Performance Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 12 November 2020

ADDENDA

5. **Police and Crime Commissioner and the Thames Valley Police Delivery Plan 2020-21** (Pages 1 - 28)

10.10

This will be a presentation from the Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police followed by a verbal update from the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and both will take questions.

6. **Safeguarding Missing Children** (Pages 29 - 44)

11.10

Report by Director of Children's Services

This report is produced on an annual basis by Children's Social Care for scrutiny and challenge through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Sub Group for Child Exploitation.

The data suggests that across the reporting period, less children have gone missing less often within Oxfordshire when compared to statistical neighbours, regional and nationally.

In Oxfordshire, there are more instances of boys going missing compared to girls and the majority of them are aged between 14yrs – 16yrs. All children reported missing more than once had a completed CE screening tool, which reassures that children frequently being reported missing are known and or open to Children's Social Care (CSC) services and that the Child Exploitation screen tool is widely adopted within the reviews of children whom are repeatedly going missing.

There are clear and robustly monitored processes in place for Oxfordshire children placed out of area who are reported missing.

Particular focus and attention is required for those areas that the data reveals have proportionately higher numbers of missing children than in other areas of the county and to ensure there is targeted action to reduce the numbers. The nature and concentration of fostering and residential children's homes within the area, means that

the issues will not dissipate quickly. Partnership arrangements with placement providers require regular review to ensure that there are effective and robust strategies in place to safely and proportionately manage the joint responses required to safeguard children who go missing children. The LPA Detective Inspector and CSC Strategic Lead remain in regular contact to ensure this is kept under review.

When return home interviews are completed, they provide detailed context and are a rich source of intelligence for the partnership , which informs partnership activities and safeguarding responses.   However, not all children have a return home interview recorded within statutory timeframes, this needs to be addressed promptly to ensure that all children who go missing are appropriately safeguarded, and that there is provision of services available in support for reducing the numbers of children who go missing in the county.

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.

Chief Constable
John Campbell QPM

12th November 2020

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THAMES VALLEY POLICE

STRATEGIC PLAN

20/21

Since we last met…
2019/20

Benefitted from an increase in precept…8.4M…

Key areas of investment

Local Policing and Investigations

Contact Management

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Local Policing

- Restructured LPA Model

- Increased Patrol numbers

  – Arrests increased by 13%
  – Stop and Search increased by 58%

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

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Force Crime

- **New Investigative Structure** – DCI Crime Managers, CID and Priority Crime Teams for each LPA

- **Virtual Crime Academy** with a focus on the retention, training, accreditation, wellbeing and reward/recognition for our staff.

- **Additional Investigative Training** for staff and supervisors to improve their knowledge and skills.

- **Recruitment of Digital Technicians** to increase efficiency in accessing digital evidence

- **Technology** is being improved to make it easier and more efficient to both gather and examine evidence and share it.

- **Force wide outcomes are currently up 24% compared to last year.**

Endeavour
ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING
INVESTIGATION

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Average time to answer calls

Our 2020 year to date average time to answer 101 calls is 141 seconds which is 40 seconds faster than 2019.

Our 2020 year to date average time to answer 999 calls is 7.6 seconds.

Page 6

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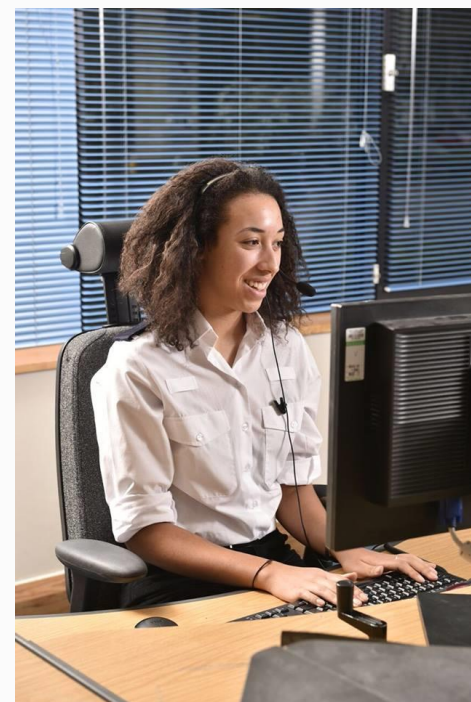
Time to Answer (seconds)

1st January 2016 to 30th September 2020

Call volumes
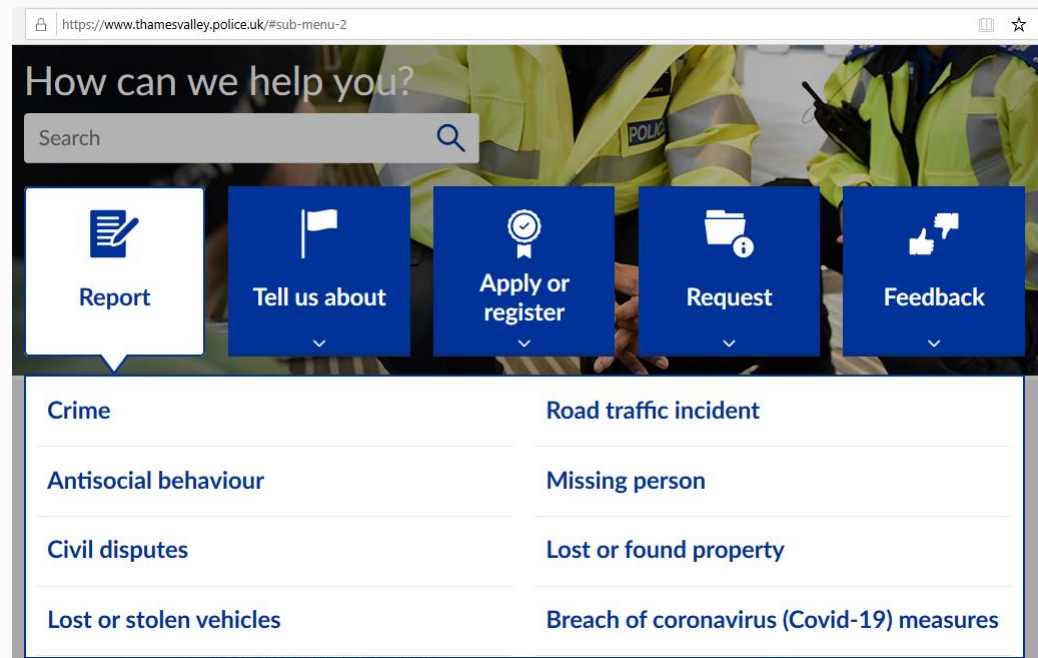
1st January 2016 to 30th September 2020

Online Reporting

Between 8 April and 27th October 2019 we received 21,327 on-line reports

Between 6 April and 25th October 2020 we received 66,340 on-line reports.

