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To: The Chair and Members of the Children's
Scrutiny Committee

County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QD

Date: 10 January 2022

Contact: Stephanie Lewis 01392 382486

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CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18th January, 2022

A meeting of the Children's Scrutiny Committee is to be held on the above date at 2.15pm in the Council Chamber - County Hall to consider the following matters.

Phil Norrey
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

PART I - OPEN COMMITTEE

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)
Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2021, (previously circulated) and the notes from the 9 December 2021 Standing Overview Group meeting, attached.
- 3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention
Items which in the opinion of the Chair should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.
- 4 Public Participation
Members of the public may make representations/presentations on any substantive matter listed in the published agenda for this meeting, as set out hereunder, relating to a specific matter or an examination of services or facilities provided or to be provided.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION OR REVIEW

5 Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

In accordance with previous practice, Scrutiny Committees are requested to review the list of forthcoming business and determine which items are to be included in the [Work Programme](#).

The Committee may also wish to review the content of the [Cabinet Forward Plan](#) and the Children's Services [Risk Register](#) to see if there are any specific items therein it might wish to explore further.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

6 Front Door Review (Pages 7 - 10)

Report of the Head of Children's Social Care and Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing, attached.

7 Early Help Review (Pages 11 - 18)

Report of the Head of Children's Social Care and Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing, attached.

8 Children's Services Performance Report (Pages 19 - 34)

Report of the Chief Officer for Children's Services covering Children's Social Care and Education, attached.

9 Schools Covid Update

A verbal update from the Head of Education and Learning.

10 Information Previously Circulated

Below is a list of information previously circulated for Members, since the last meeting, relating to topical developments which have been or are currently being considered by this Scrutiny Committee.

- Written response on Pocket Money and allowances (17th Nov)
- Written responses to Kevin's KLOE from Nov Committee (17th Nov)
- Future of Social Care Report from CCN (22nd Nov)
- Chair's Briefing - Eclipse (23rd Nov)
- Referral's written responses (7th Dec)
- LGSCO Ombudsman Draft Report (8th Dec)
- Richard Devine's Social Work Blog - Arthur Labinjo-Hughes (8th Dec)
- School Transport Pressures (10 January 2022)
- 2021 Spending Review Summary (10 January 2022)

[Briefing notes](#)

PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Nil

Members are reminded that Part II Reports contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). They need to be disposed of carefully and should be returned to the Democratic Services Officer at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.

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Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair. Filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible without additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to the wishes of others present who may not wish to be filmed. Anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance.

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It is to be noted that Members of the Council must declare any interest they may have in any item to be considered at this meeting, prior to any discussion taking place on that item.

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Induction Loop available



Report of the Children's Scrutiny Committee Standing Overview Group of Thursday 9th December 2021

1. Introduction

The Standing Overview Group of the Children's Scrutiny Committee or Children's Standing Overview Group (CSOG) meets regularly as an informal information sharing and member development session where issues are presented to the councillors to raise awareness and increase knowledge. The Children's Standing Overview Group considers key updates and pertinent issues from across different services, with the aim of developing Members' knowledge, and bringing to the forefront any areas which may benefit from further scrutiny.

The items on the agenda for Children's Standing Overview Group meetings, as per the Children's Scrutiny Action Plan, are strictly related to the Improvement Journey of Children's Services. To that end, the Children's Standing Overview Group regularly receives an update on the service's Improvement Plan and has a focus topic, where a topical or pressing issue is explored in more depth.

This report outlines the topic(s) covered at the meeting, highlights the key points raised during discussion and details any agreed actions. These are reported back to the next formal Committee meeting.

2. Recommendation

The Children's Scrutiny Committee considers this report as an accurate record of the meeting and agrees the outlined actions raised during the discussion including any addition of the highlighted issues of concern to the future work programme.

3. Attendance

Children's Scrutiny Committee Members: Councillors Rob Hannaford (Chair), Philip Sanders (Vice Chair), Su Aves, Janet Bradford, Phil Bullivant, Christine Channon, Jonathan Hawkins, Frank Letch, Lois Samuel, Margaret Squires and Mrs Christina Mabin.

Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Schools: Councillor Andrew Leadbetter.

Children's Services Officers: Melissa Caslake (Chief Officer for Children's Services), Dawn Stabb (Head of Education and Learning), Lisa Bursill (Head of Children's Social Care), Janet Fraser (Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing), Debbie Raymond (Improvement Director), Victoria Bendle (Senior Policy and Executive Support Officer).

