

## **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

### **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH 2019 AT 10:00 HOURS**  
**IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,**  
**BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB**

## **A G E N D A**

### **1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Members are reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non pecuniary interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

### **3 APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies.

### **4 ACTION NOTES**

**3 - 6**

To confirm the action notes of the meeting held on the 13th February 2019.

### **5 CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING**

**7 - 26**

To include coverage of missing children, CSE and FGM and the front door arrangements at the Trust.  
Dr Tim O'Neill, Director for Education & Skills (has the statutory role of being the Director of Children's Services) and Senior Trust Managers (Dawn Roberts, AD Early Help, Rachel McCartan, Head of Service, CASS and Karen N Brookes, Exploitations & Missing Team Manager) will be in attendance.  
Superintendents Paul Drover & Matt Shaer, West Midlands Police may also

be in attendance.

**27 - 40**

6 **BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S TRUST DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2019/20**

Incorporating actions following the Ofsted Inspection of Birmingham Children's Social Care Services December 2018.  
Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust and Dr Tim O'Neill, Director for Education & Skills in attendance.

**41 - 46**

7 **WORK PROGRAMME**

For discussion.

8 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 17 April 2019 at 1000 hours in Committee Room 6, The Council House.

9 **REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

To consider any request for call in/councillor call for action/petitions (if received).

10 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chairman are matters of urgency.

11 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

Chairman to move:-

'In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chairman jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee'.

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL****CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S)  
COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

10:00 hours on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Committee Room 2 - Actions

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**Present:**

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq (Chair)

Councillors: Debbie Clancy, Diane Donaldson, Kath Scott and Alex Yip

**Also Present:**

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

Councillor John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities

Suwinder Bains, Cohesion and Partnerships Manager

Andrew Christie, Chair, Children's Trust

Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust

Rose Kiely, Group Overview & Scrutiny Manager

Prof Simon Pemberton, Co-Chair, Child Poverty Action Forum

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

Sarah Sinclair, AD, Children and Young People Commissioning

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**1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

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**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chair declared that he is on the Board of Directors for the Leigh Academy Trust.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Shabrana Hussain and Kerry Jenkins.

#### 4. ACTION NOTES

(See documents 1 and 2).

##### **RESOLVED:**

The action notes of the meetings held on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were confirmed.

#### 5. OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

(See document 3 and 4).

Andrew Christie, Chair, Children's Trust; Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust; Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing and Sarah Sinclair, AD, Children and Young People Commissioning attended for this item.

Andrew Christie declared an interest as he is the Chair of the National Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board.

In discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- Following the full Ofsted inspection in December there have been inspections of the fostering service and adoption service. These were standard regulatory inspections and they have to take place because they are a Trust. Further information on these services can be shared when the inspection reports are available.
- They are in the process of assembling the action plan and a broader Trust improvement plan. It was suggested that the action plan could be discussed at the Committee's March meeting.
- Ofsted were positive about accountability and the Trust has got this right with regards to Scrutiny, in that it was not too onerous on the Trust, nor was it too light touch.
- They are expecting the next full Ofsted inspection to be in 2021.
- There is work for partners to do in order to get to the next stage and be assessed as 'good'. For example, the Council is responsible for the virtual school.
- The Council's Chief Executive has taken leadership of the partnership responsible for children.
- The Trust will roll out an early help assessment model.
- The Trust has inherited the significant investment made on improvement work from the Council, such as the social care data system.
- Ofsted were satisfied with the safeguarding of children who are home educated. The Cabinet Member suggested that the Committee may want officers to attend, so they could take a detailed look at elective home education and she was also happy to attend. However, it was acknowledged

that there was an overlap with the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee, as education falls within its remit.

- Councillor Clancy agreed to raise again the issues of the overlaps of the two Committees with the Deputy Leader.
- The Council is working closely so the requirements of the Ofsted inspection are picked up by Birmingham Forward Steps and they are looking at the pathway of care.
- Missing Children – there has been a shift in consistency with partners and information is known and shared. Return Home Interviews were brought back in-house a year ago and this is embedded within the front door service. They are introducing greater persistence, so more young people take up the offer of return home interviews and they can reduce the risk. This is work in progress.

**RESOLVED:**

The Committee discussed the Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Care and the action plan will be discussed at a future meeting/visit.

**6. UPDATE ON THE CHILD POVERTY ACTION FORUM**

Councillor John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities; Prof Simon Pemberton, Co-Chair, Child Poverty Action Forum and Suwinder Bains, Cohesion and Partnerships Manager attended for this item.

In discussion and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- The Forum is looking at three issues:
  - Living wage – the inclusive growth agenda is being championed by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). The Commonwealth Games and HS2 provide opportunities for this agenda.
  - Universal credit – the Co-ordinating O&S Committee is undertaking an inquiry and the University of Birmingham will contribute to the evidence base for this.
  - Holiday hunger – they are awaiting the outcome of a consortium bid they have submitted. Also, through a number of undergraduate students at the university they will be building a comprehensive picture and evidence base for holiday hunger.
- Councillor Cotton is the new Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities and he will have a joined up approach with other Cabinet Members. He will also be laying down a challenge to other parts of the Council, as to how they are going to use opportunities to drive social investment.
- The Cabinet Member will investigate the best way to inform ward councillors so that effective communication travels both ways.
- It was acknowledged that child poverty is not totally within the Council's remit.
- Councillor Yip queried whether this is relative poverty as figures are based on median household income.

Members were disappointed that there were no papers for this item, especially since this had been on the Committee's work programme for some time. The Cabinet Member took on board members' concerns over the lack of a written report and he was happy to come back to a future committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

The update was noted.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME**

(See document 5).

Councillor Yip would like a Cabinet Member to attend for the first agenda item of the March meeting.

**8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 March 2019 at 1000 hours in Committee Room 2, The Council House.

**9. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

None.

**10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**11. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 11.50 hours.



## **Report from Birmingham Children's Trust to the Children's Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee 13 March 2019**

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

#### **Purpose**

To provide an update to the Scrutiny committee in respect of how, together with its partners, the Trust is responding to risks associated with contextual safeguarding.

#### **Context**

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighborhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Often, parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. In Birmingham, contextual safeguarding relates to children and young people who are at risk of:

1. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
2. Children Missing from Home, Care and Education (Missing)
3. Criminal Exploitation - Gangs, County Lines, Gun and Knife Crime and Modern Slavery; and Prevent.

### **Leadership and Governance**

#### **Contextual Safeguarding Board**

In July 2018, the Children's Trust set up the Vulnerable Adolescents Board with a strong partnership focus to oversee procedural and practice developments for contextual safeguarding concerns, lead in the development of a new highly integrated Service offer for contextual safeguarding and ensure our new approach to working with vulnerable adolescents is designed to facilitate a smooth transition between children's and adult's services, ensuring the specific needs and development milestones of young adults with complex needs are being met through our service offers. The Board, which was renamed the Contextual Safeguarding Board in October 2018 to recognise the scope of exploitation, is now leading on developing our multi-agency response to this area of risk.

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing

The Trust has robust mechanisms in place in order to respond to child sexual exploitation and missing referrals.

There is detailed guidance to support social workers with children and young people where there are CSE concerns. The guidance supports social workers to understand the various forms of CSE, grooming processes and vulnerabilities which may indicate CSE.

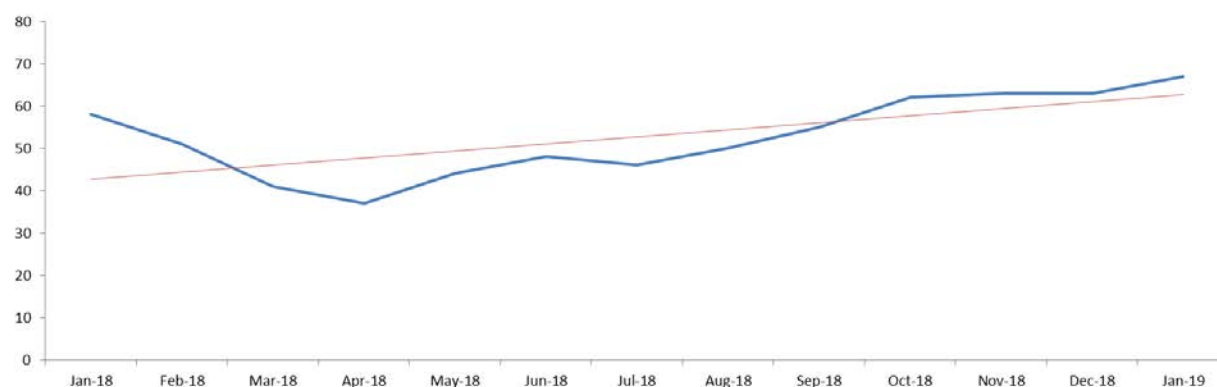
When CSE concerns are reported to the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS), our front door, the standard CASS referral form and our CSE screening tool is completed. The CSE screening tool is passed to the Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinators. The information in the screening tool is used by social workers to support their family assessments. The Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinators are also available to support practitioners with their assessments.

Where there are CSE concerns a strategy or triage meeting is held which will involve an Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinator and the allocated social worker, Police, Health and Barnardos.

If the outcome of the strategy/triage is a medium or high risk, the children and young people will be referred to a MASE – Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Meeting – where partners will share and clarify information, establish risk, consider disruption and identify links.

### CSE performance data January 2019

Total open CSE Episodes

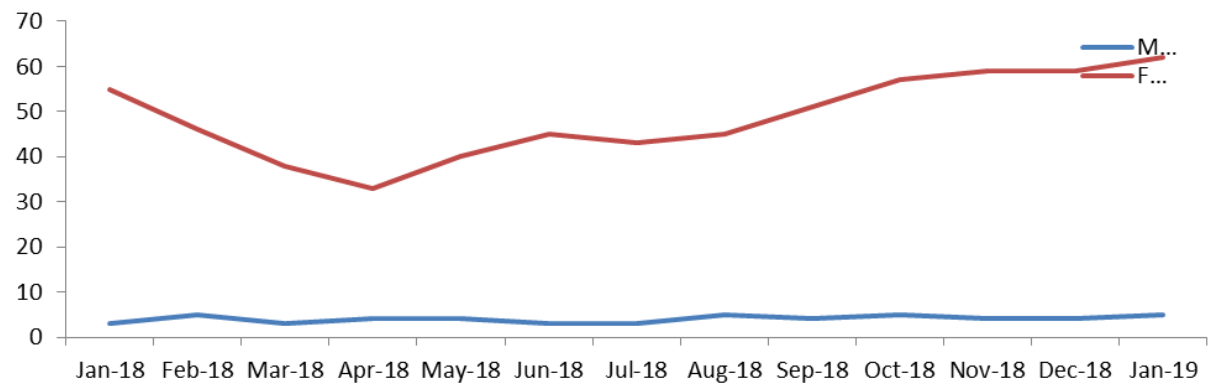


Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
58	51	41	37	44	48	46	50	55	62	63	63	67

The current number of CSE episodes being recorded has been increasing over the past 12 months, although the numbers are still relatively lower than what would be expected.