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NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

PC Andrew Harper

Court of Appeal will be considering leniency of the sentences in due course.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Black Lives Matter and Protest

Thames Valley Police is committed to tackling racism through our ongoing role in policing, working closely with our communities by building trust and confidence to help keep people safe.

Page 11

Between 1/6/2020 – 29/10/2020 – TVP dealt with 126 Protests and Demonstrations

49 of these related to Black Lives Matter and similar causes

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© **Thames Valley Police**   **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

HS2 / Extinction Rebellion

The **High speed 2** rail project will link London to Birmingham and will travel through the Thames Valley Policing area via Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.
Thames Valley Police are committed to facilitating peaceful protest in relation to this project which is currently within its first phase of construction.
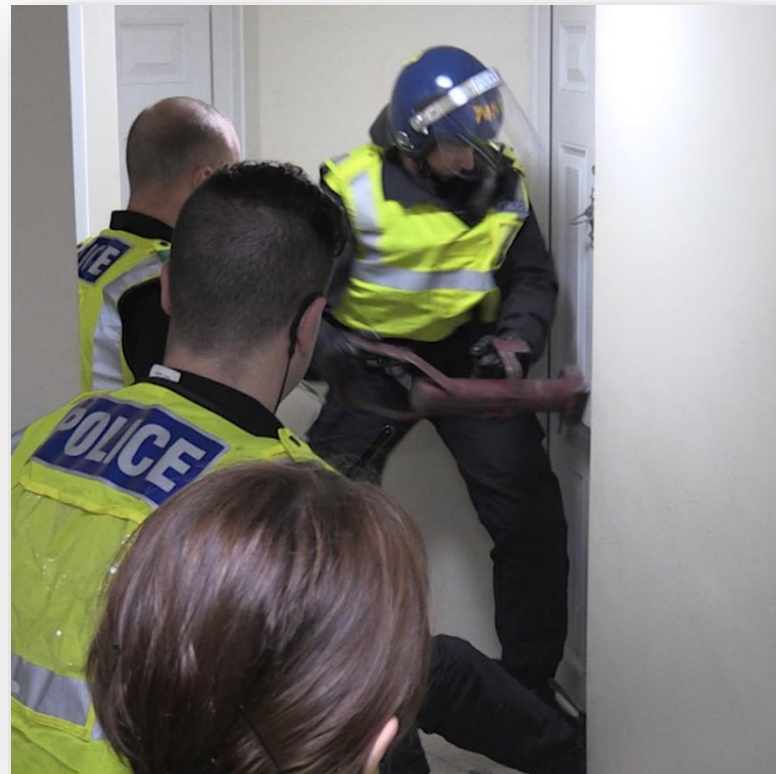
Page 12

STOP HS2
(HIGH SPEED RAIL 2)
WILL COST TAX PAYERS
£90,000,000,000 (billion)
We'd rather have
more NHS hospital A&E's
more police stations
more primary schools
more houses
www.ealing-against-hs2.co.uk

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Forbury Gardens, Reading

On Saturday 21st June 2020, three people died after being stabbed in Forbury Gardens, Reading.
Within five minutes of the first call, officers had apprehended a man and made an arrest.
On 27 June 2020, the suspect was charged with three counts of murder and three counts of attempted murder.

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Covid-19 Offences

- **Covid Related Crimes** – Thames Valley recorded 1855 Covid related crimes, 532 were in Oxfordshire

- **Covid Related Incidents** – Thames Valley attended 11,887 Covid related incidents, 2,861 in Oxfordshire

- **Fixed Penalty Notices** – 870 issued in Thames Valley, 226 in Oxfordshire

Covid 19

- Organisational Impact
- Upper Heyford PPE
- Disproportionality
- Wellbeing of staff
- Operation Renew

Assaults on Officers

Between 1st April 2020 and 25th October 2020, 945 officers were assaulted in Thames Valley which represents a **103%** increase on the previous year

- 209 of these assaults were in Oxfordshire
- 41 Officers in Oxfordshire were spat at
- 3 Officers were exposed to a Blood Borne Virus risk
- 53 Assaults in Oxfordshire were Covid-19 related

Officer Uplift

TVP opened for recruitment between the 1st - 4th June 2020 for Police Officers.

- **345 Police Officer applications were received**
- **81 (23.5%) were BAME applicants**

	Police Officers
March 2019	3824
March 2020	3973
July 2020	4071
March 2021	4103 (predicted)

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Crime Survey England & Wales (Thames Valley) - Taking everything into account I have confidence in the Police in this Area - as at March 20
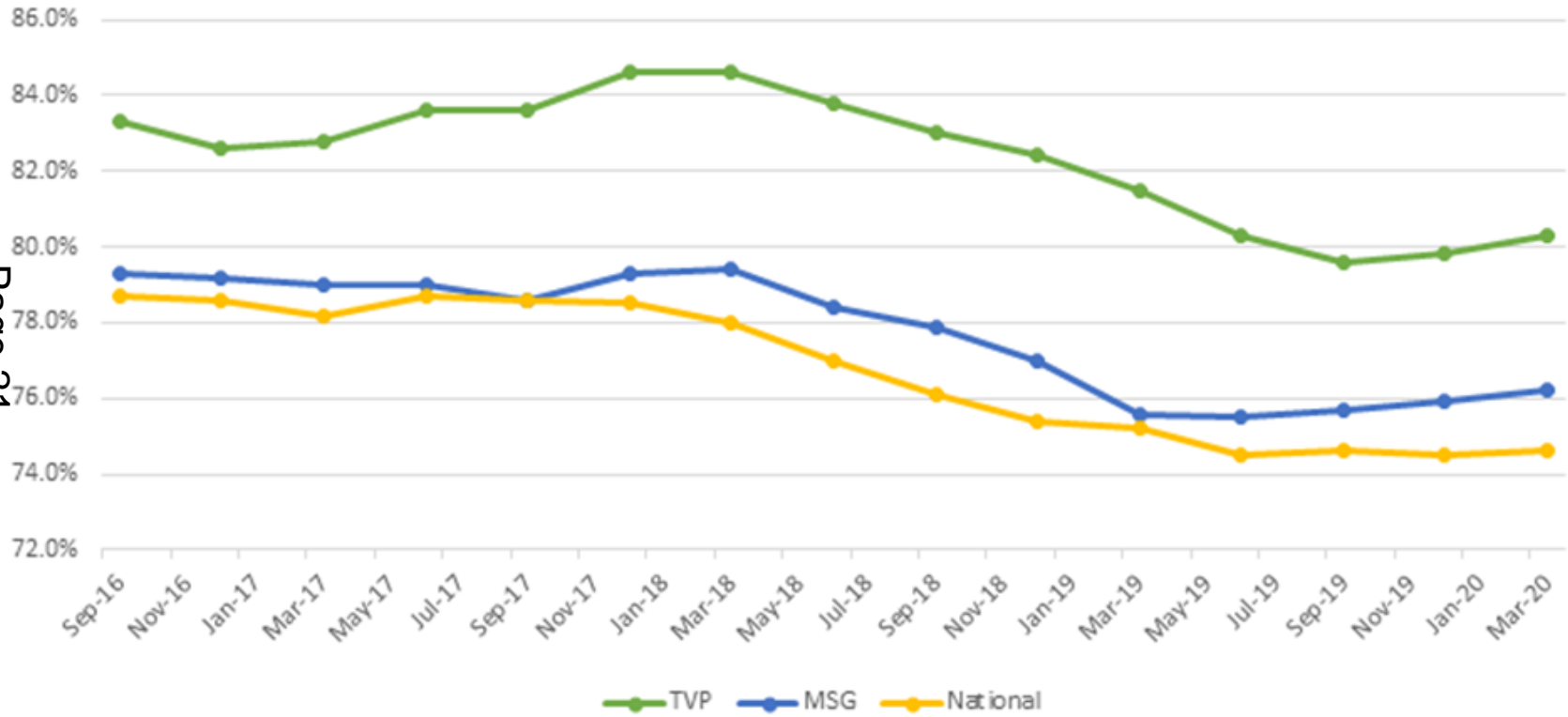
Project Vigilant

