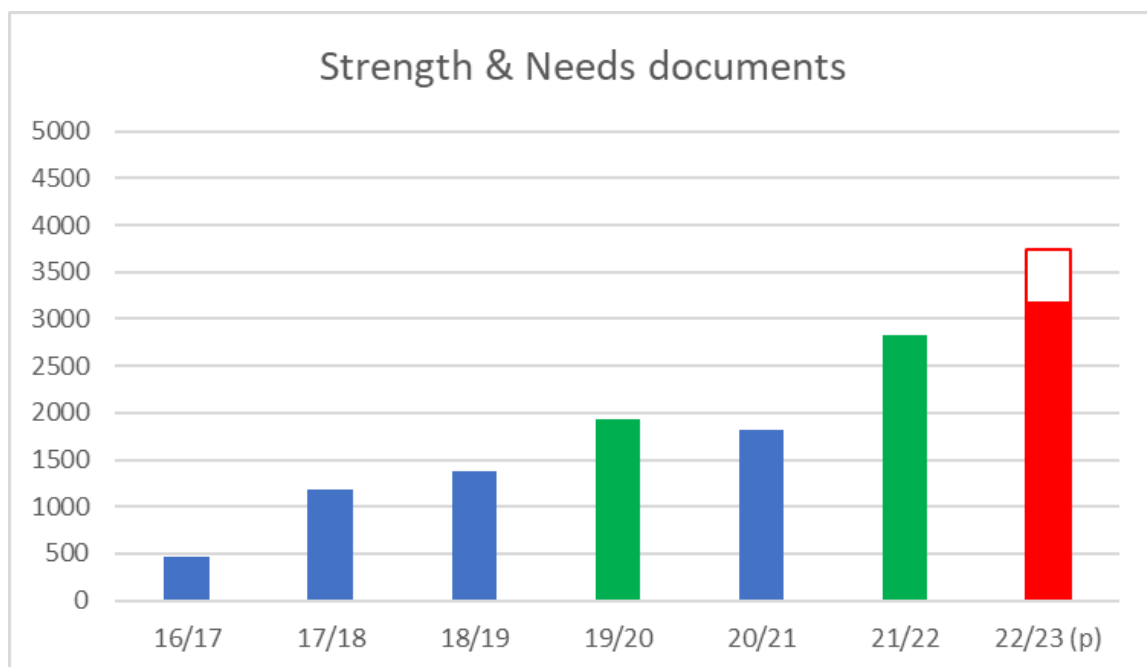


Report to Health and Wellbeing Board

Report from: Children’s Trust Board Chair – Cllr Liz Brighthouse
Report Date: 3 rd March 2023
Dates of meetings held since the last report: 22 nd February 2023 – Virtual meeting
HWB Priorities addressed in this report – A Healthy Start in Life
Link to any published notes or reports: Children & Young People's Plan 2018 - 2023
<p>Working together to help children, young people, and families to thrive.</p> <p><u>Priorities for 2022-23 – Focus on Early Help</u></p> <p>To ensure all partners on the board dedicate senior leaders to the Early Help (EH) agenda and review their agency’s current resource.</p>

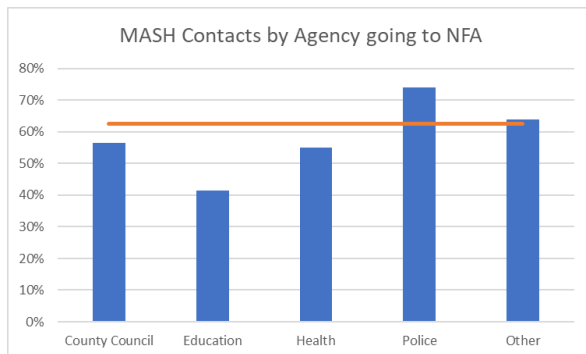
1. Performance for Early Help

The Children’s Trust has agreed a target to increase the number of Strength and Needs Assessments (early help assessments) to 5,000 in 22/23 rising to 10,000 EHAs by 2024/25. We are currently projecting 3750 for this year 25% below target. The number of strengths and needs documents in the first 10 months of the year is 27% higher than last year, in part driven by a pilot where health visitors completed strength and needs documents, which is shown by the white part of the bar in the chart below. However, the consistency of completion rates across all agencies in the partnership remains concerning. Therefore, this is highlighted to the HWBB as an area where more active partnership ownership and drive is required.