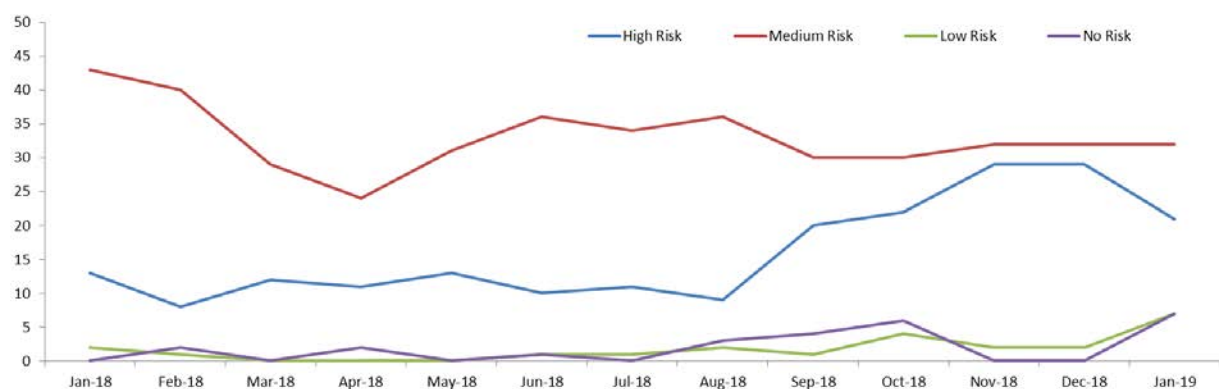
### CSE episodes by gender



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
3	5	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	5	4	4	5
55	46	38	33	40	45	43	45	51	57	59	59	62

The data indicates that there are very few cases of male CSE episodes being recorded. This may be due to reluctance by young males to disclose sexual exploitation.

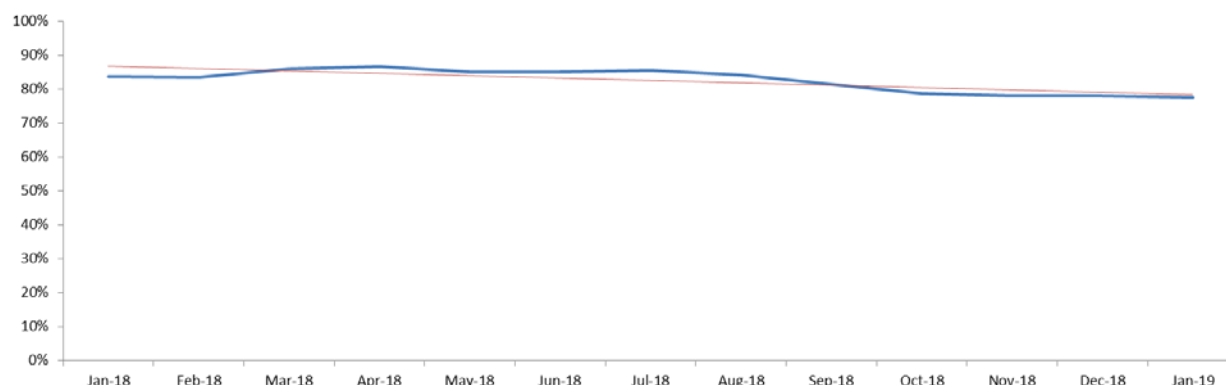
### CSE children by level of risk



	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
High Risk	13	8	12	11	13	10	11	9	20	22	29	29	21
Medium Risk	43	40	29	24	31	36	34	36	30	30	32	32	32
Low Risk	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	4	2	2	7
No Risk	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	3	4	6	0	0	7

The recording of high risk CSE has been declining slightly and stabilising over the past 12 months, compared with medium risk where, despite a drop in January, the trend is increasing indicating that proportionally more children are being assessed as medium risk and managed accordingly.

### Children with overall reduced CSE risk over the past 12 months



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
84%	83%	86%	87%	85%	85%	85%	84%	81%	79%	78%	78%	77%

There has been a small decline in the number of children who are indicating a reduction in risk over the past 12 months, although the trend is relatively stable.

A dip sample of the CSE referrals in June 2018 was undertaken. This was completed as the partnership was concerned about the reduction in CSE numbers. It was agreed that a sample of referrals citing CSE would be audited to see if CASS responded according to the Right Help, Right Time threshold document. One of the hypotheses put forward by partners was that CASS was not responding correctly to the referrals.

A total of 46 children were referred into CASS during June 2018. 15 were randomly sampled and audited by a multi-agency group. Not all of the dip sample were CSE upon the auditing although the referrers had cited CSE as being a concern when they referred the young people in. Those that were CSE were appropriately managed.

The conclusion of the audit was this dip sample did not support the hypothesis / concern that CASS were not responding to CSE referrals as aligned to our threshold document. The reduction in CSE referrals continues to be an issue and the area CSE Operational Groups (COGs) are working hard with partners to raise awareness of CSE to ensure that all children where there is a concern around CSE are referred into CASS.

### Missing

The practice guidance for missing gives detailed support to workers about the roles and expectations of parents, carers, education, social workers and police - both when a child goes missing and when a child is found.

Birmingham Children's Trust is notified by the police of all missing and found children. This takes place through the Compact system. Other local authorities also notify Birmingham of children's missing episodes if they are placed outside of the city. If a looked after child is likely to go missing then the social worker will complete a 'missing risk assessment' form

with relevant details to assist a police search for the child if needed. These should be held by the carers.

If a child has been missing for 72 hours or more a strategy discussion will be arranged with the police (Locate team). The purpose of this is to consider the action taken so far and ensure all relevant information has been shared.

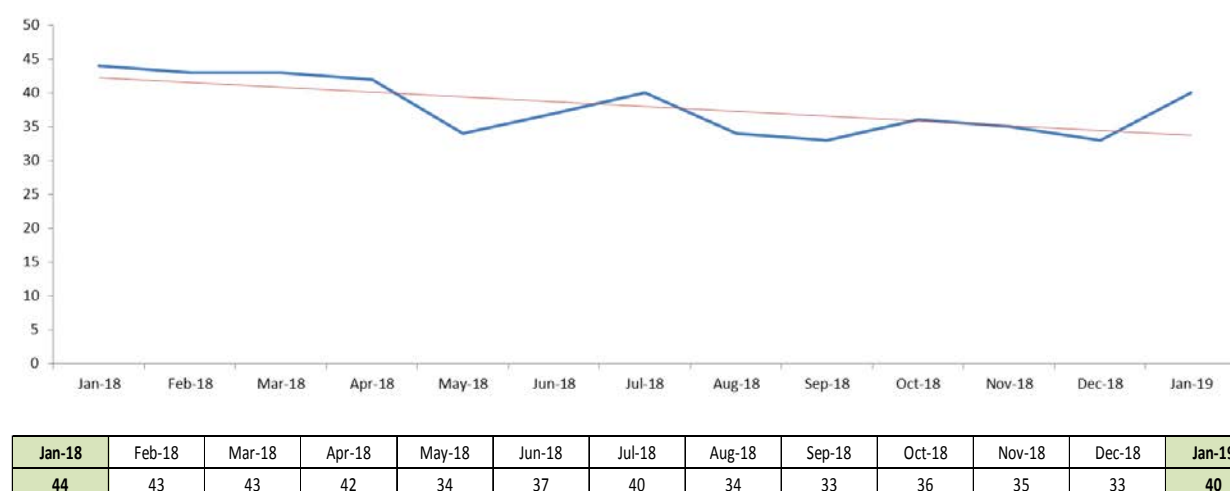
When a child is found the worker will make arrangements to see the child to discuss the missing episode as well as an independent return home interview (RHI) being offered to all Birmingham children, whether they are living in Birmingham or placed in another local authority. This offer of a return home interview is made by the Missing Support Workers in the Exploitation and Missing team. Birmingham Children's Trust forward police notifications (compacts) to other local authorities as Birmingham does not offer return home interviews to other local authority children.

If the child is an unaccompanied asylum seeking child and he/she goes missing then the child remains allocated to a worker and regular checks are maintained with the police and home office. If a child is found then their looked after status is maintained.

A Missing Operational Group (MOG) meets bi-monthly to consider issues and individual children; and a number of themes have been considered during 2018. Work is currently in place to merge the MOG with the new CSE structure.

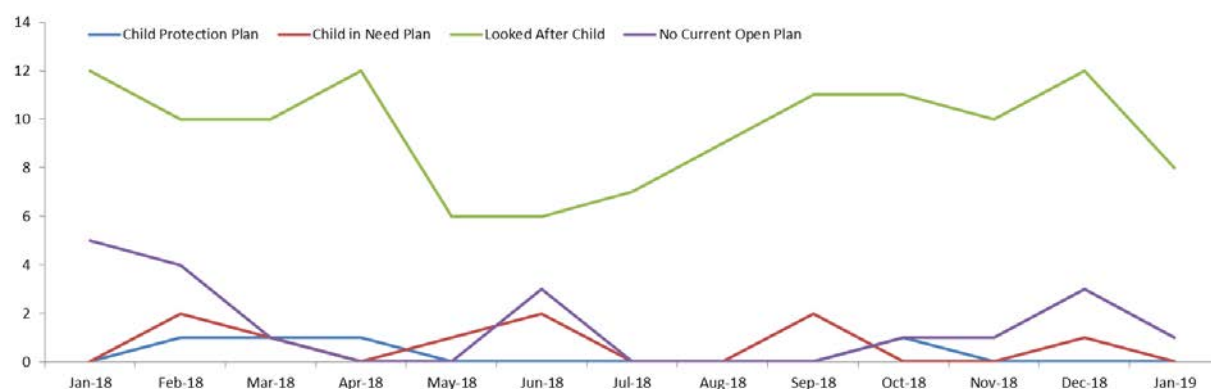
## Missing Children – performance data January 2019

Total of children missing at month end January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019



At January 2019 our figure is 4 less than this time last year and the overall trend is declining.