- Project Vigilant was launched in June 2019 to combat a rise in sexual offending in the night time economy in Oxford city centre with the aim of making it a hostile environment for potential offenders.

- This is achieved through the use of uniformed and covert officers to identify predatory behaviour such as loitering, inappropriate touching and sexual harassment. Covert officers would identify such behaviour and call on uniformed colleagues to talk to the individual and take appropriate action.

- Within six months of the project being in place serious sexual assaults and rapes linked to the night time economy were reduced by 50%.

- The project received support from the National Crime Agency (NCA) and is now being shared as best practice across other police forces and was recently awarded the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) award for Crime Prevention following its work on Project Vigilant.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Operations

- **Operation Jetty** ran from October '19 to February '20 to target winter burglaries in Cherwell and West Oxon and involved key support from TVP specialist assets resulting in a significant reduction in offending

- **Operation Ship** was a joint enforcement operation with other policing areas to address the increase seen in 'Vamoose' burglaries along the M40 and A34 corridor. One offender identified admitted to conspiring to commit 12 offences and received 5 years 3 months imprisonment.

- **Operation Orochi** conducted by the South and Vale tasking team leading to the disruption and prosecution of two separate County Drug Line propagators from London, attracting a 13 year custodial sentence.

- **Op Midsummer** to prevent the identified exploitation of the elderly through courier fraud leading to a force wide disruption and significant fall in this type offence as well as attracting praise from the City of London Police as an operation of national significance.

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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Crime Reductions

- 11% reduction in Victim Based Crime
- 6% reduction in All Crime (1,537 less victims)
- 45% reduction in Residential Burglaries
- 29% reduction in Personal Robbery
- 47% reduction in Theft from Motor Vehicle
- 22% reduction in Shoplifting

Crime Concerns

- 21% increase in Domestic incidents – however a 16% increase in positive outcomes
- 22% increase in Violence against the Person, however a 27% increase in positive outcomes

Outcomes

- 18% increase in positive outcomes for All Crimes (582 more offenders brought to justice)
- 15% increase in positive outcomes for Victim based crimes

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Challenges to Come

Savings of 13.4 million over next 3 years

- Unknown impact on Covid budgets

Recruitment v Experience

- Uplift

Covid surge or otherwise

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Thames Valley will deliver an excellent service and be regarded as an outstanding force

- We will focus on crime reduction and the disruption of criminal activity, creating a hostile environment for those that would do harm

- When people call us for help we will provide a caring, effective and swift response to those is need

- Where crimes are committed, we will investigate appropriately and relentlessly seek justice for victims

- Our response to major and serious incidents and our policing operations will be first class

The public will know that when things are at their very worst for them we will be at our very best.

Through these endeavours our communities will have high levels of trust and confidence in Thames Valley Police.

Serving with pride and confidence

Priority Outcomes 2020/21

SP 20/21

Reduce crime and incidents through problem solving

The force will focus on:

Knife Crime and Serious Violence

Robbery

Residential Burglary

Organised Crime Groups and Drugs Lines

Rural Crime

The reduction and better management of overall demand.

Bring more offenders to justice

The force will focus on:

Knife Crime

Residential Burglary

Robbery

Violence with Injury

Rape and Serious Sexual Offences

Ensuring thorough and effective investigation of crime allocated for investigation

Crime Data Integrity.

Protect the vulnerable

The force will focus on:

Domestic Abuse

Stalking and Harassment

Exploitation

Vulnerable victims of Fraud.

Increase satisfaction of victims

The force will focus on:

Improving non-emergency call answering times

The timeliness of our initial response

Understanding caller and victim expectations

Improving the updates provided to victims

Our response to major and serious incidents and policing operations.

Value our workforce

The force will focus on:

Retention, recruitment, development and wellbeing of all officers and staff

Improving the quality of supervision

Delivering training in priority areas to address knowledge, skill and capability gaps

Professional standards, ethics and integrity.

Spend our resources wisely

The force will focus on:

Investing in priority areas to maintain or increase capabilities

Developing our understanding of current and future demand, challenges and risks to the organisation

Developing a clear governance framework for the effective management of strategic planning processes

Ensuring value for money.

Implement effective digital developments

The force will focus on:

Delivering an effective digital policing response to minimise harm and protect the vulnerable

Investing to create a digital culture amongst our workforce to capitalise on the opportunities available

Ensuring high standards of data management and exploitation to enable process automation and sound decision-making

Enabling efficient ways of working to maximise productivity.

Operational ●

Organisational ●

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

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Division(s): N/A

Performance Scrutiny Committee 12 November 2020

SAFEGUARDING MISSING CHILDREN
Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the report.**

Executive Summary

2. This paper provides an executive summary of children reported as missing from home and children cared for by Oxfordshire County Council during the period 1st January 2020 to 30th June 2020.

