

Equalities Monitoring – Services

Appendix B – Children’s Social Care

Annual Report - 2014-15



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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, Looked After Children, 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 to understand the following information:

- Access to the service
- Outcomes
- Satisfaction with the service
- Complaints
- Performance

From the information gathered analysis has been undertaken in relation to the following equality groups:

- 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 2014 and 31 March 2015.
- SSDA903 return – the data refers to activity with Looked After Children (1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015), and provides a snapshot as at 31 March 2015.

(The above originally collated from data held in Frameworki– 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 ensuring that people are treated fairly and that those who are most in need receive the greatest help. If needs are severe, urgent help is offered sooner than if needs are less severe and urgent. Decisions about who receives support are made following an assessment. 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.

For further information the following documents can be accessed at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/assessment-and-planningfor-cin-procedures.pdf>

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bf-lscb-thresholds.pdf>

3. Outcomes

Following a referral, Children's Social Care will undertake an assessment to help understand what the problems / difficulties are 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 of the service users who become subject to Social Care intervention do not actively seek to be engaged, they are compelled under legislation 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 (2014/15)

The table below shows the highest % referrals of Children in Need in the duration April 2014 to March 2015 is age 10 – 15, the pattern of referrals by age can vary from year to year.

Children in Need (CIN) - % referrals by age group			
Age Groups	% Referrals	% Bracknell Forest population (0 - 17 years)¹	Variance
Unborn	3.5%	-	-
Under 1	4.8%	5.5%	-0.7%
1 - 4	17.7%	23.9%	-6.2%
5 - 9	27.0%	28.6%	-1.6%
10 - 15	35.1%	30.4%	4.7%
16+	11.9%	11.6%	0.3%

Referrals by Sex (2014/15)

The table below shows the sex of referrals for Children in Need in the duration April 2014 to March 2015. 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	51.2%	48.7%	2.5%
Male	48.8%	51.3%	-2.5%

Referrals by Race (2014/15)

The table below shows the race of referrals of Children in Need in the duration April 2014 to March 2015. It shows the referrals are largely in line with or below the Bracknell Forest population (0-17 years). It should be noted that this is a needs led service and there is no statistical significance in the variance shown.

¹ 2014 mid-year 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	83.6%	86.6%	-3.0%
Mixed	6.7%	4.5%	2.2%
Asian	2.9%	6.0%	-3.1%
Black	5.2%	2.5%	2.7%
Other	1.6%	0.4%	1.2%

5. Single Assessments by age, sex and race

Single assessments completed by Age (2014/15)

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 the single assessments completed in the duration April 2014 to March 2015 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	3.5%	3.5%	0.0%
Under 1	5.4%	4.8%	0.6%
1 – 4	17.5%	17.7%	-0.2%
5 – 9	28.1%	27.0%	1.1%
10 - 15	35.5%	35.1%	0.4%
16+	9.9%	11.9%	-2.0%

Single assessments completed by Sex (2014/15)

All the single assessments **completed** in the duration April 2014 to March 2015 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
Female	50.9%	51.2%	-0.3%
Male	49.1%	48.8%	0.3%

¹ Population data taken from NOMIS (DC2101EW) Census 2011

Single assessments completed by Race (2014/15)

All the single assessments completed in the duration April 2014 to March 2015 by race 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 - % Single assessments completed by Race			
Race	% Assessments (exc. 'not given')	% Referrals (exc. 'not given')	Variance
White	84.7%	83.6%	1.1%
Mixed	6.6%	6.7%	-0.1%
Asian	2.1%	2.9%	-0.8%
Black	5.2%	5.2%	0.0%
Other	1.4%	1.6%	-0.2%

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

Legal Status of Looked After Children by sex and race (as at 31/03/15)

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 V2 [Voluntary Care] is the highest category of children who are Looked After at 31st March 2015 and this shows a similar picture between male and female.