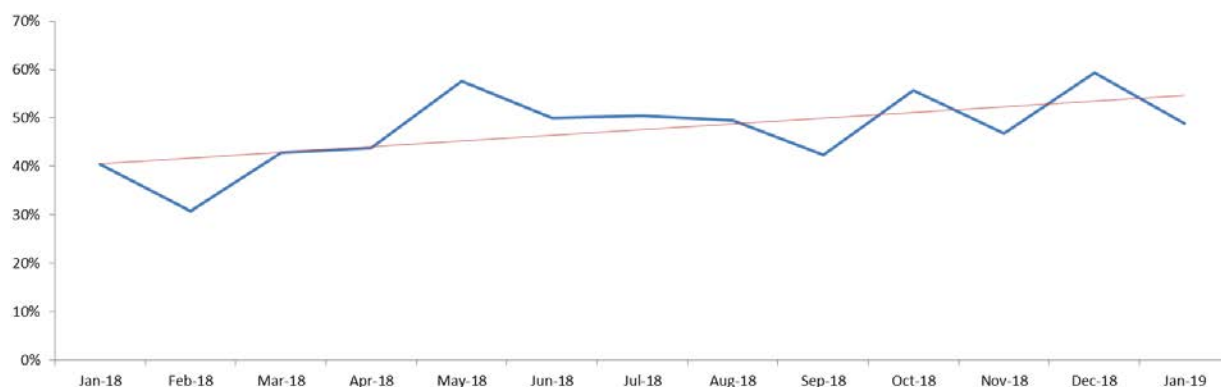
### Missing 3+ times within 30 days



	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
Child Protection Plan	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Child in Need Plan	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
Looked After Child	12	10	10	12	6	6	7	9	11	11	10	12	8
No Current Open Plan	5	4	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	3	1

Numbers are relatively stable. Children in care continue to have the most episodes of missing, although the trend is beginning to reduce again following an increase in September to December.

### % Successful return home interviews



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
40%	31%	43%	44%	58%	50%	50%	50%	42%	56%	47%	59%	49%

There has been a drop this month, but we remain 9 percentage points up on this time last year which is positive.

100% of missing children have received an offer of an RHI from April to November 2018, with the exception of October where it was 97%. In December and January the percentage offer has fallen to 79% and 58% respectively. This reflects issues around annual leave, paternity leave and sickness; and the fragility of such a small team.

Overall, the Trust is now better positioned to identify children living at home who need to be allocated a social worker following a period of being missing. This is in part due to the investment the Trust has made in recruiting Missing Support Workers (MSW) who are skilled and having detailed conversations with children upon their return and building trusting relationships resulting in a better understanding of why the missing episode occurred. Relationships have been formed with some young people where it has been important to extend the role of the MSW for additional tasks (eg. telephone contact with a young person whilst he is in YOI; attending a meeting of a 12 year old to praise the young person for the progress he has made overall and his reduction of going missing).

The return home interview reports are shared with the Partnership team of the Police. They compile data from the missing/found compacts and the Return Home Interviews of locations and places of interest re. missing children.

It is pleasing to note that the numbers of children missing from care has reduced:

- For the year 2016 the average was 153 episodes
- For the year 2017 the average was 83 episodes
- For December 2018 the average was 72 episodes.

As well as improvements in the Missing and Return Home Interview process having an impact, the positive effect has been enhanced by proactive responses from residential units and clearer care planning. In early summer the Police conducted interviews at residential units where there were high numbers of missing children. Their conclusion was positive about the residential homes and the actions they took. There has also been multi-agency support to the Home Care Forum (originally a forum for residential placements and the Police) which has assisted communication and understanding.

We have also written to other local authorities asking them to inform us of any children placed in Birmingham where they have concerns in relation to both missing and CSE – as we want to ensure that we are fully briefed on all children where these issues have an impact on their safety/welfare who reside in Birmingham. We now have a better, but nevertheless a 'point in time', picture of around 1000 children and young people placed in Birmingham by other authorities.

### **Gangs and criminal exploitation (inc county lines)**

Over 12 months ago there were no dedicated multi-agency arrangements to address criminal exploitation and gang affiliation. This has been addressed. We have a Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Partnership (a sub-group of the Community Safety Partnership). As part of this work we have developed new governance arrangements to ensure partners know what they are required to do, and developed a Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Strategy.

Criminal Exploitation and Gang Affiliation Practice Guidance, including screening tool and prompt sheet, has been developed to assist all stakeholders on what to look out for and what

to do in making a referral. This was promoted through staff briefings across key organisations. Bespoke briefings have also been given to magistrates and Heads of Safeguarding for all Birmingham Health Trusts. A number of schools have received training via the school and police panels, and in schools that have a higher concentration of victims of this sort of exploitation staff have received training specific to their pupils and neighbourhoods.

Gang affiliation and criminal exploitation concerns feature at all levels of the Right Help Right Time model, and will often involve Early Help where concerns are emerging but are not currently harmful.

In light of these developments we are improving our safeguarding activity to support children who are affected by criminal exploitation, 'County Lines' and gang affiliation. Right Help, Right Time practice guidance has increased awareness of the extra-familial risks. We have strengthened our multi-agency responses in strategy discussions in CASS/MASH and have established new city-wide multi-agency arrangements with the purpose of increasing partnership offers to children and families alongside statutory responses, and to increase disruption activity. New Criminal Exploitation and Gang Affiliation practice guidance has been written to embed these arrangements.

### **Criminal Exploitation**

The Criminal Exploitation Panel first met in March 2018. Since then this multi-agency body has examined and put additional safeguarding in place for 236 children, who have been identified at risk of or being criminally exploited. Each of these children have been subject of CASS & Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) strategy meetings.

Our understanding and response to 'County Lines' through our Criminal Exploitation Panel came before the term appeared nationally. This is because of our adoption of a Public Health model as the means to tackle the issues. In Birmingham this means we have succeeded in bringing people and organisations around the table by having a trauma-informed approach at the core as intervening to mitigate trauma is everyone's responsibility. We also look at the child first and the offender second in tackling criminal exploitation.

There is on-going work to build resilience to trauma and to recover from its impact, introducing bespoke mentoring into key localities, encouraging the growth of Mentors in Violence Prevention in schools, as well as the UNICEF 'Rights of the Child' resilience programme, the arrival of Redthread into our hospitals to intervene at those teachable moments with people in the middle of medical and emotional trauma. We have a trauma informed YOS, have raised awareness across the partnership, Early Help Hubs with embedded police and health staff as well as a city-wide Think Family offer including multi-systemic therapy.

### **Gangs and Organised Crime groups**

As part of our wider Public Health model we also have a multi-agency Operations Group that is designed to disrupt and pursue Urban Street Gangs (USGs), Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and key individuals.

The Criminal Exploitation Panel's work has identified 14 previously unidentified cohorts of children who are linked together in victim networks and are being exploited by (OCGs and USGs). We are currently aware of 44 OCGs and 11 USGs operating in the Birmingham area.

Based on January 2019 information there are 254 children age under 18 who are related to gang members as their child or sibling. The vast majority have received an assessment based on Right Help, Right Time with a relevant plan. This has improved since changes in the Right Help, Right Time framework.

Based on January 2019 information 69 children under the age of 18 are gang members within Birmingham. This figure is dynamic and does not include all the children on the periphery or at risk of affiliation. All have received an assessment based on Right Help, Right Time with a relevant plan and support and/or offender management.

The National Crime Agency (NCA) estimate that there are 90 drug lines running out of the West Midlands with approximately 60 running out of Birmingham. Birmingham is seen as a major "County Line" Hub.

We are currently tracking and taking action with regard to 56 known active drug lines via West Midlands Police which works closely with the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU).

Our work has informed and shaped various law enforcement operations:

- Operation SORA –16 interim gang injunctions for senior gang members and provided mentoring and skills support for 20 young people associated with rival gangs.
- Operation ARKLE – 7 young exploited children were rescued from exploitation in a national landmark multi-agency operation, where the enforcement action led to the imprisonment of an adult for 14 years for Child Trafficking offences as well as possession with intent to supply Class A drugs. None of the children who were exploited provided statements. Despite being involved in the sale and distribution of Class A drugs none of the children were prosecuted or used as witnesses, offering them both protection and support in the widest context possible.
- In addition to the successful enforcement action there are on-going joint police operations which involved West Midlands Police and representatives of the Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Partnership in disrupting criminal exploitation.

## Next steps

Together with its partners, Birmingham Children's Trust has developed multi-agency responses to CSE), CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) and children who go missing. However, in response to the growing concerns around children being at risk within the contexts, the Trust is working with partners to develop a Contextual Safeguarding Hub which will seek to align existing responses to CSE, CCE and missing within a wider system which:

1. Targets vulnerabilities within families and or extra-familial contexts and relationships.
2. Will develop alternative ways to work with children and young people and their families, recognising that traditional child protection processes place an onus on the family despite the fact the causes of contextual concerns are typically external.
3. Ensures our new approach to working with vulnerable adolescents is designed to facilitate a smooth transition between children's and adult's services, ensuring the specific needs and development milestones of young adults with complex needs are being met through our service offers.

The Hub will work with the different contexts influencing the lives of individual young people and their families. It will seek to disrupt and rehabilitate perpetrators, map locations of concern, undertake peer mapping in order to prevent other young people from being exploited and work with parents as partners where appropriate. The Hub's approach will also recognise that the influence of these different social contexts on young people can often restrict the extent to which parents and the family are able to influence and support young people when they are exposed to contextual risks.

The Hub will also recognise that the right person to work with and influence young people is not always the same professional, and that it should be determined by which professional has the best relationship with the young person.





## **Report from Birmingham Children's Trust to the Children's Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee 13 March 2019**

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

#### **Purpose**

To provide an update to the Scrutiny committee in respect of how, together with its partners, the Trust is responding to risks associated with contextual safeguarding.