3. The paper provides an analysis of the primary patterns, trends and concerns across the county, the actions being taken to address these and recommendations to consider implementing to mitigate and address new risk and needs.

4. This paper is not intended to reflect the full picture of all the work undertaken by the Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel and partners within the period. Many investigations and analyses are active, awaiting further intelligence development or exploration with operational partners, third party agencies and the children and families whom we are working to safeguard. Safeguarding missing children is a key priority for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB). The OSCB Child Exploitation Sub-Group is responsible for overseeing the partnership arrangements for missing children across the county.

5. As well as central data and intelligence gathering, this paper is also informed by the discussions held with the Network Meetings and Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panels and wider partnership membership. It draws on a wide variety of information and intelligence. Sources include information held on both Oxfordshire County Council's and Thames Valley Police databases (including crime, intelligence and missing persons), local authority databases and multi- agency records. There remains evidence of risks related to missing children across all of Oxfordshire, with varying patterns and trends in each locality.

Summary

6.   The data suggests that across the reporting period, less children have gone missing less often within Oxfordshire when compared to statistical neighbours, regional and nationally.

7.   In Oxfordshire, there are more instances of boys going missing compared to girls and the majority of them are aged between 14yrs – 16yrs. All children reported missing more than once had a completed Child Exploitation (CE) screening tool, which reassures that children frequently being reported missing are known and or open to CSC services and that the CE screen tool is widely adopted within the reviews of children whom are repeatedly going missing.

8.   There are clear and robustly monitored processes in place for Oxfordshire children placed out of area who are reported missing.

9.   Particular focus and attention is required for those areas that the data reveals have proportionately higher numbers of missing children than in other areas of the county and to ensure there is targeted action to reduce the numbers. The nature and concentration of fostering and residential children's homes within the area, means that the issues will not dissipate quickly. Partnership arrangements with placement providers require regular review to ensure that there are effective and robust strategies in place to safely and proportionately manage the joint responses required to safeguard children who go missing children. The LPA Detective Inspector and Children's Social Care (CSC) Strategic Lead remain in regular contact to ensure this is kept under review.

10.   When return home interviews are completed, they provide detailed context and are a rich source of intelligence for the partnership, which informs partnership activities and safeguarding responses. However, not all children have a return home interview recorded within statutory timeframes, this needs to be addressed promptly to ensure that all children who go missing are appropriately safeguarded, and that there is provision of services available in support for reducing the numbers of children who go missing in the county.

11.   ## Recommendations
- The Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel chair and OCC strategic lead for CE and Missing Children review the arrangements currently in place to escalate, monitor and scrutinise safeguarding plans with placing authorities.   Where evidence of patterns or trends occur in missing episodes for this cohort of children consideration is taken for the effectiveness of cross border management plans between the placing authority, provider, neighbourhood policing team and child exploitation specialist within OCC.
- The CE subgroup to undertake analysis of the missing episodes of adolescents (predominately boys) frequently going missing and review this in context of the partnership's development of a vulnerable adolescent strategy.

- Partnership analysis of the pattern and trend of children going missing from foster care and residential care within the Cherwell and West LPA. That the analysis considers evidence for consistency of local practice within provisions as within other LPAs, to identify whether reporting levels are being influenced by unauthorized absences of children, (and actions taken by the parent/carer) or due to other risks or concerns. This will help identify and understand effectiveness of local strategies in managing the identified issue and need.
- Return Home Interviews is an area of fluctuating performance over the past 24 months. The CSC strategic lead for missing children should consider reviewing and revisiting with CSC directorate leads options to commission RHI provision and delivery as a solution for improvements to for the Local Authority to fully discharge its responsibilities in line with national guidance.

12. **Financial and Staff Implications**

There are no current financial and staff implications.

13. **Equalities Implications**

Our work with children who are missing focuses on some of our most vulnerable children and who are most at risk in terms of safeguarding and exploitation.

Name:
Kevin Gordon, Director of Children's Services
Lara Patel, Deputy Director for Children's Services

Contact Officer:
Jennifer Sergeant, Interim Head of Youth Justice and Exploitation Services
12.

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Prevalence Report For Children Missing from Home and Care in Oxfordshire

June 30

2020

Author: Daniel Ruaux – Strategic Lead for Missing Children

Prevalence of Children going Missing in Oxfordshire

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an executive summary of children reported as missing from home and children cared for by Oxfordshire County Council during the period:
1ˢᵗ January 2020 to 30ᵗʰ June 2020.

The paper provides an analysis of the primary patterns, trends and concerns across the county, the actions being taken to address these and recommendations to consider implementing to mitigate and address new risk and needs.

This paper is not intended to reflect the full picture of all the work undertaken by the Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel and partners within the period. Many investigations and analyses are active, awaiting further intelligence development or exploration with operational partners, third party agencies and the children and families whom we are working to safeguard. Safeguarding missing children is a key priority for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB). The OSCB Child Exploitation Sub-Group is responsible for overseeing the partnership arrangements for missing children across the county.

As well as central data and intelligence gathering, this paper is also informed by the discussions held with the Network Meetings and Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panels and wider partnership membership. It draws on a wide variety of information and intelligence. Sources include information held on both Oxfordshire County Council's and Thames Valley Police databases (including crime, intelligence and missing persons), local authority databases and multi- agency records.   There remains evidence of risks related to missing children across all of Oxfordshire, with varying patterns and trends in each locality.

2. CURRENT OVERVIEW

Oxfordshire Comparative & National Benchmarking:

	Oxon	SNs	Eng	SE
% with missing incident during the year	9	12	11	12
Average number of incidents per child	6	5	6	6
% went missing more than once in the year	11	12	10	11
% away from placement without authorisation	1	5	3	3

This dataset reports on 'all' the children who were reported missing in Oxfordshire.