SSDA903 return - % Legal Status by Sex			
Sex	Female	Male	All LAC
C1 - Interim Care Orders	10.0%	7.4%	8.7%
C2 - Full Care Orders	38.0%	29.6%	33.7%
E1 - Placement orders	12.0%	24.1%	18.3%
V2 - Section 20	40.0%	38.9%	39.4%
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 Looked After Children by legal status by race, those classified as BME groups is comparable to those classified as white. 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 LAC
C1 - Interim Care Orders	5.7%	25.0%	8.7%
C2 - Full Care Orders	33.0%	37.5%	33.7%
E1 - Placement orders	19.3%	12.5%	18.3%
V2 - Section 20	42.0%	25.0%	39.4%
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 Looked After Children by age, sex and race

Type of Placement for Looked After Children 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 for them 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 Looked After Children - by Age					
Placement Type:	as % of each age group				as % of all Looked After Children
	Under 5	5 – 9	10 - 15	16 - 17	Total
Foster placement with relative or friend:					
Inside local authority	11.8%	6.3%	10.6%	8.3%	9.6%
Outside local authority	-	-	2.1%	-	1.0%
Placement with other foster carer:					
Inside the Local Authority	52.9%	56.3%	40.4%	33.3%	43.3%
Outside the Local Authority	-	25.0%	25.5%	33.3%	23.1%
Homes and Hostels	-	6.3%	19.1%	8.3%	11.5%
Parents	5.9%	-	-	-	1.0%
Placed for adoption	29.4%	6.3%	-	-	5.8%
Residential School	-	-	2.1%	-	1.0%
Independent living	-	-	-	16.7%	3.8%
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 Looked After Children by Sex

SSDA 903 return – Placement Type of Looked After Children – by Sex			
Placement type	% by placement type by Sex		
	Female	Male	All LAC
Foster placement with relative or friend:			
Inside local authority	18.0%	1.9%	9.6%
Outside local authority	-	1.9%	1.0%
Placement with other foster carer:			
Inside local authority	44.0%	42.6%	43.3%
Outside local authority	14.0%	31.5%	23.1%
Homes and Hostels	10.0%	13.0%	11.5%
Parents	2.0%	-	1.0%
Placed for adoption	8.0%	3.7%	5.8%
Residential School	-	1.9%	1.0%
Independent living	4.0%	3.7%	3.8%
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 Looked After Children by Race

SSDA903 return – Placement Type of Looked After Children – by Race			
Placement type	% of White (inc. White Irish & White Other)	% of Black & Minority Ethnic Groups*	All LAC
Foster placement with relative or friend:			
Family/Friend-Inside local authority	11.4%	-	9.6%
Family/Friend-Outside local authority	1.1%	-	1.0%
Other foster carer:			
Inside Local Authority	39.8%	62.5%	43.3%
Outside Local Authority	22.7%	25.0%	23.1%
Homes and Hostels	12.5%	6.3%	11.5%
Parents	1.1%	-	1.0%
Placed for adoption	5.7%	6.3%	5.8%
Residential School	1.1%	-	1.0%
Independent living	4.5%	-	3.8%
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 October 2011 there was an inspection of safeguarding and looked after children carried out by Ofsted [Office for Standards in Education]. 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. Underpinning the inspection was a judgement on equality and diversity. The report makes the following comments:

Users of services are increasingly contributing well to planning, and services are appropriately sensitive to the needs of children and families from different cultures. The Council has successfully met the achieving levels of the Equality Framework, which helps local authorities improve their performance in equality and diversity matters. The Community Engagement and Equalities Team effectively bring together work on equalities, community cohesion and community engagement. The local authority has a strong commitment to inclusion. Children with disabilities have access to a particularly wide range of mainstream activities which enhance their lives, and their parents receive regular and helpful information about services. The authority has enhanced the monitoring of diversity to meet all aspects of its duty well, and has close links to faith groups to develop their understanding of their responsibilities in this area.

Ofsted Report can be accessed at:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bracknell-forest>

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

Table of related Performance Indicators

Ind Ref	Short Description	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 ¹
L123	Initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 10 working days of referral	83.9%	84.5%	N/A	N/A
L188	Percentage of single assessment for children's social care carried out within 45 working days (Annually)	N/A	N/A	93.5%	95.9%
L161	Number of looked after children	100	103	113	104
NI062	Stability of placements of looked after children - number of placements	10.0%	11.7%	13.3%	13.5%
NI063	Stability of placements of looked after children - length of placement	76.2%	68.4%	51.6%	61.3%
NI066	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales	100.0%	98%	96%	100%
NI068	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment	74.6%	78.2%	N/A	N/A
L189	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to single assessments (Annually)	N/A	N/A	78.8%	92.8%
NI147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation (aged 19)	89.5%	100.0%	100.0%	84.6%
NI148	Care leavers in suitable education, employment or training (aged 19)	57.9%	86%	56.3%	53.8%

¹ Data for 2014/15 is provisional

N.B. Data is no longer collected for L123 and NI068. These PIs have been replaced by L188 and L189 respectively.