#### **Context**

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### **Leadership and Governance**

#### **Contextual Safeguarding Board**

In July 2018, the Children's Trust set up the Vulnerable Adolescents Board with a strong partnership focus to oversee procedural and practice developments for contextual safeguarding concerns, lead in the development of a new highly integrated Service offer for contextual safeguarding and ensure our new approach to working with vulnerable adolescents is designed to facilitate a smooth transition between children's and adult's services, ensuring the specific needs and development milestones of young adults with complex needs are being met through our service offers. The Board, which was renamed the Contextual Safeguarding Board in October 2018 to recognise the scope of exploitation, is now leading on developing our multi-agency response to this area of risk.

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing

The Trust has robust mechanisms in place in order to respond to child sexual exploitation and missing referrals.

There is detailed guidance to support social workers with children and young people where there are CSE concerns. The guidance supports social workers to understand the various forms of CSE, grooming processes and vulnerabilities which may indicate CSE.

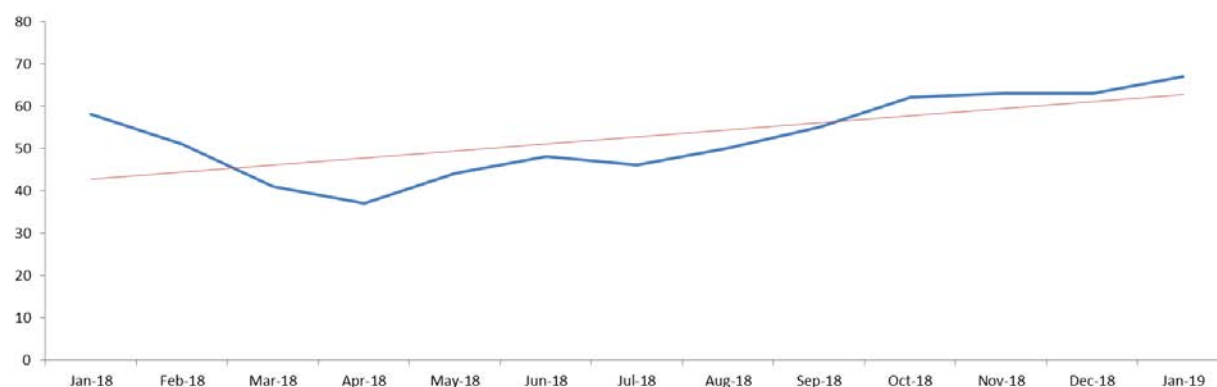
When CSE concerns are reported to the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS), our front door, the standard CASS referral form and our CSE screening tool is completed. The CSE screening tool is passed to the Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinators. The information in the screening tool is used by social workers to support their family assessments. The Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinators are also available to support practitioners with their assessments.

Where there are CSE concerns a strategy or triage meeting is held which will involve an Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinator and the allocated social worker, Police, Health and Barnardos.

If the outcome of the strategy/triage is a medium or high risk, the children and young people will be referred to a MASE – Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Meeting – where partners will share and clarify information, establish risk, consider disruption and identify links.

### CSE performance data January 2019

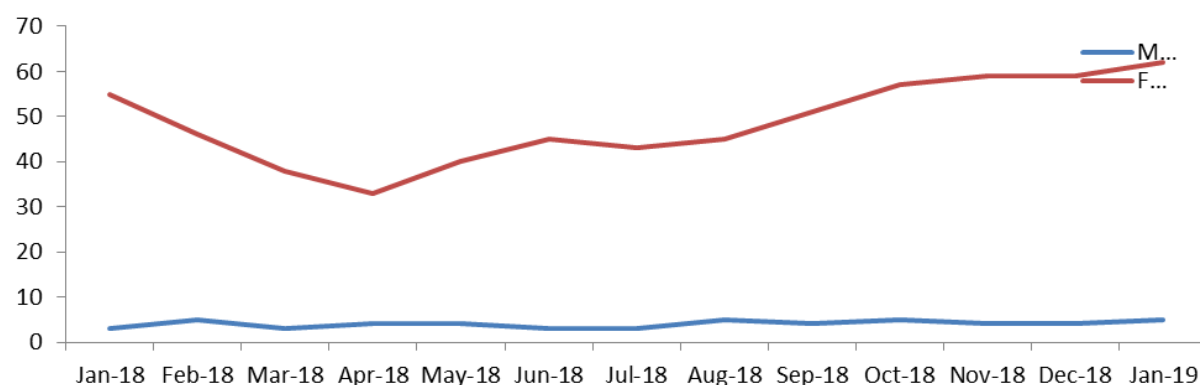
Total open CSE Episodes



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
58	51	41	37	44	48	46	50	55	62	63	63	67

The current number of CSE episodes being recorded has been increasing over the past 12 months, although the numbers are still relatively lower than what would be expected.

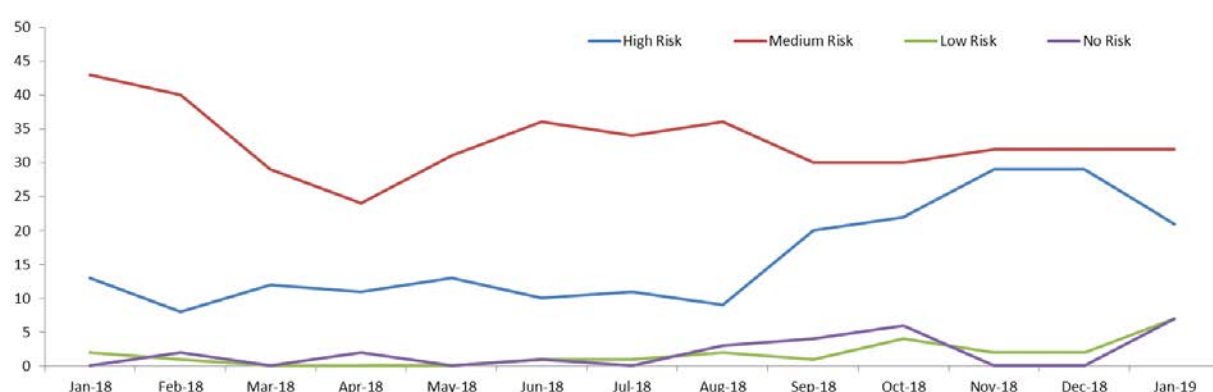
### CSE episodes by gender



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
3	5	3	4	4	3	3	5	4	5	4	4	5
55	46	38	33	40	45	43	45	51	57	59	59	62

The data indicates that there are very few cases of male CSE episodes being recorded. This may be due to reluctance by young males to disclose sexual exploitation.

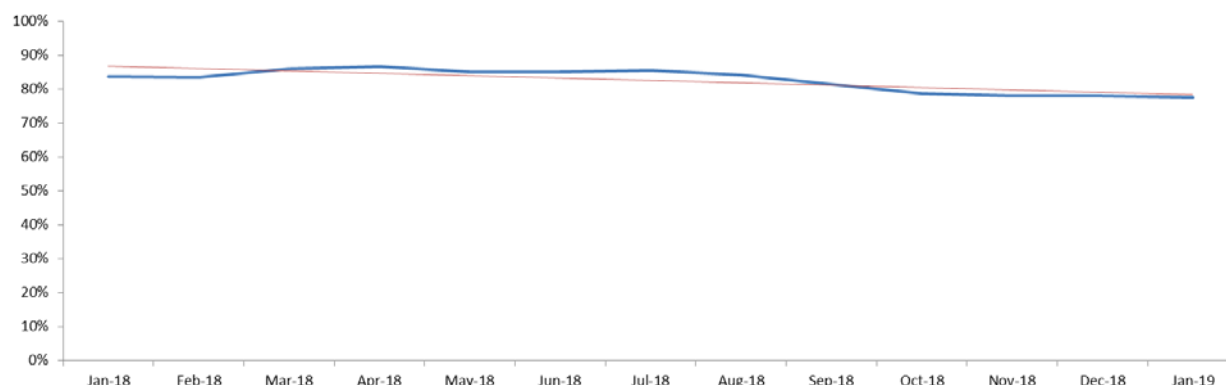
### CSE children by level of risk



	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
High Risk	13	8	12	11	13	10	11	9	20	22	29	29	21
Medium Risk	43	40	29	24	31	36	34	36	30	30	32	32	32
Low Risk	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	4	2	2	7
No Risk	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	3	4	6	0	0	7

The trend of medium risk CSE has been declining slightly and stabilising over the past 12 months, compared with high risk where, despite a drop in January, the trend is increasing indicating that an increasing number of children have been assessed as high risk and are being managed accordingly.

### Children with overall reduced CSE risk over the past 12 months



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
84%	83%	86%	87%	85%	85%	85%	84%	81%	79%	78%	78%	77%

There has been a small decline in the number of children who are indicating a reduction in risk over the past 12 months, although the trend is relatively stable.

A dip sample of the CSE referrals in June 2018 was undertaken. This was completed as the partnership was concerned about the reduction in CSE numbers. It was agreed that a sample of referrals citing CSE would be audited to see if CASS responded according to the Right Help, Right Time threshold document. One of the hypotheses put forward by partners was that CASS was not responding correctly to the referrals.

A total of 46 children were referred into CASS during June 2018. 15 were randomly sampled and audited by a multi-agency group. Not all of the dip sample were CSE upon the auditing although the referrers had cited CSE as being a concern when they referred the young people in. Those that were CSE were appropriately managed.

The conclusion of the audit was this dip sample did not support the hypothesis / concern that CASS were not responding to CSE referrals as aligned to our threshold document. The reduction in CSE referrals continues to be an issue and the area CSE Operational Groups (COGs) are working hard with partners to raise awareness of CSE to ensure that all children where there is a concern around CSE are referred into CASS.

### Missing

The practice guidance for missing gives detailed support to workers about the roles and expectations of parents, carers, education, social workers and police - both when a child goes missing and when a child is found.

Birmingham Children's Trust is notified by the police of all missing and found children. This takes place through the Compact system. Other local authorities also notify Birmingham of children's missing episodes if they are placed outside of the city. If a looked after child is likely to go missing then the social worker will complete a 'missing risk assessment' form

with relevant details to assist a police search for the child if needed. These should be held by the carers.