% of CLA with missing incident in year
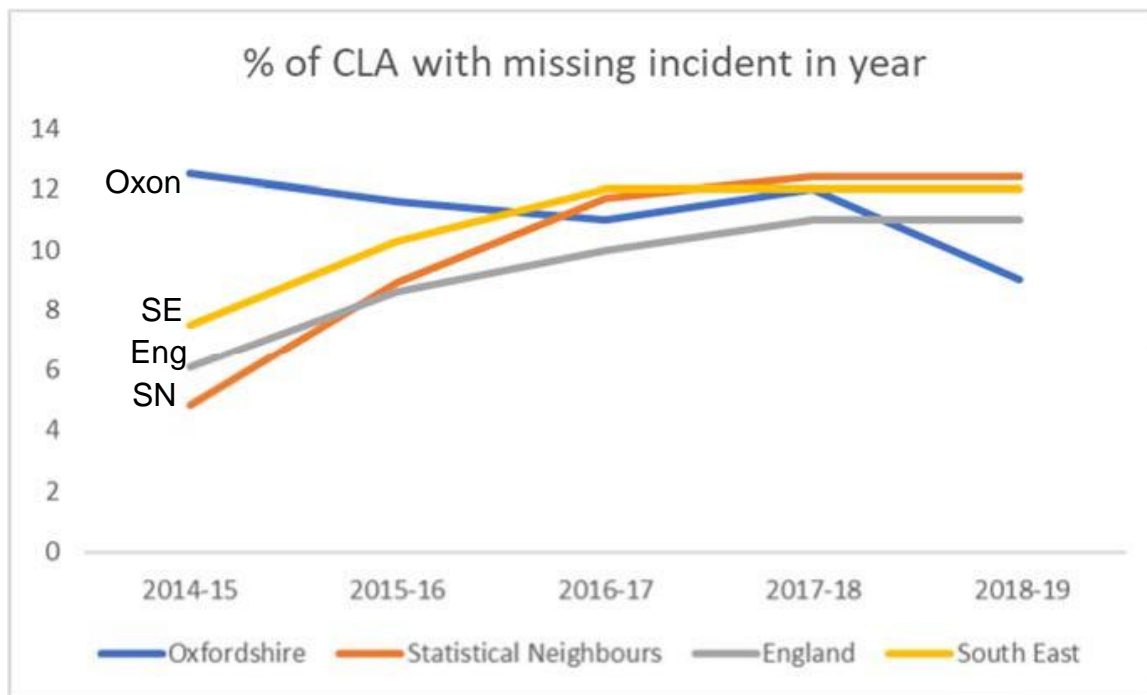
The graph above reflects the total number of children whom the local authority cares with missing episodes. Like the national context Oxfordshire's figures have remained broadly consistent with the trend and trajectory as previously reported. The 2019/20 dataset has not yet been published by the Department for Education due to delays following the Covid-19 pandemic. There is no indication of when the dataset will be published to date.

Local Demographic Picture:

Gender

Ethnicity

- A3 - Any other White background 2%
- B2 - White and Black African 2%
- B1 - White and Black Caribbean 4%
- E4 - Information not yet obtained 8%
- A1 - White British 213 50%
- Unknown 26%
- E1 - Chinese 0%

Legend:
- B4 - Any other mixed background
- E2 - Any other ethnic group
- D2 - African
- C2 - Pakistani
- D3 - Any other Black background
- B3 - White and Asian
- E3 - Refused
- D1 - Caribbean
- C4 - Any other Asian background
- C3 - Bangladeshi

Age Range

- 0-5 / 31 / 7%
- 6-11 / 39 / 9%
- 12-16 / 258 / 61%
- 16+ / 96 / 23%

Legend: 0-5, 6-11, 12-16, 16+

Headline Analysis:

- The number of boys going missing in the county is slightly higher than girls
- The predominant age range of children reported as being missing is between 12 and 16 years of age.
- All children aged 0-5yrs reported missing were reported as missing when with their parent/carer, this figure includes unborn children for whom there were immediate welfare concerns.
- 75% of all children reported missing in Oxfordshire are of a White British ethnicity.
- In summary: during the first 6 months of 2020, the most common profile of a child reported missing in Oxfordshire is a white, British male, aged 12-16yrs of age, who account for 46% of all missing episodes of children in Oxfordshire.

3. NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MISSING CHILDREN'S REPORTS

Number of children reported missing

☐ No of Oxon Children Reported Missing - In Oxon

Frequency of children reported missing

☐ No of Episodes for Oxon Children Reported Missing - In Oxon

■ No of Episodes for Oxon Children Reported Missing - Outside Oxon
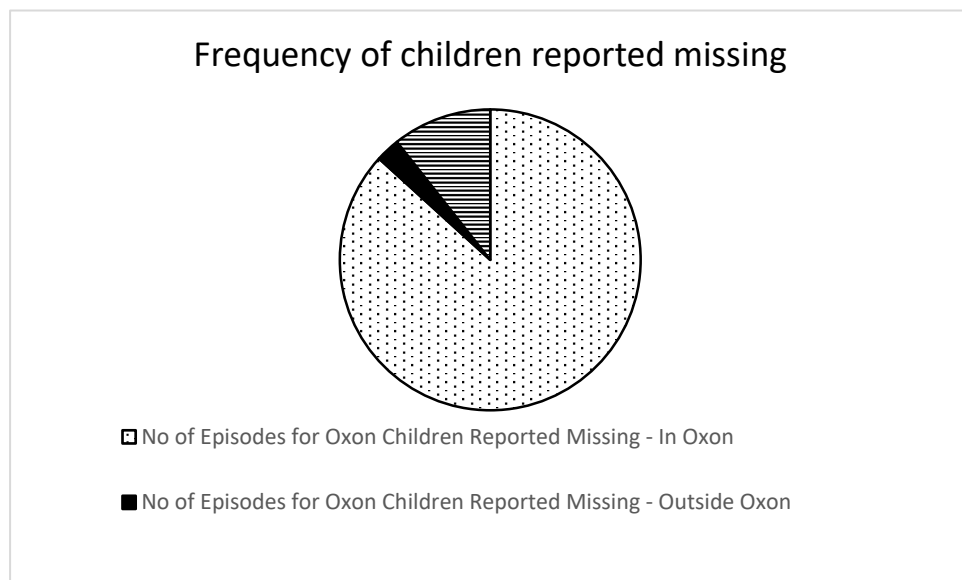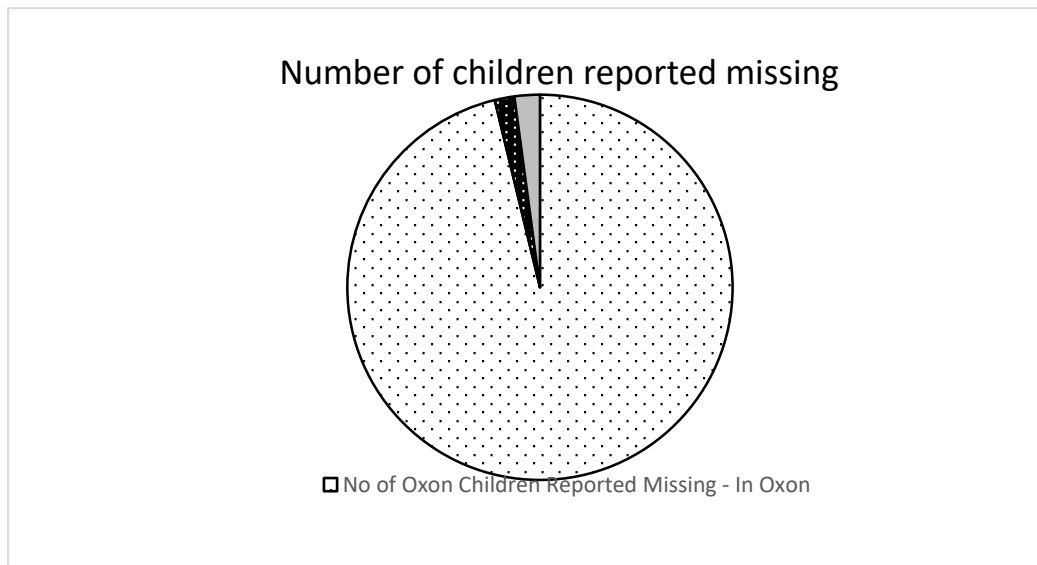
Headline Analysis:

Responsible	Number of children	Number of Episodes
No of Oxon Children Reported Missing - In Oxon	408	668
No of Oxon Children Reported Missing - Outside Oxon	7	20
No of Children Cared for by Another LA Reported Missing - In Oxon	9	82
Total	**424**	**770**

During the period reported, 424 children went missing on 770 separate occasions. The number of children reported missing whom are the responsibility of other local authorities represents 2% of the total number of children reported missing, they also account for 11% of the total overall number of missing episodes in the period. This indicates that a small number of children placed in Oxfordshire from other local authority areas are missing frequently.

Recommendation: The Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel chair and OCC strategic lead for CE and Missing Children review the arrangements currently in place to escalate, monitor and scrutinise safeguarding plans with placing authorities. Where evidence of patterns or trends occur in missing episodes for this cohort of children consideration is taken for the effectiveness of cross border management plans between the placing authority, provider, neighbourhood policing team and child exploitation specialist within OCC.

4. NUMBER OF CHILDREN REPEATEDLY BEING REPORTED MISSING

Number of occasions children went missing

Legend: 1, 2-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-19, 20+
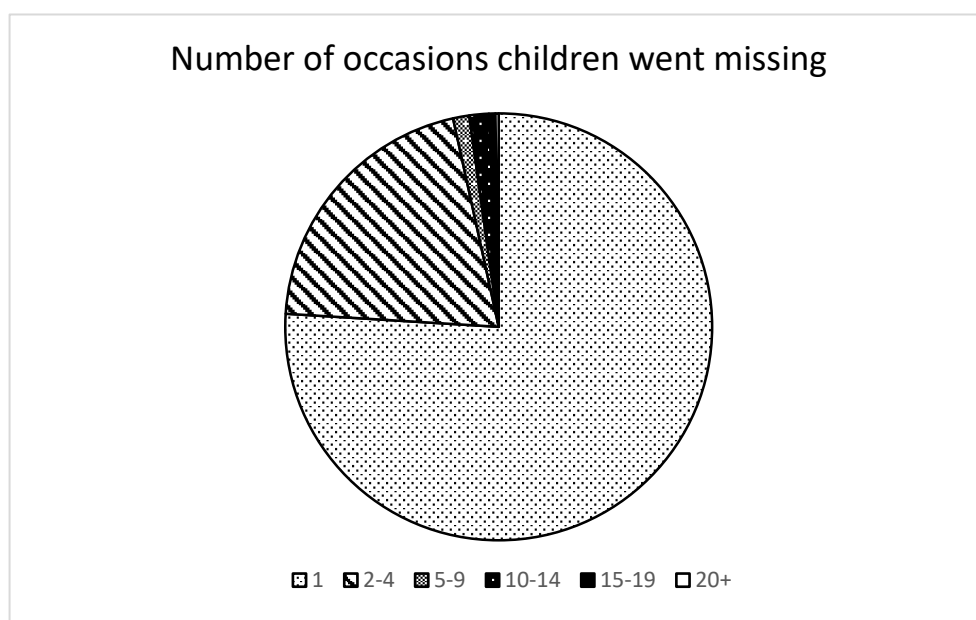
Headline Analysis:

During the period a total of 408 Oxfordshire children were reported missing, 75% had one missing episode, 23% of children had between 2 and 4 episodes of which 51 out of 84 were for boys aged between 14 and 16yrs of age.
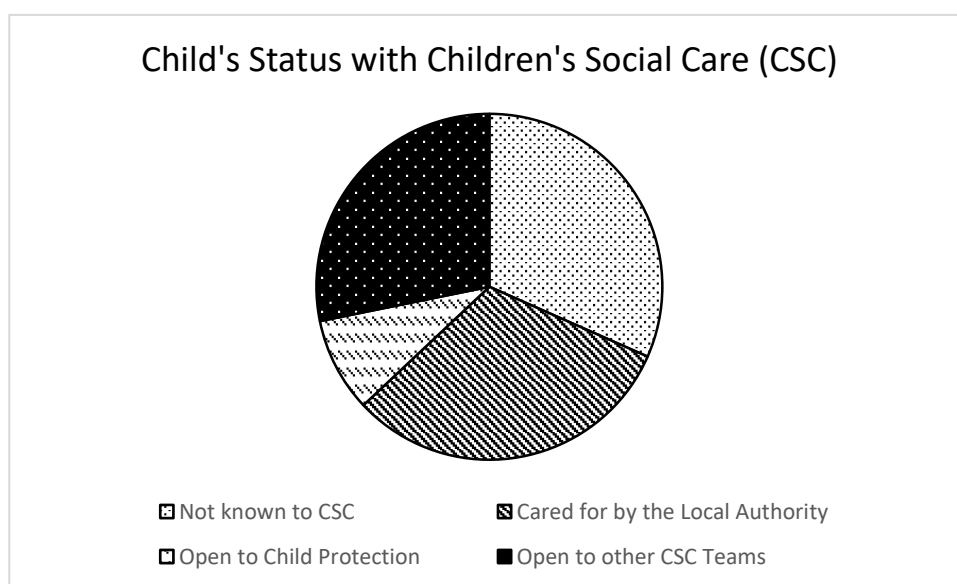
No of Episodes	Occurrence	%
1	310	73%
2-4	84	23%
5-9	5	1%
10-14	6	1.5%
15-19	2	1.3%
20+	1	0.2%

The view of strategic leads is that the overall numbers of children being reported missing for the first time and the continued trend of reducing numbers of children repeatedly going missing, are attributable to the partnerships understanding of risk exposure to children when missing, and effective local partnerships working prior to escalation to the Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel.