DfE Improvement Advisor and Chair of Improvement Partnership Board: Alastair Gibbons.

Leeds Relational Practice Centre: Gail Faulkner, John Maynard.

LGA Children's Improvement Advisor: Claire Burgess.

Special Advisor: Kevin Crompton.

Scrutiny Officer: Charlie Fisher.

4. Summary of Discussion and Actions

4.1 Improvement Plan Monitoring

Melissa Caslake, Chief Officer for Children's Services; Lisa Bursill, Head of Children's Social Care; and Janet Fraser, Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing updated Members on the Ofsted Improvement Plan and Monitoring Update.

Officers updated Members on the overview of this phase of the Improvement Plan and the Department for Education (DfE) Improvement Advisor and Chair of the Improvement Partnership, Alastair Gibbons, attended to answer questions from Members. In addition, Members were updated on work with Leeds Relational Practice Centre in the Sector Led Improvement Partnership (SLIP), the ongoing reviews of the Front Door (Early Help, MASH and Initial Response Team) conducted by the service and the findings and recommendations from the DfE's recent 6-month review.

Initially, Members received an overview of the Improvement Partnership and the Chair of the Improvement Partnership informed Members of the new Terms of Reference for the Partnership, starting in 2022. The Partnership will meet bi-monthly to ensure more time between meetings to progress the Improvement Plan. All four of the Improvement Plan's priority are now RAG rated 'Amber'. Recent achievements have been the awarding of substantial grants from the DfE and the implementation of the new senior leadership team with Lisa Bursill and Janet Fraser as additional Deputy Chief Officers to compliment the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer. Overall, officers reported that the foundations were now in place to continue to drive improvement, outcomes for children across the partnership and were optimistic about the future.

The Head of Children's Social Care and the Head of Children's Health and Wellbeing presented to Members on the 8-week Action Plan on the Front Door (Early Help, MASH and IRT). The three areas were look at together to ensure the entirety of the Front Door system was reviewed.

Finally, the Chief Officer appraised Members of the DfE 6 Month review which had happened a few weeks before the meeting. The DfE were positive about direction of travel and restorative approach and saw the beginnings of optimism and confidence going forward. The DfE recognised the impact of the permanent, visible leadership team but raised concerns about caseloads and process driven practice.

Member discussion points and questions raised:

- The communication between Scrutiny and the Improvement Partnership and it's overall effectiveness. This was the first time Mr Gibbons had been invited to meet with Scrutiny and he stated he was happy to continue to communicate with Scrutiny at future meetings. He commented on effectiveness of Improvement Boards in that they initially focus on assurance and fixing the concerns Ofsted have raised but need to move into a different phase of driving improvement and focusing on outcomes for children, something Devon's Improvement Partnership is now looking to do. Other officers commented that for Scrutiny to help the Improvement Partnership, Scrutiny needs to be focused on what is happening in practice and assure itself using performance data. In addition, using the key challenges (e.g., Recruitment and Retention, Caseloads, Quality of Practice) to inform Scrutiny's agenda to ensure we work together with the other governance arrangements and avoid duplication.

Agenda Item 2

Children's Scrutiny Committee
18th January 2022

- Officers were asked about the successes of the first Improvement Plan and the priorities of the plan going forward. Some of these successes included a permanent leadership team for Children's Social Care, Restorative Practice and the awarding of grants to support this and the areas where Ofsted had identified in their focused visit: care leavers and care proceedings. The Improvement Partnership is now looking at the system wide improvements, rather than fixing the issues in the inadequate judgement.
- In a similar question, Members wanted to learn from our partners in Leeds, what should Scrutiny be looking at to support Officers? Officers from LRPT commented that key for Members to know what is going on is to have dialogue with Officers and ensure regular metrics are seen so Members can see for themselves if things are getting better. In addition, making use of case studies as insights on what is happening in practice. Topic wise, officers suggested pre-birth assessments, the experience of children in domestic abuse situations and continuing to focus on recruitment and retention and affordable housing.
- Members asked about Restorative Practice and if it is the right approach for Devon to be taking? Officers commented there are several value and strength-based models which focus on working with families to help them take responsibility. Devon has started its journey using Restorative Practice and is now working to ensure it is understood, embedded, and delivered. Staff are enthusiastic about using this model and want to continue to work to embed Restorative Devon.
- Members asked for assurances if the 8 Week Plan and Restorative Practice can be delivered and are not just list of wish list of planned improvements. Officers commented that Recruitment and Retention of social workers continues to be a concern and while progress has been made, we still need to bring our agency rate down. Affordable housing is a concern shared by Members and Officers and featured heavily at the most recent Full Council meeting where Members discussed a notice of motion relating to the creation of a Team Devon Housing Strategic Taskforce.
- Evidencing progress and ensuring that Members see the key performance metrics. Officers commented that progress has been made on reporting Children's Social Care data to Committee meetings, but offered further discussion on what metrics, data, audit, case studies, etc. Scrutiny sees at CSOG meetings concerning the Improvement Partnership.
- If the Council and Children's Services are making the most of the work with Leeds and we are getting best value from their time working with us. Officers from LRPT highlighted Devon's energy and enthusiasm in their work, our officers have accepted and acknowledged what had happened and that we are making some good early progress – "green shoots of progress". Devon's officers agreed and highlighted that Leeds had been on a similar journey to Devon and we want to draw on their experiences.
- Our relationship with the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) and if we had provided our relationship? Officers responded that it was a significant weakness in our 2020 Ofsted Inspection, but the relationship has significantly improved. We are exploring a practice review with the service to work better together.