If a child has been missing for 72 hours or more a strategy discussion will be arranged with the police (Locate team). The purpose of this is to consider the action taken so far and ensure all relevant information has been shared.

When a child is found the worker will make arrangements to see the child to discuss the missing episode as well as an independent return home interview (RHI) being offered to all Birmingham children, whether they are living in Birmingham or placed in another local authority. This offer of a return home interview is made by the Missing Support Workers in the Exploitation and Missing team. Birmingham Children's Trust forward police notifications (compacts) to other local authorities as Birmingham does not offer return home interviews to other local authority children.

If the child is an unaccompanied asylum seeking child and he/she goes missing then the child remains allocated to a worker and regular checks are maintained with the police and home office. If a child is found then their looked after status is maintained.

A Missing Operational Group (MOG) meets bi-monthly to consider issues and individual children; and a number of themes have been considered during 2018. Work is currently in place to merge the MOG with the new CSE structure.

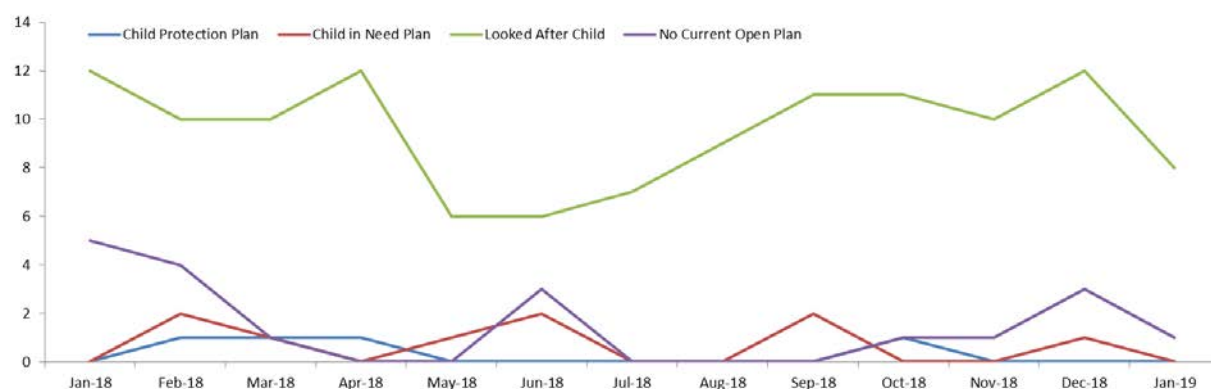
## Missing Children – performance data January 2019

Total of children missing at month end January 31<sup>st</sup> 2019



At January 2019 our figure is 4 less than this time last year and the overall trend is declining.

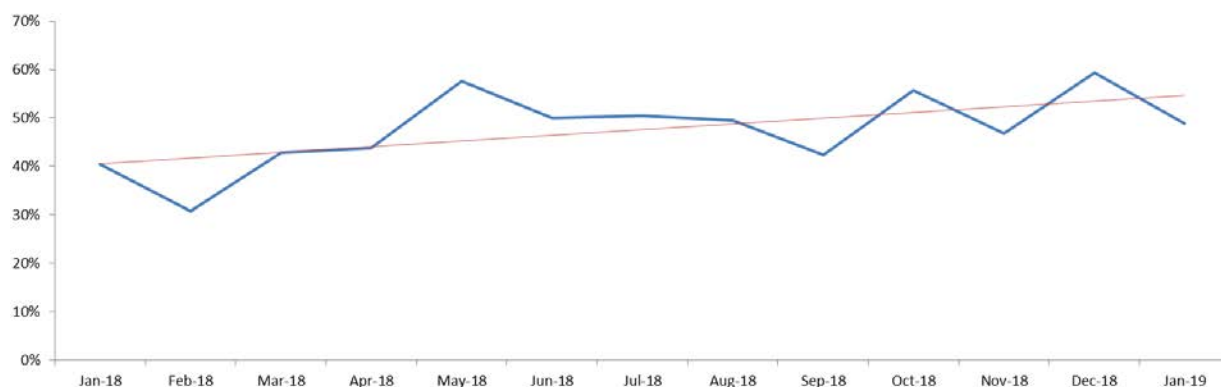
### Missing 3+ times within 30 days



	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
Child Protection Plan	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Child in Need Plan	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
Looked After Child	12	10	10	12	6	6	7	9	11	11	10	12	8
No Current Open Plan	5	4	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	3	1

Numbers are relatively stable. Children in care continue to have the most episodes of missing, although the trend is beginning to reduce again following an increase in September to December.

### % Successful return home interviews



Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19
40%	31%	43%	44%	58%	50%	50%	50%	42%	56%	47%	59%	49%

There has been a drop this month, but we remain 9 percentage points up on this time last year which is positive.

100% of missing children have received an offer of an RHI from April to November 2018, with the exception of October where it was 97%. In December and January the percentage offer has fallen to 79% and 58% respectively. This reflects issues around annual leave, paternity leave and sickness; and the fragility of such a small team.

Overall, the Trust is now better positioned to identify children living at home who need to be allocated a social worker following a period of being missing. This is in part due to the investment the Trust has made in recruiting Missing Support Workers (MSW) who are skilled and having detailed conversations with children upon their return and building trusting relationships resulting in a better understanding of why the missing episode occurred. Relationships have been formed with some young people where it has been important to extend the role of the MSW for additional tasks (eg. telephone contact with a young person whilst he is in YOI; attending a meeting of a 12 year old to praise the young person for the progress he has made overall and his reduction of going missing).

The return home interview reports are shared with the Partnership team of the Police. They compile data from the missing/found compacts and the Return Home Interviews of locations and places of interest re. missing children.

It is pleasing to note that the numbers of children missing from care has reduced:

- For the year 2016 the average was 153 episodes
- For the year 2017 the average was 83 episodes
- For December 2018 the average was 72 episodes.

As well as improvements in the Missing and Return Home Interview process having an impact, the positive effect has been enhanced by proactive responses from residential units and clearer care planning. In early summer the Police conducted interviews at residential units where there were high numbers of missing children. Their conclusion was positive about the residential homes and the actions they took. There has also been multi-agency support to the Home Care Forum (originally a forum for residential placements and the Police) which has assisted communication and understanding.

We have also written to other local authorities asking them to inform us of any children placed in Birmingham where they have concerns in relation to both missing and CSE – as we want to ensure that we are fully briefed on all children where these issues have an impact on their safety/welfare who reside in Birmingham. We now have a better, but nevertheless a 'point in time', picture of around 1000 children and young people placed in Birmingham by other authorities.

### **Gangs and criminal exploitation (inc county lines)**

Over 12 months ago there were no dedicated multi-agency arrangements to address criminal exploitation and gang affiliation. This has been addressed. We have a Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Partnership (a sub-group of the Community Safety Partnership). As part of this work we have developed new governance arrangements to ensure partners know what they are required to do, and developed a Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Strategy.

Criminal Exploitation and Gang Affiliation Practice Guidance, including screening tool and prompt sheet, has been developed to assist all stakeholders on what to look out for and what



to do in making a referral. This was promoted through staff briefings across key organisations. Bespoke briefings have also been given to magistrates and Heads of Safeguarding for all Birmingham Health Trusts. A number of schools have received training via the school and police panels, and in schools that have a higher concentration of victims of this sort of exploitation staff have received training specific to their pupils and neighbourhoods.

Gang affiliation and criminal exploitation concerns feature at all levels of the Right Help Right Time model, and will often involve Early Help where concerns are emerging but are not currently harmful.

In light of these developments we are improving our safeguarding activity to support children who are affected by criminal exploitation, 'County Lines' and gang affiliation. Right Help, Right Time practice guidance has increased awareness of the extra-familial risks. We have strengthened our multi-agency responses in strategy discussions in CASS/MASH and have established new city-wide multi-agency arrangements with the purpose of increasing partnership offers to children and families alongside statutory responses, and to increase disruption activity. New Criminal Exploitation and Gang Affiliation practice guidance has been written to embed these arrangements.

### **Criminal Exploitation**

The Criminal Exploitation Panel first met in March 2018. Since then this multi-agency body has examined and put additional safeguarding in place for 236 children, who have been identified at risk of or being criminally exploited. Each of these children have been subject of CASS & Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) strategy meetings.

Our understanding and response to 'County Lines' through our Criminal Exploitation Panel came before the term appeared nationally. This is because of our adoption of a Public Health model as the means to tackle the issues. In Birmingham this means we have succeeded in bringing people and organisations around the table by having a trauma-informed approach at the core as intervening to mitigate trauma is everyone's responsibility. We also look at the child first and the offender second in tackling criminal exploitation.

There is on-going work to build resilience to trauma and to recover from its impact, introducing bespoke mentoring into key localities, encouraging the growth of Mentors in Violence Prevention in schools, as well as the UNICEF 'Rights of the Child' resilience programme, the arrival of Redthread into our hospitals to intervene at those teachable moments with people in the middle of medical and emotional trauma. We have a trauma informed YOS, have raised awareness across the partnership, Early Help Hubs with embedded police and health staff as well as a city-wide Think Family offer including multi-systemic therapy.

### **Gangs and Organised Crime groups**

As part of our wider Public Health model we also have a multi-agency Operations Group that is designed to disrupt and pursue Urban Street Gangs (USGs), Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and key individuals.

The Criminal Exploitation Panel's work has identified 14 previously unidentified cohorts of children who are linked together in victim networks and are being exploited by (OCGs and USGs. We are currently aware of 44 OCGs and 11 USGs operating in the Birmingham area.



Based on January 2019 information there are 254 children age under 18 who are related to gang members as their child or sibling. The vast majority have received an assessment based on Right Help, Right Time with a relevant plan. This has improved since changes in the Right Help, Right Time framework.

Based on January 2019 information 69 children under the age of 18 are gang members within Birmingham. This figure is dynamic and does not include all the children on the periphery or at risk of affiliation. All have received an assessment based on Right Help, Right Time with a relevant plan and support and/or offender management.

The National Crime Agency (NCA) estimate that there are 90 drug lines running out of the West Midlands with approximately 60 running out of Birmingham. Birmingham is seen as a major "County Line" Hub.

We are currently tracking and taking action with regard to 56 known active drug lines via West Midlands Police which works closely with the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU).