The lack of early help means children are unnecessarily being pulled into social care systems, for example less than 1 in 3 new statutory plans where the child had suffered neglect this year had evidenced a strengths and needs document.

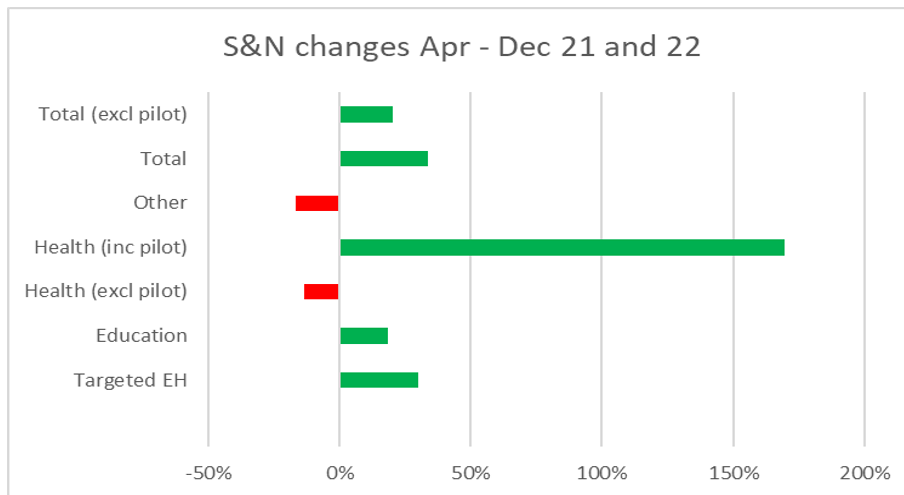
We are targeting individual agencies about their reported numbers of Early Help Assessments and the proportion of MASH contacts that come from them and lead to no further actions. 62% of MASH contacts lead to no further action, including 57% from county council sources. This doesn’t mean that these families shouldn’t be receiving help or support, but that the support should be delivered through the Early Help/Strengths & Needs arrangements. This should be in a way that is more proportionate and builds upon the existing work a professional may already be delivering in a setting or in the community.



The table below shows the differences between agencies as a ratio. It provides a useful baseline to measure progress and improvement.

Organisation	Response
County Council	1.8 S&Ns per MASH contact
Health	4.1 MASH contacts per S&N
Health with pilot	2.5 MASH contacts per S&N
Education	3.7 MASH contacts per S&N
Police	75 MASH contacts per S&N
Other	55 MASH contacts per S&N

There is activity in place to support agencies in developing the skills and capabilities to undertake Strength & Needs assessments. A recent example is the Health Visitor Early Help pilot where Service Managers from Oxford Health have championed Early Help training and worked to embed Early Help interventions as part of their day-to-day work seeing families. the graph below shows the impact of this work.



Since October 2022 and end of February 2023, 301 multi-agency staff have been trained in the use of Strength & Needs forms and early help.

Recommendations for HWBB

The Childrens Trust Board has developed an Early Help 'ask' for agencies to provide information and performance reports from their organization on a regular basis. This will include:

- EH targets for 2022/23 & 2023/24
- Performance in relation to targets (to include data and narrative)
- Any barriers/challenges to achieving targets

A copy of the format can be provided (upon request paper 1.)

Recommendations

1. **HWBB receive a summary report on the EH progress at the next board**
2. **HWBB members familiarise themselves with the process, particularly the section of the pro forma about Early help internal (organisational) governance and reporting.**

2. Mock Inspection – findings and learning

A Mock Inspection of our Children's Social Care was undertaken between 9th January 2023 – 20th January 2023. The key findings that had an interagency element to them, were shared with the board partners before they are to be taken forward to the OSCB (Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board).

At OSCB, with the collaboration of other agencies, an Action Plan will be drawn up and implemented, of the detailed findings and how these are to be addressed.