Action: Scrutiny Officer to add Domestic Violence and Abuse to potential future topics on the work programme.

4.2 Focus Topic: Restorative Devon

Debbie Raymond, Improvement Director, gave an overview of Restorative Practice and work going on to embed the practice in Devon. Restorative Practice is a programme our work includes three different strands: working with Leeds Relational Practice Centre (LRPC), the £2.2m DfE Transformational grant to help capacity and funding to explore innovation practice models (Mockingbird and Pause). Restorative Practice is a value-based theory of human change, built on the basis that behaviour is most receptive to change when we work with people in a collaborative high support / challenge approach, building on existing strengths, while providing clear guidance about expectations.

Gail Faulkner and John Maynard from the LRPC shared Leeds' improvement journey from 'Inadequate' in 2010 to 'Outstanding' and the lessons they have learnt in creating a 'Child Friendly Leeds'. The key learnings passed on to Members was that improvement journeys take time, culture and systems need to change and evolve to embed a shared vision and the importance of building engagement and enthusiasm from partners to create a shared vision.

Members were enthusiastic about the future and proposals to make Devon a child friendly county and a fantastic place to grow up as part of the 'Child Friendly Devon' vision. Members recognised the part they needed to play to mobilise the vision, make links between partners and were "excited" to see the vision develop and offered their support to the Cabinet Member and Officers in ensuring we make the 'Child Friendly Devon' a reality.

Member discussion points:

- Members discussed the training of staff on restorative practice and why it hasn't been embedded despite being a Restorative county since 2018. Officers commented that while there was training, the culture of the service didn't support working restoratively. Staff feel knowledgeable on working restoratively but we need to ensure they are able to practice restoratively and not process led practice as they are used to. Members discussed the importance of ensuring social workers were empowered by the training and ensuring they are able to put their training into practice.
- Members and Officers from LRPC asked about their experiences in getting a 'whole county approach', understanding that Devon has multiple tiers of local government, to ensure everyone has children on their agenda. Officers advised Members that the best way to do this initially is to get interested people in a room to start discussions. From their experience, their advice was to start by organising to get interested in a room to discuss ways of helping and allowing it to grow from there. Leeds found that businesses and organisations were very interested in helping and wanted to do things to help the children of Leeds. Organisations and Businesses offer support to different groups such as tickets to sporting events for foster families.

Action: Members to discuss how best to promote 'Child Friendly Devon' in their divisions, making best use of their current partnerships and links to their communities, local businesses and organisations as community leaders.

5. Next Meetings

The next meeting of the Children's Standing Overview Group is scheduled for Monday 21st February 2022.

The meeting began at 3.00pm and ended at 4.45pm

Agenda Item 2

Children's Scrutiny Committee
18th January 2022

Councillor Rob Hannaford
Chair, Children's Scrutiny Committee

Electoral Divisions: All

Contact for Enquiries: Charlie Fisher - charlie.fisher@devon.gov.uk / 01392 383691

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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DCC Front Door Priority Action Plan

Priorities

Early Help

Children are receiving the right help/intervention by the right service at the right time

Pathways for early help support are clear which enable families to access timely support

Wider Early Help Offer is clear to practitioners and families across the partnership

Children's naturally connected network of support is identified and mobilized to support.

MASH

All children's contacts are recorded on the relevant children's social care recording system

Thresholds are well understood by the partnership and practitioners

Referral pathways are clear and children are not held in the front door awaiting a service

Ensure that there are robust responses to pre mobile/unborn children referred into the front door

Strategy Discussions/meetings are held appropriately, in a timely way and children are routinely seen and their lived experience sought.