Our work has informed and shaped various law enforcement operations:

- Operation SORA –16 interim gang injunctions for senior gang members and provided mentoring and skills support for 20 young people associated with rival gangs.
- Operation ARKLE – 7 young exploited children were rescued from exploitation in a national landmark multi-agency operation, where the enforcement action led to the imprisonment of an adult for 14 years for Child Trafficking offences as well as possession with intent to supply Class A drugs. None of the children who were exploited provided statements. Despite being involved in the sale and distribution of Class A drugs none of the children were prosecuted or used as witnesses, offering them both protection and support in the widest context possible.
- In addition to the successful enforcement action there are on-going joint police operations which involved West Midlands Police and representatives of the Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Partnership in disrupting criminal exploitation.

## Next steps

Together with its partners, Birmingham Children's Trust has developed multi-agency responses to CSE), CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) and children who go missing. However, in response to the growing concerns around children being at risk within the contexts, the Trust is working with partners to develop a Contextual Safeguarding Hub which will seek to align existing responses to CSE, CCE and missing within a wider system which:

1. Targets vulnerabilities within families and or extra-familial contexts and relationships.
2. Will develop alternative ways to work with children and young people and their families, recognising that traditional child protection processes place an onus on the family despite the fact the causes of contextual concerns are typically external.
3. Ensures our new approach to working with vulnerable adolescents is designed to facilitate a smooth transition between children's and adult's services, ensuring the specific needs and development milestones of young adults with complex needs are being met through our service offers.

The Hub will work with the different contexts influencing the lives of individual young people and their families. It will seek to disrupt and rehabilitate perpetrators, map locations of concern, undertake peer mapping in order to prevent other young people from being exploited and work with parents as partners where appropriate. The Hub's approach will also recognise that the influence of these different social contexts on young people can often restrict the extent to which parents and the family are able to influence and support young people when they are exposed to contextual risks.

The Hub will also recognise that the right person to work with and influence young people is not always the same professional, and that it should be determined by which professional has the best relationship with the young person.



## Development Plan 2019/20

"The Trust continues to have one focus: to deliver better services and better outcomes for the city's most vulnerable children, young people and families. This development plan describes the important work we need to focus on now, particularly strengthening the quality and consistency of practice across the Trust. We will do that by engaging and forging strong and purposeful collaboration with children, young people and families, with those we work with, with the Council as our commissioner, with our partners, and with our staff."

*Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Birmingham Children's Trust*

"This plan represents a vital next step in the City's journey towards providing high impact, purposeful support and care to all of Birmingham's vulnerable children and young people. The Trust has already made significant strides in that direction, and the City Council will continue to work closely, and well with the Trust to reach our next set of goals. I am committed to ensuring that all of our services work seamlessly together so that every child and young person receives high quality support, feels safe and achieves their potential."

*Tim O'Neill, Corporate Director of Education and Skills/Director of Children's Services, Birmingham City Council*

The vision of Birmingham Children's Trust is to build a service that provides excellent children's social work and social care services for the city's most vulnerable children, young people and families. We aim to always deliver services with compassion and with care, through positive relationships, building on strengths. We work in collaboration with children and young people, families and our partners. We strive to always listen to, involve and include children and their families in our work. We aim to achieve the best outcomes by supporting children to be healthy, happy and resilient.

The last full Ofsted inspection of children's services published in January 2019 found that services for children overall require improvement to be good. That is consistent with our self-assessment that overall we continue to **require improvement to be good**.

We have accepted the six areas that Ofsted have told us we need to improve, and they had been identified as such in the self-assessment produced prior to the inspection. Work is already underway in response and we have developed a number of key priorities that we are working on now.

- We continue to be committed to engaging our partners and external agencies as we know that the partnership must work together to support and protect our children. The Trust are prominent members of the developing Children and Young People Strategic Partnership, including the chief executives of all key partner agencies.
- We continue to develop and sustain a skilled and confident workforce.
- We continue to build collaboration, understanding, and capacity within the Trust Board.
- We continue to develop and strengthen our regulated services to ensure that they provide good services to children.
- We are developing a practice response to children at risk of contextual harm.
- We continue to embed the relationship-based practice model to drive improving practice.

The Development Plan is based around 8 strategic priorities:

- The quality, effectiveness and pace of partnership working with external agencies, including partner-led early help services.
- Trust and confidence between the courts and Birmingham Children's Trust.
- Effectiveness of the fostering service.
- Robust and timely focus on all permanence options for children.
- Alignment of the approach to contextual safeguarding.

- The impact of the virtual school in improving provision for children in care.
- Practice improvement.
- Workforce.

Our response to Ofsted's findings is incorporated within this plan, particularly strategic priorities 1-6.

This plan will be monitored, reviewed and updated monthly. It will sit alongside the Trust's contractual key performance indicators, other quantitative and qualitative measures of performance, and quarterly updates of the Trust's self-assessment. In this way, at all times we will have a strong picture of the effectiveness of the services organised and delivered by the Trust. Detailed delivery plans underpin each of the strategic priorities described in this plan. It will be an iterative plan, and we will add new actions as new issues, risks and opportunities emerge during the year. Sponsors for the strategic priorities will be accountable to the Trust Board, through the Chief Executive, and the Trust will be accountable to the Council for progress.

In order to ensure effective delivery of this plan we are redesigning Assistant Director roles and responsibilities for implementation from 1 April 2019.

Looking ahead, the key elements of transformation will include:

- Care, edge of care and alternatives: strengthening and extending hours of the Edge of Care team; investment in family-based decision-making and in families' ability to find solutions and build plans for their children; releasing resource properly to support family plans.



- More generally, we will embed family meetings and family group conferences (FGCs) as a key plank of our decision-making and ensure resources are oriented around supporting family plans.
- Family placement transformation: recruitment and retention; fee structures; developing an innovative proposition for working in a regional adoption agency (RAA) model; exploring different strategic partnership models for delivering and supporting more Trust carers.
- Contextual safeguarding: implementing new models for delivering service to, and managing risks faced by, vulnerable adolescents at risk from exploitation, gangs, drugs, 'county lines'. We recognise traditional models are not fit for purpose and we are developing models with partners for a new and different approach.
- We will play a key role in building and strengthening strategic and operational partnerships working across the city.
- Transforming the children's judicial system in Birmingham: we have agreed with the senior District Judge a system review to support swifter and more effective decision-making in the courts. Trust and confidence between stakeholders needs to be rebuilt.
- A review of our structural arrangements. They have served improvement well since 2015-16, but we are stronger now and need to review these in the context of:
  - Exploring different management roles within the team structure.
  - Reducing the number of changes of social worker that children and families still experience.
  - Exploring the introduction of allied professionals into social work teams: adult mental health, domestic abuse, substance Misuse: we see the impact this has had in CASS/MASH and want to exploit wider opportunities across the service.
  - Building stronger local connections with our partners in schools, health, police etc.



- We need to review and improve progression pathways for social workers, linking pay and non-pay rewards, the development of a social work academy with higher education (HE) partners, improving our learning and development/continuing professional development offer.
- We will be delivering a bespoke leadership and management development programme beginning in March 2019 for all practice leaders and senior leaders in the Trust. We will not get the traction we need through small numbers of managers gaining places on nationally accredited programmes.
- We will continue to work with the 'What Works' Centre on a number of significant projects including understanding the impact of first line management supervision on family outcomes and child protection decision making.

We continue to be ambitious for the Trust and we believe that the priorities set out in the Development Plan are the right ones to drive improvements further.

Jenny Turnross  
Director of Practice  
Birmingham Children's Trust

## Development Plan 2019/20

	<u>Lead(s)</u>	Progress Update	Date to complete	RAG Status
<b>Strategic Priority 1</b>				
<b>The quality, effectiveness and pace of partnership working with external agencies, including partner-led early help services</b>				
<b>Sponsor – Director of Practice, Birmingham Children's Trust</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board to ensure the implementation of the revised Early Help Strategy including robust expectations across partner agencies to strengthen the Early Help Offer.</li> <li>Work with West Midlands Police to improve collaboration in respect of s47 investigations and resulting child protection processes.</li> <li>Review and strengthen step up/step down protocol across the Trust.</li> <li>Work with partners in understanding city-wide early help services so that partners can assure themselves that the partnership is responding to families in need of support effectively.</li> </ul>				
1. Develop bespoke training for 'Lead Practitioners' (across the partnership) and toolkit to support the role.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice		April 2019	
2. Develop a web based portal and suite of documents (EHA, Plan, Impact tool) which will allow the registration and monitoring of assessments and plans onto the Trust case management data base via the portal.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice		June 2019	
3. Development of e-learning Early Help Module.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice		April 2019	
4. Review and strengthen step down arrangements to universal services across the Trust.	HoS, Think Family/Family Support		July 2019	





	<u>Lead(s)</u>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Date to complete</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
5. Think Family transformation across the City to focus partnership intervention on the most vulnerable families and capture progress overtime to meet Birmingham's outcomes for families.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice		March 2020	
6. Present proposal for roll out of the 'Outcome Star' to the Early Help Safeguarding Partnership. This will support our understanding of the effectiveness of early help.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice		March 2019	
7. Practice Evaluation to focus on re-referrals Feb 2019, feedback from this will determine further actions, including policy and practice developments.	Area AD HoS, CASS		March 2019	G
8. Quarterly case auditing to ensure that agency checks are consistently completed when children are referred to the Trust.	Area AD HoS, ASTI East HoS, CASS		Commences February 2019	
9. Quarterly case auditing to review partner engagement.	Area AD		Commences February 2019	
10. Develop protocol to review and escalate cases at critical milestones to ensure a robust reviewing system of child protection plans.	AD, Safeguarding		April 2019	
11. Extend the current step up-down protocol to include universal services	HoS, Think Family/Family Support HoS, ASTI East		July 2019	
12. Quarterly case auditing programme to review cases that have stepped up/down to ensure threshold has been applied appropriately.	HoS, Think Family/Family Support Acting HoS, Think Family/Family Support Acting HoS, ASTI South HoS, Safeguarding North, West & Central		Commences March 2019	
13. The Trust will undertake an audit programme of 30 children to determine where a decision to undertake a joint visit was followed through.	HoS, ASTI North, West & Central		March 2019	
14. Excercise to map out wider partnership offer across Birmingham City and ensure this aligns with need, to include a review of the wider family support offer.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice Area AD		July 2019	



**Strategic Priority 2**

**Trust and confidence between the courts and Birmingham Children's Trust**

**Sponsor – Director of Finance and Resources**

- Ensure the current processes within Birmingham Children's Trust enable best practice to be achieved in respect of pre and court proceedings.
- Develop and improve relationships between Birmingham Children's Trust, CAFCASS and the Judiciary to ensure a collaborative case management approach.
- Ensure that Birmingham Children's Trust staff have the necessary skills and expertise to effectively manage cases through the court process.