In all cases the pattern in frequency of missing reports noted a reducing and improving trend. A randomised sample of the records to the Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel notes that plans were thoroughly interrogated and appropriately escalated when required. Partnership planning was challenged, the effectiveness of control measures and actions reviewed; ensuring responses were proportionate, appropriate and effective.

Recommendation: The CE subgroup to undertake analysis of the missing episodes of adolescents (predominately boys) frequently going missing and review this in context of the partnership's development of a vulnerable adolescent strategy.

5. CHILDREN STATUS WITH CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE (CSC)

Child's Status with Children's Social Care (CSC)

☒ Not known to CSC   ☒ Cared for by the Local Authority
☐ Open to Child Protection   ■ Open to other CSC Teams

Headline Analysis:

Status within Oxfordshire County Council	Children	CE Screen Completed
Not known to CSC	129	0
Cared for by the Local Authority	128	121
Open to Child Protection	36	23
Open to other CSC Teams	115	59

A total of 279 children out of the 408 children who went missing were known to Children's Services, 128 children (68%) cared for by the local authority represented 30% of all missing episodes/reports made within the period. Most of the children had one missing episode. All children reported missing more than once within the period known to CSC

had a completed CE screening tool. This provides reassurance that those children frequently going missing are known and or open to CSC services and that the CE screen tool is now widely used in the reviews of children who repeatedly go missing.

6. CHILDREN MISSING BY LPA

The reporting of missing children within Oxfordshire has been divided into the following geographical areas in line with District Council Authority boundaries.

- Cherwell and West Oxfordshire
- South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse
- Oxford City

Overview Dataset:

Prevalence of missing children by area

☒ City ▨ Cherwell & West ◧ South & Vale
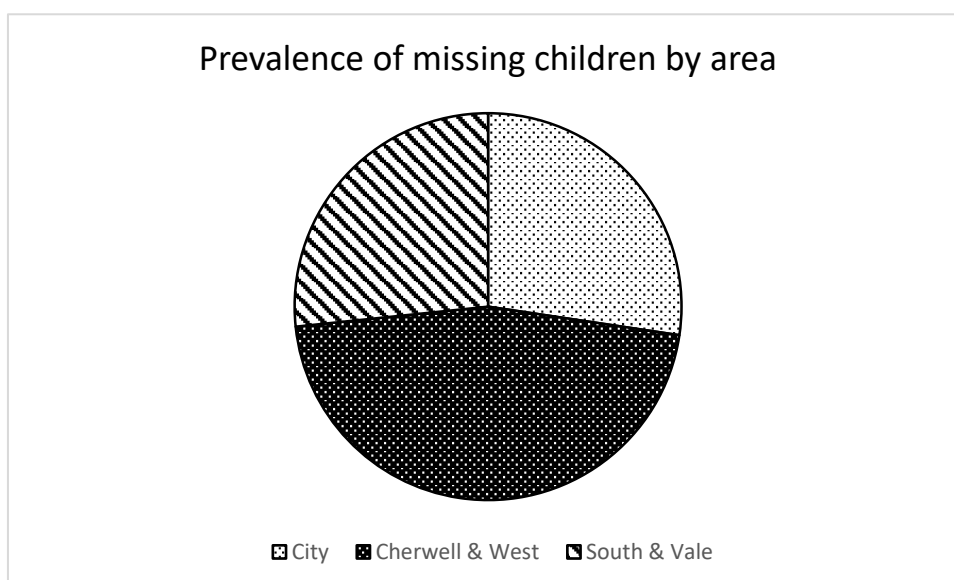
Area	Number of children	%	Number of Episodes	%
City	116	27%	215	28%
Cherwell & West	195	46%	346	45%
South & Vale	113	27%	209	27%
Grand Total	424		770	

Cherwell and West Oxfordshire:

Particular focus and attention is required for those areas that the data reveals have proportionately higher numbers of missing children than in other areas of the county and to ensure there is targeted action to reduce the numbers'

The LPA has a higher percentage of children going missing from home and care when compared to the two other LPAs in the county. Whilst there are higher numbers of missing reports, a significant number appear short in duration and is distinguished with having more easily identifiable patterns and trends e.g. children returning home late

(unauthorized absence). Many of the children reported missing whom are the responsibility of several other local authorities are placed within the LPA. Opportunities to develop consistent working practices between the placing authority, provider and LPA need consideration. Anecdotally, the trend indicates more complexities and barriers to overcome in these circumstances, compared to children indigenous to Oxfordshire given the rigor of local partnership arrangements.

Targeted partnership work will continue with residential placement providers. The concentration of placement provision in the area, the complex vulnerabilities and needs of the children being cared for, means it is likely that the LPA will continue to experience higher numbers of missing children and frequency of missing episodes in comparison to the other LPAs in the county.

Recommendation: Partnership analysis of the pattern and trend of children going missing from foster care and residential care within the LPA. That the analysis considers evidence for consistency of local practice within provisions as within other LPA's, to identify whether reporting levels are being influenced by unauthorized absences of children, (and actions taken by the parent/carer) or due to other risks or concerns. This will help identify and understand effectiveness of local strategies in managing the identified issue and need.

South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse:
As a new reporting tool has been implemented (this is the first report) analysis on the pattern and tends within the LPA is not yet possible. A wider comparative to review Jan-Jun 2020 and Jul-Dec 2020 will need to be undertaken in Jan 2021 for assessment of the patterns and trends of missing incidents.