IRT

Children are allocated to a Social Worker and are being seen

Children are receiving the right help/intervention by the right service at the right time

Social Workers have workloads that enable effective relationship-based practice and effective management oversight

Assessments accurately capture the lived experience of children in timescales appropriate to their needs

8 - Week Priority Action

Early Help

Page 9

- Review children open to teams for a period of 6 months or longer, and take appropriate action in providing support
- Address current blockages within system to ensure practitioners/managers have the tools/resources available to them.
- Produce pathway documents and guidance for Early Help outcomes within MASH
- Develop resources and guidance on identify and mobilizing family networks, followed by training in the spring
- Develop multi-agency EH Strategy

MASH

- Work in partnership with OLM to develop a contact in Eclipse that supports the recording of all children
- Review the current threshold document ensure it is well embedded, understood and communicated to All staff
- Produce and MASH practice guidance detailing referral pathways for children coming through the MASH
- Develop a pre-birth guidance, embed new process and roll out workshops to all staff.
- Analyse recent audit activity, circulate updated guidance, set up a task & finish group to take forward audit recommendations

IRT

- Identify all children awaiting referral decision, unallocated and/or allocated to managers in each locality.
- Analysis of root causes of current blocks in the system and appropriate solutions and timescales developed for allocating all children to Social Workers.
- Review of Case Transfer Policy and practice, case transfer meetings, CIN clinics.
- Identify opportunities for increased EH 'wrap around' and identification of families to step down to EH Plans and DCC run EH service provision e.g. FIT, YIT, YOS
- Position statement and 12- month plan developed with Area Leads

Agenda Item 6

8 – Week Priority Progress

Early Help

Page 10

FIT Area Manager has led an initial review on children open for 9 months plus. Which has resulted in handover to Level 2 services (23). Area Manager will continue to lead action to review and monitor progress for children.

Early Help Outcomes agreed for MASH G, with IAG being provided immediately.

Enquiry Toolkit produced to support with understanding risk, strengths and next steps.

Training Package devised and will commence in January 2022 with FIT. Rolling out to wider teams early 2022.

Appraisal briefing provided on options within Early Help to CSLT.

MASH

A review of the MASH has completed, and Next Steps plan is being implemented

The threshold document has been reviewed

Time in motion review of MASH operations has been completed

Task and finish groups established to take forward review findings

Recording systems reviewed to streamline processing of contacts and referrals

IRT

Locality Directors are leading action to review children in IRT and C&F teams and where appropriate step across to Early Help and/or progress plans.

Task and finish group has completed a review of the use of Strategy meetings with workshop for changing practice being planned for January onwards.

New management reports available to track referrals awaiting allocation and timeliness of children being seen.

Decisions made on the purpose of IRT that will enable children to receive the right support from the right service at the right time. Fewer children are either unallocated or allocated to managers.

Early Help Review

Support families early, to ensure we can transform the lived experience of children, young people and their families.

Enhance the way we work together earlier to support families build upon their strengths.

Integrate service delivery and invest in local communities to support children to thrive.

Deliver improved outcomes for children and families.



What is the current picture of Early Help in Devon

- Comprehensive but challenging to navigate,
- Knowledgeable and committed practitioners, who can articulate a vision of change,
- Enhance working relationships to embed a 'one team approach',
- Multiple entry points which leads to delay for children and their families,
- Developing data on capacity, demand, outcomes to support leaders in managing services,
- Range of pathways in accessing Early Help the majority via Triage Panels.
- Direct pathway from MASH to Children Centre's,
- Develop mapping of need, service provision linked to commissioning of provision,
- A range of understanding from practitioners/partners on the Early Help offer,
- Multiple systems and relationships,
- Quality Assurance activity, to drive practice and outcomes forward for children,
- A clear operational model for Children Centres, main focus remains at 0-2,
- Commitment to support families with internal teams,
- Partners supportive of Early Help.

Our Approach in Devon will be ...

Relationship based, developing relationships which provide opportunities for change, being clear about the change required and honouring progressing

One family, one lead worker, one plan and Work Family

Enabling the utility of the family, putting the family at the heart of everything we do

Systemic, formulation driven and evidenced based.

Restorative and strength focussed, working with families strengths, networks and resources.



Transparency, children, young people and families are as fully informed and involved as possible.

Coordination of Early Help Offer

Timely responses provided to requests for early help,
Countywide view of early help offer,
Multi-agency team providing advice and guidance.
Streamline pathways, guidance, reporting/outcomes, Quality management.