15. Pre-Proceedings Improvement Project to ensure effective management oversight and progression.	Head of Legal Services Area AD AD, Practice Improvement		June 2019	
16. Review of the Legal Tracker Tool and reporting processes to monitor performance in respect of pre/court and post proceedings.	AD, Practice Improvement		February 2019	<b>G</b>
17. Project group to improve relationships between social care and legal teams.	Head of Legal Services Area AD AD, Practice Improvement		June 2019	
18. Review of Trust Legal Services structure and delivery model.	Head of Legal Services		June 2019	
19. Independent Review of Birmingham Court process (commenced).	AD, Practice Improvement		April 2019	
20. Project group to review practice delivery of the family and friends policy to ensure that assessments are completed appropriately.	Head of Legal Services AD, Practice Improvement		May 2019	
21. Implement programme of shared learning events with CAFCASS to improve relationships and performance.	Area AD AD, Practice Improvement		April 2019	
22. Refresh the permanence policy followed by a number of events to ensure that the concept of permanence is fully embedded in practice.	AD, Practice Improvement		May 2019	
23. Ensure that any legacy/delays are responded to by the Trust, the judiciary and CAFCASS.	Area AD		April 2019	



**Strategic Priority 3**

**Improve the effectiveness of the fostering service**

**Sponsor – Director of Commissioning and Corporate Parenting**

- Ensure the fostering service has the capacity to deliver a robust and effective provision.
- Ensure that the issues identified in the recent fostering inspection (published February 2019) are addressed.
- Ensure that the fostering service functions as an Independent Fostering Service with a clear business model in place.
- Improve the quality and sufficiency of foster carers, including the out of hours response to children who need care.

24. Review of the disruption process and protocol to ensure learning and improvements in practice.	AD, Practice Improvement AD, Placements		April 2019	
25. Review the current structure and operating model for the Placement and Fostering Service (including recruitment of a range of carers, short term matching and assessments).	AD, Placements		April 2019	
26. Delivery of Fostering Action Plan in response to Ofsted Inspection January 2019.	AD, Placements		April 2019	
27. Review all policies and processes around long term fostering (planning, family finding and matching).	AD, Placements		February 2019	
28. Redesign the Emergency Duty Team Edge of Care Service to ensure an effective out of hours response to children needing care.	AD, Placements		February 2019	
29. Review the quality of and response to family and friends placements to ensure that children can safely live within their extended families where appropriate.	AD, Placements		February 2019	
30. Ensure that the Fostering Service has a comprehensive service delivery plan.	AD, Placements		April 2019	
31. Develop and implement the Placements Strategy.	AD, Placements		April 2019	
32. Review our residential offer to ensure that services are contemporary and available to children who will benefit.	AD, Placements		commences May 2019	



**Strategic Priority 4**

**Ensure a robust and timely focus on all permanence options for children**

**Sponsor – Director of Practice**

- Ensure the current processes within Birmingham Children's Trust enable permanence to be achieved at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that Birmingham Children's Trust workforce have the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out best practice around permanence planning.

33. Review Eclipse training guidance around uploading direct work to ensure this is appropriate and available to the workforce.	AD, Practice Improvement		Mar 2019	
34. Trust Practice Hub to review the resources and delivery of direct work across the Trust.	AD, Practice Improvement		June 2019	
35. Review the policy for the escalation of cases if a permanence plan is not progressing.	AD, Practice Improvement AD, Safeguarding		Mar 2019	
36. Review the current delivery and effectiveness of Lifestory work across the Trust.	AD, Practice Improvement		April 2019	
37. Review of current process around advocacy resources and delivery.	Head of Participation & Engagement AD, Safeguarding		May 2019	
38. Launch of Trust Permanence policy and strategy.	AD, Practice Improvement		May 2019	
39. Review the current Family Group Conferencing Structure to determine capability to deliver an effective service.	AD, Practice Improvement		March 2019	



**Strategic Priority 5**  
**Align the approach to Contextual Safeguarding**

**Sponsor – Director of Practice**

- Implement a specialised centre for practice to deliver an effective multi-agency approach to Contextual Safeguarding.

40. Design and develop a project brief for a specialised HUB to deliver an effective multi-agency approach to Contextual Safeguarding.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice Area AD		February 2019	<b>G</b>
41. Trust Contextual Safeguarding Hub launch.	AD, Early Help and Youth Justice Area AD		September 2019	
42. Review of current practice and delivery of Return Home interviews.	Team Manager, Exploitations and Missing		April 2019	

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**Strategic Priority 6**

**The impact of the virtual school in improving provision for children in care**

**Sponsor – Director of Children's Services Birmingham City Council**

- Narrow the attainment gap for children in care at all key stages through the setting of individualised targets.
- Strengthen the integrated monitoring tracking system within the ePEP to secure improved pupil progress and outcomes.
- Strengthen the governance of the Virtual School to ensure the needs of vulnerable pupils are being met.

43. Ensure all children in care at pre-school, reception and all key stages have termly PEPs which are at least good or outstanding.	AD Education and Early Help Head of Virtual School		Sept 2019	
44. Strengthen cohort overview data for Year 6 OC2 cohort which supports the identification of individual and groups of children in care and improve the targetting of resources to secure appropriate outcomes.	AD Education and Early Help Head of Virtual School		April 2019	
45. Strengthen the targeted approach of the Year 11 cohort to secure recognised qualifications in English and Maths. Ensure Virtual School workers set Maths/English targets for these young people at each of their ePEP meetings and update secondary phase group on the progress of these targets throughout the year.	AD Education and Early Help Head of Virtual School		April 2019	
46. Develop the baseline management tool of the ePEP and embed the ePEP reports in the review system across the service.	AD Education and Early Help Head of Virtual School		April 2019	
47. Develop attendance surgeries with children in care teams across the city.	AD Education and Early Help Head of Virtual School		July 2019	
48. Embed regular evaluation of the Virtual School to ensure intended outcomes are being achieved and to inform future planning.	AD Education and Early Help Head of Virtual School		March 2019	



**Strategic Priority 7  
Practice Improvement**

**Sponsor - Director of Practice**

- Ensure a focus on evaluating practice and applying learning across all Trust services to secure consistent delivery and standards.

49. Launch of 2019/2020 Practice Evaluation Programme (Focus on targeted themes including planning and decision making).	AD, Practice Improvement HoS, Practice Improvement		Commences May 2019	
50. Launch of 2019/2020 Principal Social Work Programme to improve performance and practice.	AD, Practice Improvement Acting HoS, Practice Improvement		Mar 2020	
51. Learning from Practice Week and Practice Evaluations to be distributed in a variety of formats to improve practice development.	AD, Practice Improvement		Jun 2019	
52. Review of Tri.x manual to ensure this is aligned to Trust culture, language and procedures.	AD, Practice Improvement		July 2019	
53. Review and relaunch of Quality Assurance Framework.	AD, Practice Improvement		Apr 2019	
54. Launch of 2019/2020 Performance and Intelligence delivery programme to ensure data and intelligence are consistently used effectively to improve practice development.	AD, Practice Improvement Performance and Intelligence Manager		Apr 2019	
55. Launch of 2019/2020 of Trust Academy Programme to ensure comprehensive training offer is available to the development and progression of staff.	AD, Practice Improvement Learning & Development Manager		Apr 2019	
56. Review of service structures beginning with a refresh of assistant director roles to ensure that staff are well deployed and services are targeted.	Director of Practice		Commences February 2019	
57. Introduce multi-disciplinary teams to area teams to ensure that children and families receive the support they need.	Area AD		Commences April 2019	



**Strategic Priority 8**  
**Workforce**

**Sponsor - Director of Practice and Director of Finance and Resources**

- Ensure high quality recruitment and retention of staff underpinned by coherent and effective policies and learning and development.

58. To ensure an effective approach to recruitment which delivers to the Trust's objectives and People Strategy, and ensure we have robust induction process at all levels.	Head of HR		May 2019	
59. To deliver a clean and transparent pay offer and attractive rewards package which improves retention and supports our recruitment aim.	Head of HR		June 2019	
60. To review HR policies and procedures across a number of priority areas including agile working; absence management; disciplinary; capability; and grievance.	Head of HR		September 2019	
61. A review of the Learning & Development Strategy to underpin the Practice Hub and promote excellence in social work practice.	AD, Practice Improvement		July 2019	
62. To implement a Social Worker Academy and a Trust (Leadership and Management) Academy to maintain and develop skills across the Trust.	AD, Practice Improvement (support from Corporate Heads of Service)		April 2019	





## Children's Social Care O&S Committee: Work Programme 2018/19

**Chair:** Cllr Mohammed Aikhlaq

**Deputy Chair:** Cllr Diane Donaldson

**Committee Members:** Cllrs: Debbie Clancy, Shabrina Hussain, Morriam Jan, Kerry Jenkins, Kath Scott and Alex Yip

**Officer Support:** Rose Kiely, Group Overview & Scrutiny Manager (303 1730)  
Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer (675 8444)  
Sarah Stride, Committee Manager (303 0709)

### 1 Terms of Reference

- 1.1 To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning the Children's Trust, vulnerable children, corporate parenting and other child social care and safeguarding functions of the council.

### 2 Priority Issues and Items to be Scheduled

- 2.1 The following were highlighted in June as the possible priority issues for the committee's 2017/18 municipal year:
- Children's Trust – July 2018, December 2018, February 2019, March 2019, March 2019 committee meetings and a visit in September 2018.
  - Safeguarding - to include the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board Annual report in October 2018, Youth Justice Strategic Plan in January 2019 and contextual safeguarding in March 2019.
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - October 2018, December 2018 and an update in February 2019 at the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee.
  - Early Years, Health and Wellbeing contract – to be scheduled.
  - Update on the Children Missing from Home and Care Inquiry – 13 March 2019 (included in the contextual safeguarding item).
  - Corporate Parenting – the Corporate Parenting Board Annual report and an update on progress with the Corporate Parenting Inquiry recommendations will be discussed in April 2019. Also, the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing is the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS) and the LMCS and the Director of Children's Services (DCS) have a shared responsibility with all officers and members of the local authority to act as effective and



caring corporate parents for Children in Care. The Cabinet Member attended the December 2018 committee meeting to provide an update on her portfolio.