Oxford City:
Like South Oxfordshire, the numbers of children referred to the Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel for discussion have remained consistent with the previous reporting cycles. As a new reporting tool has been implemented (this is the first report) A comparative review of data with Jan-Jun 2020 and Jul-Dec 2020 will need to be undertaken in Jan 2021 for assessment of the current patterns and trends.
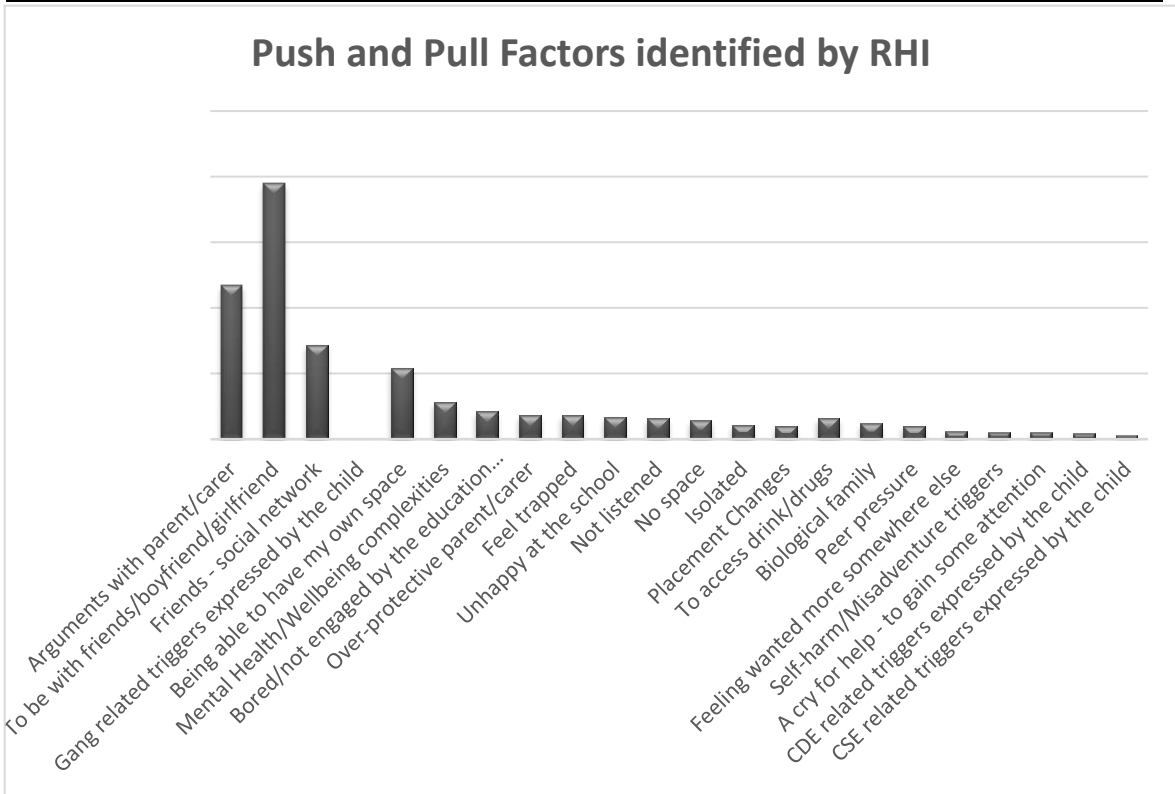
7. REPORTING OF OUT OF COUNTY LAC MISSING EPISODES

There is clear process and procedure in place for providers commissioned by CSC to report on children who go missing whom are the responsibility of Oxfordshire and living in a placement in or out of county. Current contract arrangements require all missing episode as being a notifiable event for CSC notification of any child going missing. The Children at Risk of Child Exploitation and Missing Panel ensures that these episodes are reviewed and scrutinised in overview in assurance of safeguarding potential risk and plans in place for their management.

8. RETURN HOME INTERVIEW (RHI)

Headline Analysis:

The number of completed RHIs	594	80%
The number of RHIs completed within 72hrs	370	62%

Push and Pull Factors identified by RHI

The chart shows, from highest to lowest:
- Arguments with parent/carer
- To be with friends/boyfriend/girlfriend
- Friends - social network
- Gang related triggers expressed by the child
- Being able to have my own space
- Mental Health/Wellbeing complexities
- Bored/not engaged by the education...
- Over-protective parent/carer
- Feel trapped
- Unhappy at the school
- Not listened
- No space
- Isolated
- Placement Changes
- To access drink/drugs
- Biological family
- Peer pressure
- Feeling wanted more somewhere else
- Self-harm/Misadventure triggers
- A cry for help - to gain some attention
- CDE related triggers expressed by the child
- CSE related triggers expressed by the child

National guidance states that on return home from being missing all young people should be offered a Return Home Interview (RHI) and timescales for completion within 72 hours. 80% of all children in Oxfordshire received a return home interview on return home from being missing, which is a higher rate when compared to that for the national average and of statistical neighbours. Of those, 62% were completed and recorded as returned to Thames Valley Police within the statutory 72hr timeframes.

Current analysis highlights that 20% of RHI's as not been recorded or received by TVP. It is an area for focus of analysis for underlying reasons and any factors for informing prompt and informed actions for improvement. Current performance within CSC of RHI's is subject to weekly scrutiny by the Deputy Directors in weekly performance review.

Return Home Interviews provide information about the reasons why children go missing in the county and is critical information for the partnership in developing provision for children who go missing and to inform help at an earlier stage when problems first emerge.

Reasons young people tell us they go missing in Oxfordshire include:

- Arguments with parents/carer
- a desire to be with friends or partners
- Social networks
- Wanting space
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Complexities

The delay in recording and transfer to Thames Valley Police is impacting on the partnerships ability to fully map information and intelligence surrounding circumstances of children after they return home from being missing .

RHI's provide information for use as evidence and intelligence for operational and tactical response to quickly and effectively safeguard children whom are reported or repeatedly reported missing. They are also critical to inform the partnership development of service provision to reduce the numbers of children going missing in the county and to highlight gaps in service provision.

9. RECOMMENDATION:

Return Home Interviews is an area of fluctuating performance over the past

24 months. The CSC strategic lead for missing children should consider reviewing and revisiting with CSC directorate leads options to commission RHI provision and delivery as a solution for improvements to for the LA to fully discharge its responsibilities in line with national guidance.

10. SUMMARY

The data suggests that across the reporting period, less children have gone missing less often within Oxfordshire when compared to statistical neighbours, regional and nationally.

In Oxfordshire, there are more instances of boys going missing compared to girls and the majority of them are aged between 14yrs – 16yrs. All children reported missing more than once had a completed CE screening tool, which reassures that children frequently being reported missing are known and or open to CSC services and that the CE screen tool is widely adopted within the reviews of children whom are repeatedly going missing.

There are clear and robustly monitored processes in place for Oxfordshire children placed out of area who are reported missing.

The number and of frequency of children reported missing in the Cherwell and West Oxfordshire LPA are key areas for focus and attention. The nature and concentration of fostering and residential children's homes within the area, means that the issues will not dissipate quickly. Partnership arrangements with placement providers require regular review to ensure that there are effective and robust strategies in place to safely and proportionately manage the joint responses required to safeguard children who go missing children. The LPA DI and CSC Strategic Lead remain in regular contact to ensure this is kept under review.

When return home interviews are completed, they provide detailed context and are a rich source of intelligence for the partnership, which informs partnership activities and safeguarding responses. However, not all children have a return home interview recorded within statutory timeframes, this needs to be addressed promptly to ensure that all children who go missing are appropriately safeguarded, and that there is provision of services available in support for reducing the numbers of children who go missing in the county.

11. RECOMMENDATION

The CE Subgroup is RECOMMENDED to note the report and RECOMMENDATIONS made forthwith.

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