3. Children's Services Strapline

With partners contributions, the Children's Services Strapline has now been developed and circulated to all board partners and OSCB, for all to use and reach out more widely with other agencies. Oxfordshire County Council's communications team will be asking

partners of good news stories and the work that is being done across the Children's Trust Board (CTB). (*Upon request 2 papers for 3.*)

4. Children & Young People's Plan Priorities 2023-24

The suggestion for the board going forward, regarding the priorities for the plan next year, was to continue with the early help overarching theme, working with the Strategic and Transformation leads across the partnership so that partnership priorities are included and have a more extensive process. This would involve agencies contributing with what they have in their business plans around early help and creating joined up work in the plan. There will be a Children's Trust and Transformation Leads workshop before the next meeting in May.

5. Youth voice bubbling-up issues from Children & Young People

A Bubbling Up survey went out via the Targeted Youth Support Services (TYSS), where youth workers fed back with what the issues there are for young people. There were some key themes, such as jobs, transport (cost, getting to education/work), feeling safe in their community. The TYSS is aware of that much of this anxiety from young people is the effects of coming out from COVID and their unpreparedness for the next stage. Self-referrals mainly come from professionals and not from young people themselves, so a big promotional campaign has been launched that will run over a few weeks to increase self-referral from young people and an update will be provided. Following on from the Sounding Board completed last year, there will be another in March on transport and travel and a commitment has been made to undertake 3 sounding boards every year and suggestions for topics are welcome from partners.

6. SEND Update & Ordinarily Available Toolkit

The Ordinarily Available Toolkit which is mentioned in the report (*upon request papers 6. for toolkit and report*), has been updated and issued to schools, but the plan is to make this more of an interagency toolkit.

The SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) helpline has been launched along with some special educational need coordinators who are specialist teachers within school and available to all SENCos across the county in providing help and support for children in mainstream settings. A grant has been received with the Delivering Better Value Programme, which is mentioned in the above report. The request to transfer some of the schools funding for SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) has been agreed by the Secretary of State, which is another £2.4million to the already £1million investment for SEND inclusion within mainstream school settings. This will be communicated by the Head of SEND to partners of the opportunities available. Cllr Brighouse also highlighted that there is an additional half a million pounds being specifically provided for EHCPs (Education & Health Care Plans) and how that whole process is managed.

7. Feedback from OSCB on emerging issues

The thematic child safeguarding practice review on child sexual abuse will be published in 2023 alongside another review, which was completed in 2022. Training and events

are being held on child sexual abuse and violence against women and girls. Further details can be found in the report which can be provided (*upon request paper 7.*).

8. Forward plan for the May 2023 meeting

The following items are due to be considered in forthcoming meetings:

- Focus and progress on Early Help - partner responses and feedback
- Development of 2023/24 Children and Young People's Plan by partners
- Progress of 2022/23 Plan
- SEND update.

APPENDIX A

Priority focus for 2022/23:

- Early Help & Mental Health & Well-Being
- Early Help & 0–5-year-olds
- Early Help & SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) Early Intervention

Objectives

- To identify issues and concerns for children and families early so that they can be addressed promptly and without the need for statutory interventions if that is not necessary or appropriate.
- To ensure that Early Help support is at the least intrusive level and designed to support families continue to develop and thrive.
- To use an Early Help Assessment to develop a holistic, coordinated multi-agency intervention where an organization alone cannot fully support the problems a family is facing.

Actions

- Each agency to review their senior leadership and resource levels to early help and report to Children's Trust Board and report on targets for their agency Early Help Assessments.
- To increase the number of Early Help Assessments (EHAs) to 10,000 by 2024/25.
- To identify resource to ensure front-line staff/designated staff across all our services are trained in the early identification and support that can be offered in relation to mental health and well-being, attachment, trauma informed and whole family working by:
 - scoping what is in place
 - adapting existing resources and designing training
 - planning delivery of training and/or train the trainers

Outcomes

- Senior strategic leadership and increased resourcing in place for early help so that fewer children are supported by statutory services.
- Pooled resource for Early Help
- Increase in EHAs (Early Help Assessments) to 5,000 by April 2023; 250 more staff trained to deliver EHAs.
- Reduction in children needing assessments for Education Health Care Needs, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or Children's Social Care statutory support and improvement in Good Level of Development because their needs have been addressed at the earliest opportunity.
- Staff are confident to deliver mental health and well-being interventions, promote whole family working, signpost on as appropriate.