Defined Early Help Offer:

Revised Level 2 & 3 Family Intervention Offer (Children Centres, Family Solutions Teams, Adolescence Teams, Early Support, Y-SMART)
Clear Level 2 Early Help offer, easy to access and responds to local needs.

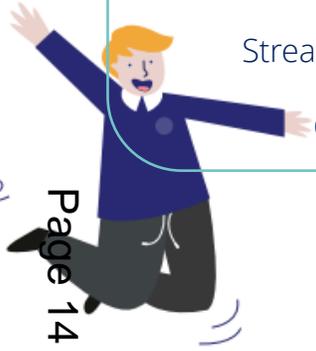
What are we seeking to achieve in Early Help for children in Devon?

Relationships & Structure

Strong relationships with our colleagues & partners that drive positive outcomes for children,
Using our data and local information to inform our commissioning decisions,
Central Early Help team/structure with interface with localities teams.

Establish operating model

Defined operating model, with entry, mid and exit points for progress.
Measuring the impact of the work of Early Help against the model.
Streamlined pathways for children and their families in accessing the right support.
Right conversations, at the right time, with the right people.



Potential challenges Devon will need to address with any vision;

Financial Stability (People)

Core Early Help budget, impact on service delivery, scope, staff morale, recruitment and development of Early Help.

Commissioning of Services (Partners & Practice)

Commissioned service and spot purchased

Commissioned Services are aligned to the vision for Devon

Meeting needs across Devon, developing our commissioning relationships

Thresholds/Criteria (Practice)

Level of Need to be understood across the partnership, ensure children receive the right support, at the right time, by the right team.

Multiple access points for early help, streamline access to early help

Capacity and Recruitment Issues (People, Performance, Practice)

A number of teams are struggling with volume of work, even if fully resourced

Challenge in recruiting to fixed term contracts

Progression within Devon's Early Help service

Perceptions and Attitudes (People)

Need services to think outside box if to achieve transformation

Changing perception of Early Help

Practice Improvement (Practice, Performance, People)

Operating Model
Service Specifications
Quality Assurance Framework
Recording and reporting systems
Impact
Reflective Supervisions
Ownerships of Early Help

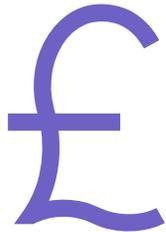
Benefits of the Early Help Programme



Align Devon's Early Offer to bring to reality 'Right Support, Right Time, Right Person' .

Children, young people and families will be supported to achieve outcomes in a timely manner.

Helping Families early, building upon resilience and strengths.



Provide financial security to Devon's Early Help Offer to develop a resilience workforce.

Provide strategic Early Help leadership and oversight, with the vision of one team approach.

More families supported within Early Help, reducing the number of children and families needing a social care assessment.

Reporting data used to inform responses and offer support.



Comprehensive and clear Early Help offer, supporting children stepping down from social care into Early Help.

Decisions Required

Members are asked to approve:

1. The draft vision for Early Help in Devon. (Slide 4)
2. Officers exploration of an Early Help operating model and offer in Devon, including the financial aspects.

Members are asked to note:

1. The potential challenges that will need to be considered in achieving the vision for Early Help in Devon.



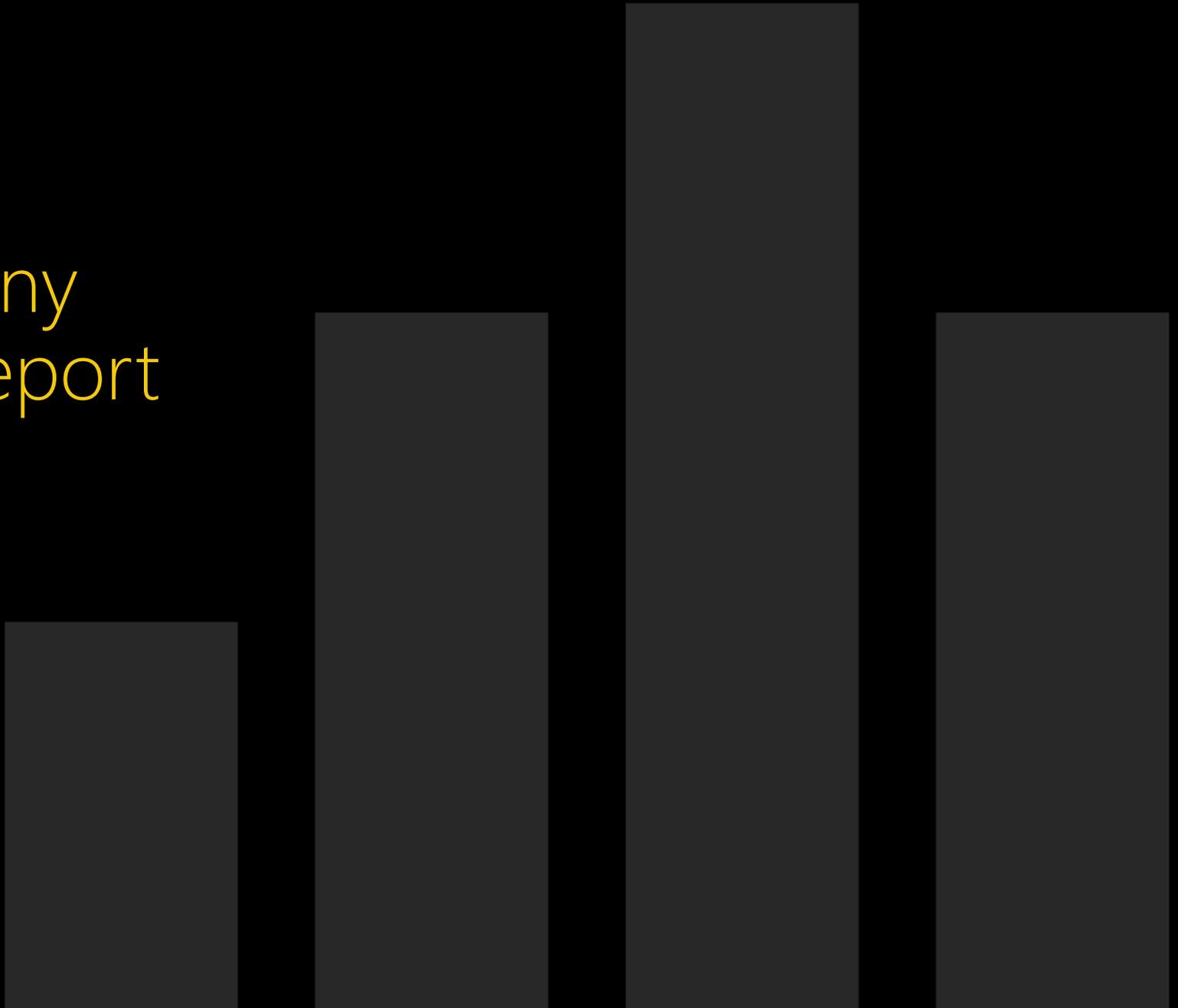
Childrens Scrutiny Performance Report

January 2022

[View in Power BI](#) ↗

Last data refresh:
05/01/2022 11:52:03 UTC

Downloaded at:
05/01/2022 14:32:52 UTC



Referrals

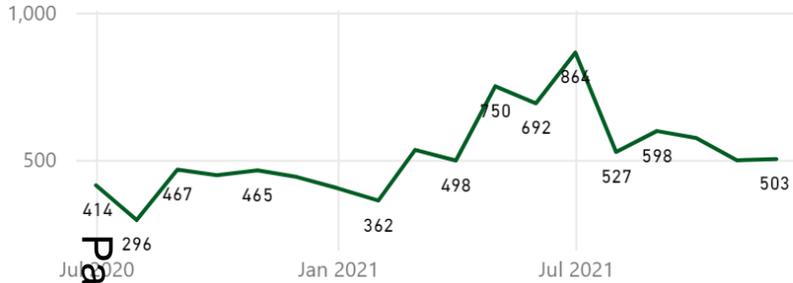
503

Number of New Referrals Last Month

13.8%

Referral Growth (Last Year %)

Number of Referrals (Last 18 Months)



22%

% Re-referrals Last Month

8.2%

% Referral NFA Last Month

Assessments

238

Assessments Started Last Month

-27.8%

Assessment Growth (Last Year %)

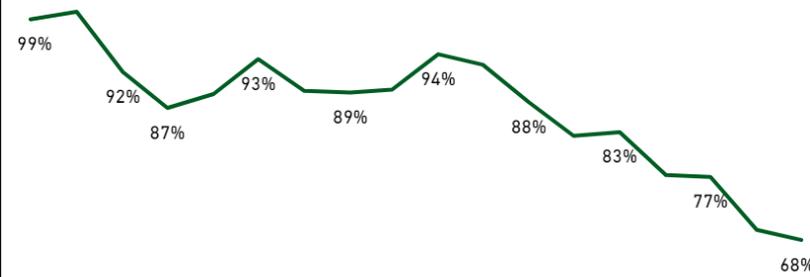
68%

Assessment Timeliness Last Month

417

Currently Open Assessments

Assessment Timeliness (Last 18 Months)



