. In all cases there is careful consideration given to matching the needs of the child or young person to the right kind of placement, including ensuring that any needs arising from race, sex, religion etc. can be met appropriately.

The tables below show the placement pattern by age, race and sex:

SSDA903 return - Placement Type of Children Looked After - by Age					
Placement Type:	*as % of each age group*				*as % of all Children Looked After*
	Under 5	**5 – 9**	**10 - 15**	**16 - 17**	**Total**
Foster placement with relative or friend:					
Inside local authority	6.7%	17.4%	6.3%	4.9%	7.7%
Outside local authority	-	8.7%	-	2.4%	2.1%
Placement with other foster carer:					
Inside the Local Authority	60.0%	39.1%	39.7%	24.4%	37.3%
Outside the Local Authority	13.3%	13.0%	27.0%	12.2%	19.0%
Homes and Hostels	-	-	22.2%	31.7%	19.0%
Parents	13.3%	21.7%	4.8%	2.4%	7.7%
Residential School	-	-	-	2.4%	0.7%
Semi-independent (not subject to Children's Home Regulations)	-	-	-	14.6%	4.2%
YOI	-	-	-	2.4%	0.7%
Family centre	6.7%	-	-	-	0.7%
Other placements	-	-	-	2.4%	0.7%

Total in each age group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NB: It is important to note that numbers are small and therefore need to be viewed with caution.

Type of Placement for Children Looked After by Sex

SSDA 903 return – Placement Type of Children Looked After – by Sex			
	% by placement type by Sex		
Placement type	Female	Male	All CLA
Foster placement with relative or friend:			
Inside local authority	8.1%	7.5%	7.7%
Outside local authority	-	3.8%	2.1%
Placement with other foster carer:			
Inside local authority	40.3%	37.0%	37.3%
Outside local authority	16.1%	21.3%	19.0%
Homes and Hostels	17.7%	20.0%	19.0%
Parents	11.3%	5.0%	7.7%
Residential School	1.6%	-	0.7%
Semi-independent (not subject to Children's Home Regulations)	3.2%	5.0%	4.2%
YOI	-	1.3%	0.7%
Family centre	-	1.3%	0.7%
Other placements	1.6%	-	0.7%
Total in group	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

NB: It is important to note that numbers are small and therefore need to be viewed with caution.

Type of Placement for Children Looked After by Race

SSDA903 return – Placement Type of Children Looked After – by Race			
Placement type	**% of White** *(inc. White Irish & White Other)*	**% of Black & Minority Ethnic Groups** *	**All CLA**
Foster placement with relative or friend:			
Inside local authority	6.4%	9.4%	7.1%
Outside local authority	2.8%	-	2.1%
Placement with other foster carer:			
Inside Local Authority	36.7%	40.6%	37.6%
Outside Local Authority	20.2%	15.6%	19.1%
Homes and Hostels	20.2%	15.6%	19.1%
Parents	38.3%	6.3%	7.8%
Residential School	0.9%	-	0.7%
Semi-independent (not subject to Children's Home Regulations)	3.7%	6.3%	4.3%
YOI	-	3.1%	0.7%
Family centre	0.9%	-	0.7%

Other placements	-	3.1%	0.7%
Total in group	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

*Due to small numbers of BME children the percentages can be high and therefore should be viewed with caution.

8. Performance Monitoring

Within Children's Social Care performance monitoring is a crucial element of ensuring the local authority is meeting its statutory requirements.

Within the performance monitoring process, information is collected on age, race and sex and is routinely analysed to ensure those who access the service receive a fair and equitable service.

In May 2017 there was an inspection of services for child in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers carried out by Ofsted [Office for Standards in Education] which resulted in a judgement of 'Good'. This was a very intensive inspection which looked at the way in which the local authority and its partners managed its services around safeguarding and looked after children. The report includes the following comments:

'Children's health, education, cultural and diversity needs are sensitively considered, recorded and used to inform plans (care).'

'There is a sufficiency and diversity of potential adopters, and this promotes choice for Bracknell Forest children who need adoptive families.'

Ofsted Report for Bracknell Forest

The report does not contain any recommendations since the findings did not support any.

Table of related Performance Indicators

Ind Ref	Short Description	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20[1]
L092	Number of children on protection plans (as at 31/03 in any given year)	171	105	130	122
L161	Number of looked after children (as at 31/03 in any given year)	116	138	158	142
L287	Number of children in need supported under S17 of the Children Act (as at 31/03 in any given year)	645	743	742	568
L289	Average caseload per children's social worker (as at 31/03 in any given year)	18.0	17.2	18.2	13.9
L290	Rate of referral to children's social care (Annual)	583.7	648.0	790.5	608.1
NI062	Stability of placements of looked after children - number of placements (as at 31/03 in any given year)	9.5%	13.8%	19.6%	14.8
NI063	Stability of placements of looked after children - length of placement (as at 31/03 in any given year)	45.5%	56.0%	64.5%	51.2
NI066	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales (as at 31/03 in any given year)	98%	94%	84%	86%
NI147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation (aged 19 - 21)	96.9%	100.0%	93.3%	98.1%
NI148	Care leavers in suitable education, employment or training (aged 19 - 21)	62.5%	69.0%	55.6%	50.9%

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[1] Data for 19/20 is provisional