Priority focus for 2022/23: Be Supported

- To ensure the partnership listens to and learns from the views and feedback from children and young people, aged 8-18yrs and up to 25yrs with additional needs, about how supported they feel by the services they access in Oxfordshire.

APPENDIX B

What is being done in areas rated Red or Amber in the Performance Framework

The data and information below are for Performance Report Quarter 3 2022/23.

Be successful

- The number of children expelled continues to be a third of the 18/19 level, but the number of children suspended, which had been dropping is now rising
- 43% of primary school pupils and 22% of secondary school pupils who were suspended last year had special educational needs.
- Persistent absence (over 90%) has risen across the last 4 years – with 1 in 4 primary school children and 1 in 3 secondary school children persistently absent.
- 1.1% of primary school children (596 children) and 4.3% of secondary school children (1733 children) have severe absence.
- The number of electively home educated children is 64% higher than pre pandemic levels but only 8 children who are electively home educated are the subject of a social care plan

Be healthy

- Data on waiting times for CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service) has not been updated since July 22 because of the cyber-attack on the trust.
- Concerns about access to eating disorder services have been raised by the Integrated Commissioning Board. Performance in Oxfordshire below standard and other areas in Berkshire West, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire.
- There has been an 11% decrease in A&E (Accident & Emergency) attendances for self-harm compared to last year, but figures are still 26% more than 19/20 when we were in lockdown. Hospital admissions are 11% lower than 20/21 and 22% lower than 19/20
- The number of early help assessments (EHAs) in the last 2 months is 18% higher than the previous 12 months but remains 37% below target. This only includes EHAs shared with the council
- After 4 quarters when under-age conceptions fell it increased in the last two quarters. 14 children under 18 and some under 16 (number suppressed under 5) presented at the OUH (Oxford University Hospitals)

Be Safe

- MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs) contacts for the first 9 months of the year are 2% higher than last year and more than 60% higher than pre pandemic levels. Despite this increase the timeliness of red (most urgent) contacts remains better

than target. Local benchmarking data suggests contact levels are similar to other areas in the southeast.

- Child protection numbers remain above target and those of similar authorities (648 compared to 550 target). This has been driven by an increase in children coming on to a plan. Child Protection Quality and Tracking Meeting currently focusing on children the subject of repeat plans and children on a plan for over 18 months.
- There are currently 913 cared for children (compared to 413 in 2013). Recent increases are due to an increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, with 3 home office hotels being located in Oxfordshire. Increasing numbers puts pressure on placements, workloads, and services. At the end of December, we had 8 children in unregistered placements.
- Data has been added on initial health assessments (IHAs). 10% of IHAs are completed in 20 working days as the service struggles with capacity and timely notifications and consent.
- In 2022 domestic incidents involving children were 9% higher than 2019 (pre Covid) and domestic crimes 28% higher. In the last year domestic incidents fell by 1% in the year whilst domestic crimes rose by 7%.
- In 2022 the number of children going missing was 12% lower than 2019(pre Covid) and the number of occurrences was 16% lower. However, compared to last year 9% more children went missing and there were 11% more missing incidents
- From the taxi licencing report at the end of quarter 2 three quarters of taxi drivers across county had up-to-date safeguarding training (against a target of 90%). City (72%) and South & Vale (70%) continued to catch up with Cherwell and West (both >95%).

Indicator Number	RAG	What is being done to improve performance?
1.3a Mean wait for Core CAMHS (days)	N/A	In July 2022 the number was 124 – 16% higher than July 2021. Figure not updated since cyber-attack.
1.3b Median wait for Core CAMHS (days)	N/A	In July 2022 the number was 70 – 20% lower than July 2021.
1.11 Reduce the persistent absence of children subject to a Child Protection Plan	N/A	In 2021, Oxfordshire was 4% points better than statistical neighbours; 8% points better than the national position (<i>figures to be seen in the context of the pandemic and changed behaviours</i>)
1.1 Reduce the number of children we care for to 750 by March 2022	R	The number in December 2022 was 803 – the number of children we care for is beginning to fall. It remains below the national rate, but above similar authorities.