### 3 Meeting Schedule

3.1 Below is the list of potential committee dates and Members may want to use some of these dates for other things other than committee meetings, such as visits, informal briefings etc.

All at 10 am	Session / Outcome	Officers / Attendees
20 June 2018 in committee room 6	Informal meeting to discuss the Work Programme and priorities.	Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust; Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive, Children's Trust; Sarah Sinclair, Interim AD, Commissioning; Natalie Loon, Corporate Parenting Coordinator.
25 July 2018 committee room 6	Cllr Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing.	Suman McCarthy.
Report Deadline: 16 July 2018	Children's Trust briefing and discussion.	Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive; Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive; Sarah Sinclair, Interim AD, Commissioning; Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help; David Bishop, Head of Service.
19 September 2018	Visit to the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) to observe the work of the Children's Trust.	Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive, Children's Trust; Rachel McCartan, Head of Service, CASS.
17 October 2018 committee rooms 3 & 4	Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB) Annual Report.	Penny Thompson, Chair of BSCB; Simon Cross, Business Manager.
Report Deadline: 8 October 2018	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)  Cllrs Kath Scott and Martin Straker-Welds were in attendance from the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee.	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People; Rachel O'Connor, Director of Planning & Performance, Birmingham and Solihull CCG.
14 November 2018 committee rooms 3 & 4	Travel Assist  Cllr Kath Scott, Cllr Mary Locke and Rabia Shami were in attendance from the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee.	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People; Sharon Scott, Acting AD for SEND; Jennifer Langan, Travel Assist Lead; Suman McCarthy, CSO.
Report Deadline: 5 November 2018		



All at 10 am	Session / Outcome	Officers / Attendees
12 December 2018 committee rooms 3 & 4  Report Deadline: 3 December 2018	Children's Trust report (10am – 11am).	Andrew Christie, Chair; Andy Couldrick, CEX; Professor Jon Glasby, Non-Executive Director.
	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Update (11am – 12).  To provide an update on portfolio (including the budget proposals).	Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People; Suman McCarthy, CSO.
17 December 2018 Ellen Pinsent committee room	Request for Call In: Written Statement of Action (WSOA) – Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).  Cllr Kath Scott was in attendance from the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee.  Background documents including the action plan and risk assessment to be circulated to Members. The action plan was circulated on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2019 and the risk register was circulated on 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2019.	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People.
8 January 2019 at 1pm committee rooms 3 & 4	Request for Call In: Travel Assist Service  The risk register was circulated to Members on the 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2019.	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People.
16 January 2019 committee room 2  Report Deadline: 7 January 2019	Youth Justice Strategic Plan (annual)  Members from the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee were invited for this item as it is linked to the work of the Community Safety Partnership.  The plan then went to City Council.	Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help and Trevor Brown, Head Of Youth Offending Service.
13 February 2019 committee room 2  Report Deadline: 4 February 2019	Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care Services	Andrew Christie, Chair, Andy Couldrick, CEX, Children's Trust and Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing.
	Update on the Child Poverty Action Forum	Councillor John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equalities; Prof Simon Pemberton, Co-Chair and Suwinder Bains, Cohesion and Partnerships Manager; Marcia Wynter, Cabinet Support Officer



All at 10 am	Session / Outcome	Officers / Attendees
13 March 2019 committee room 2  Report Deadline: 4 March 2019	Contextual Safeguarding (to include coverage of missing children, CSE and FGM and the front door arrangements)  Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing sends her apologies.	Dr Tim O'Neill, Director for Education and Skills (has the statutory role of being the Director of Children's Services) and Senior Trust Managers (Dawn Roberts, AD Early Help, Rachel McCartan, Head of Service, CASS and Karen N Brookes, Exploitations & Missing Team Manager) will be in attendance.  Marshelene Williams, AD Children's Services North West Central has sent her apologies and Irfan Alam, AD may be attending.  Superintendents Paul Drover & Matt Shaer, West Midlands Police may be in attendance.
	Birmingham Children's Trust Development Plan 2019/20 incorporating actions following the Ofsted Inspection of Birmingham Children's Social Care Services December 2018  Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing sends her apologies.	Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust and Dr Tim O'Neill, Director for Education and Skills in attendance.
17 April 2019 committee room 6  Report Deadline: 8 April 2019	Corporate Parenting Board report (annual) and a progress update on the Corporate Parenting Inquiry recommendations (R02, R03 & R04)	Andy Pepper, AD, Children in Care Provider Services and Natalie Loon, Corporate Parenting Manager

## 4 Other Meetings

### Call in Meetings

17 December 2018 – Written Statement of Action (WSOA)  
8 January 2019 - Travel Assist Service

### Petitions

None scheduled

### Councillor Call for Action requests

None scheduled

It is suggested that the Committee approves Wednesday at 10.00am as a suitable day and time each week for any additional meetings required to consider 'requests for call in' which may be lodged in respect of Executive decisions.



## 5 Report to City Council / Pieces of Work

5.1 Update on Children's Trust - Members to discuss the timings for City Council.

## 6 Outstanding Tracking

Inquiry	Outstanding Recommendations	Date of Tracking
Children Missing from Home and Care  12 January 2016 report to City Council	R2 – Develop an overarching strategy for missing children so responsibilities are clear and understood, <b>risk is managed well, especially for looked after children and persistent runaways, information is shared effectively and appropriate support is in place for children and families.</b>	Update received: 12 October 2016, 26 April 2017 and 18 October 2017
Corporate Parenting  4 April 2017 report to City Council	R1 – R7 Update on recommendations due on 13 March 2019	Update rec'd 18 Oct 17 & Annual Report 14 Feb 18
<p>R01 - Councillors to commit to at least one activity from the 'menu of involvement'. This will then be published on the Council's website. A follow-up survey will be undertaken by the Scrutiny Office in nine months requesting an update from Councillors on this. Responsibility - All Councillors, by April 2017 (Achieved – late).</p> <p>R02 - The menu of involvement for Councillors is developed into a corporate parenting handbook for Councillors for May 2018. This will include providing Councillors with examples of how they can undertake each task. Responsibility: Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools by May 2018 (this was in progress at the last update).</p> <p>R03 - Training is offered to Councillors in the first couple of weeks of becoming a Councillor. Responsibility: Deputy Leader by May 2018 (in progress at the last update).</p> <p>R04 - Every children's home in Birmingham that has a Birmingham child in care is visited by the end of July 2017 and the District Corporate Parent Champions ensure this happens. Responsibility: District Corporate Parent Champions by July 2017 (Not Achieved - Progress Made at the last update).</p> <p>R05 - Supporting documentation for completing cabinet reports includes a requirement that consideration is given as to any impact of the proposals on children in care. If there are likely impacts, the cabinet report should include this in the body of the report. Responsibility: Cabinet Member for Transparency, Openness and Equality by October 2017 (Achieved).</p> <p>R06 - The AD, Children in Care Provider Services presents an annual Corporate Parenting Board report to the Schools, Children and Families O&amp;S Committee. Responsibility: Cabinet Member for Children, Families &amp; Schools by Feb 2018 (Annual report received 14 February 2018).</p>		



## 7 Useful Acronyms

ASTI = Assessment and Short Term Intervention	EHE = Elective Home Education	SEN = Special Educational Needs
BEP = Birmingham Education Partnership	FGM = Female Genital Mutilation	SENAR = SEN Assessment and Review
BSCB = Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board	Key Stage 1 (Ages 5-7) Years 1 and 2	SENDIASS = SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
CAFCASS = Child & Family Court Advisory Support Service	Key Stage 2 (Ages 7-11) Years 3, 4, 5 & 6	SENCO = Special Educational Needs Coordinator
CAMHS = Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	Key Stage 3 (Ages 11-14) Years 7, 8 & 9	SEND = Special Educational Needs and Disability
CASS = Children's Advice and Support Service	Key Stage 4 (Ages 14-16) Years 10 & 11	SGOs = Special Guardianship Orders
CICC = Children in Care Council	Key Stage 5 (ages 16 – 18)	UASC = Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
COBS = City of Birmingham School	MASH = Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	YOT = Youth Offending Team
CSE = Child Sexual Exploitation	NEET = Not in Education, Employment or Training	
	NRPF = No Recourse to Public Funds	
	Ofsted = Office for Standards in Education	

## 8 Forward Plan for Cabinet Decisions

8.1 The following decisions, extracted from the Cabinet Office Forward Plan of Decisions, are likely to be relevant to the Children's Social Care O&S Committee's remit.

ID Number	Title	Cabinet Member	Proposed Date	Date of Decision
005164/2018	T023 – Provision of Transport Services (Contract Extension)	Children's Wellbeing	26 Jun 18	26 Jun 18
005447/2018	Council Run Day Nurseries – Public Report	Children's Wellbeing	11 Dec 18	11 Dec 18
005639/2018	Options for Next Stage of Early Years Health & Wellbeing Contract	Children's Wellbeing	14 May 19	
005729/2018	Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2018-19	Children's Wellbeing	11 Dec 18	11 Dec 18
005449/2018	Travel Assist Service	Education, Skills & Culture	11 Dec 18	11 Dec 18
006186/2019	Ofsted Inspection of Birmingham Children's Social Care Services December 2018	Children's Wellbeing	-	12 Feb 19
006102/2019	Travel Assist Service	Children's Wellbeing	16 Apr 19	
006187/2019	Action Plan in Response to Ofsted Inspection of Birmingham Children's Social Care Services December 2018	Children's Wellbeing	16 Apr 19	

8.2 The following are joint decisions made by the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Officers.

Ref No	Title	Cabinet Member & Lead Officer	Date of Decision
005968/2018	Written Statement of Action (WSOA) - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) - Public Report	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Jointly with Sharon Scott, Interim Assistant Director - SEND	7 Dec 2018
005969/2018	Private Report		