Child Protection Conferences (ICPC)

47

Number of ICPCs Last Month

-7.8%

ICPC Growth (Last Year %)

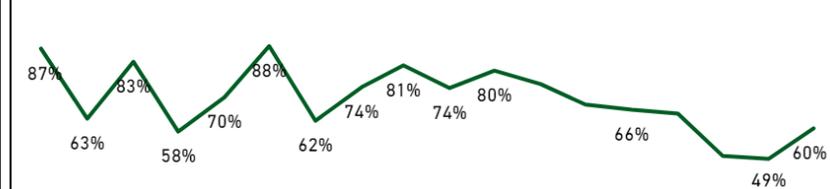
87%

% ICPCs resulting in CP Plan Last Month

60%

% ICPC Timeliness Last Month

ICPC Timeliness (Last 18 Months)

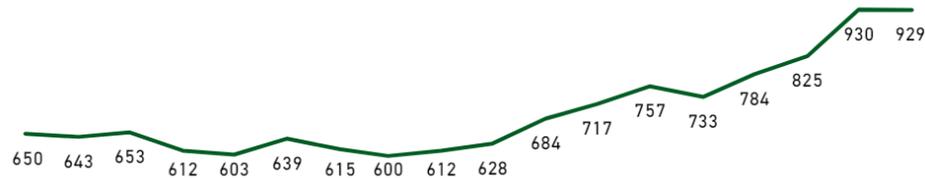


Type of Plan

Child in Need Plan

929

Children on Plan - 18 Month Trend



Cohort Trend (Last Year %)

45.4%

Current Visit Timeliness

89%

Locality Visit Timeliness

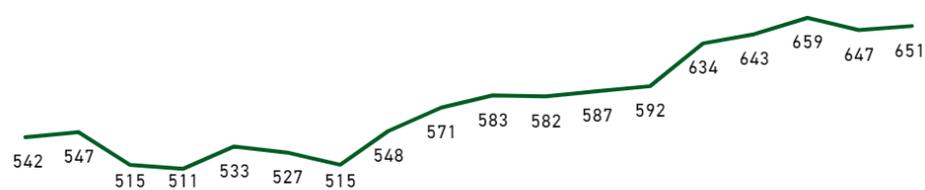
SOUTH	77%
NORTH	58%
MID & EAST	78%
EXETER	68%

Service Visit Timeliness

DISABLED CHILDREN SERVICE	64%
SOCIAL WORKERS IN SCHOOL	88%

Child Protection Plan

651



23.5%

88%

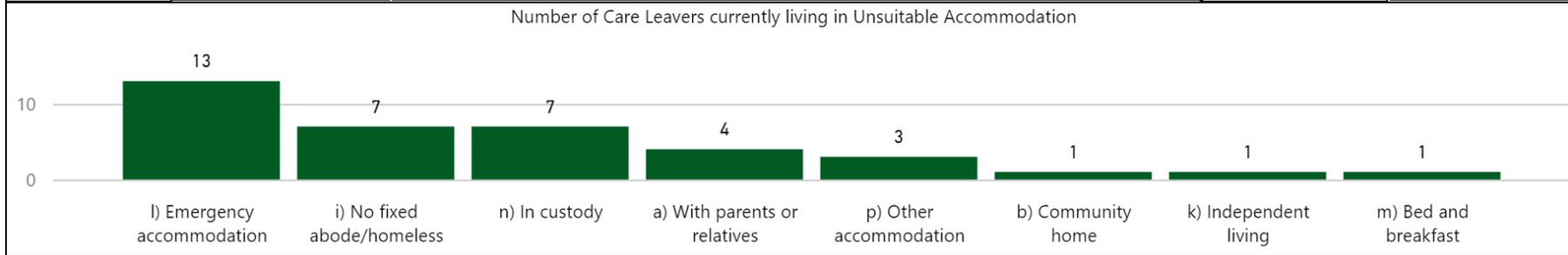
SOUTH	81%
NORTH	82%
MID & EAST	93%
EXETER	88%

SOCIAL WORKERS IN SCHOOL	98%
DISABLED CHILDREN SERVICE	97%

Type of Plan	Children on Plan (Current Month)	Cohort - 18 Month Trend	Cohort Trend (Last Year %)	Children Entering Care (Last 6 Months)	Children Leaving Care (Last 6 Months)
Children in Care	816	<p>802 811 826 830 841 829 816 821 813 823 821 800 809 805 803 812 809 816</p>	-1.6%	136	116

Health Check Timeliness (Last Month)	Health Check Timeliness (Last 18 Months)	Short Term Placement Stability (Last Month)	Short Term Placement Stability (Last 18 Months)
65%	<p>91% 92% 92% 92% 92% 92% 93% 93% 94% 93% 90% 89% 84% 83% 80% 75% 71% 65%</p>	12%	<p>11% 10% 11% 11% 11% 12% 13% 12% 12% 12% 13% 12% 12%</p>
Dental Check Timeliness (Last Month)	Dental Check Timeliness (Last 18 Months)	Long Term Placement Stability (Last Month)	Long Term Placement Stability (Last 18 Months)
43%	<p>68% 62% 57% 51% 48% 45% 43% 41% 45% 49% 50% 54% 55% 54% 51% 49% 47% 43%</p>	62%	<p>66% 63% 61% 60% 58% 60% 60% 60% 60% 62% 62% 62%</p>

Type of Plan	Children on Plan (Current Month)	Cohort - 18 Month Trend	Cohort Trend (Last Year %)	Young People In Touch %	% in Education, Employment or Training	
Care Experienced	431	<p>452 462 464 459 457 451 432 419 432 434 432 430 433 432 430 426 436 431</p>	-4.4%	92%	50% (Last Month)	<p>44% 43% 47% 44% 46% 48% 45% 43% 49% 50% 50%</p>



% in Suitable Accommodation	
83% (Last Month)	<p>83% 81% 82% 85% 83% 88% 86% 85% 82% 82% 80% 82% 83% 83%</p>

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Agenda Item 8

What is the data telling us?

Referrals

We have seen a small dip in referrals to childrens social care which would be expected in the month of December – this is common due to the 2 week School Holiday.

Assessments

The volume of work in our IRT teams has meant that we continue to see a decline in assessment timeliness. A new performance report has been produced so that managers can keep a closer track of those children whose assessments are outside of timescales. Since producing this report we have seen some improvements in timeliness however this requires our continued focussed attention and a weekly meeting is now in place to closely monitor our progress on this. We wouldn't expect 100% of assessments to be completed within timescale for various reasons but all relating to what is right for that individual child and family – however we would want to see the number of assessments in timescale increase form 68%.

ICPC (Initial Child Protection Conference) Timeliness

Whilst ICPC timeliness still requires our attention this is an improving picture, timeliness has increased by 13% in the last month. This is being closely monitored by managers in localities to ensure we continue to improve our timeliness for initial child protection conferences.

Visit Timeliness

Visit timeliness has increased for children on child protection plans – we would expect that some children are not visited within timescales but this would only be the case where this is right for the child i.e. the child is on holiday, the child is unwell...

Children in Care

136 children entered care in the last 6 months whilst 116 left care. Those children leaving care will be a mixture of children turning 18 but also children where we have worked to safely return them to their families.

Health Check

Timeliness has reduced slightly and this is attributed in some part to the pandemic. We must ensure all of our children in care have their health check completed.

Dental Check

Timeliness has fluctuated on Dental Checks for our children in care - Nationally this is a problem following the pandemic. Officers are meeting with health and are in discussions to understand why our children are not getting appointments and how we can improve.

Placement Stability

Short term placement stability remains the same as last month however long term placement stability has increased by 1%. We are currently establishing new ways of reviewing and monitoring placement stability and interventions / support with the aim that this will increase placement stability for children.

Care Experienced

It is a positive trajectory that our NEET figures are now up to 50% we are reviewing what has supported us to improve this so that we can continue to increase the number of our care experience young people who are in education, employment or training.

What questions is the data raising for us?

Referrals

Are partners making the right referrals at the right time?

Assessments

How is assessment timeliness impacting on outcomes for children and their families?

ICPC (Initial Child Protection Conference) Timeliness

- What is the conversion rate from S47 Enquiry to ICPC (Initial Child Protection Conference)?
- Are statutory partners working together to ensure the protection of children?
- What about the children we have not seen?

Visit Timeliness

Are Child in Need plans supporting sustainable and continuous changes for children and their families?

Children in Care

Are our children and young people safe and settled where they live?

Health and Dental Checks

Are we meeting the health needs of our children? Can scrutiny support with the health and dental checks issue?

Placement Stability

Are children and young people only moving in line with care plans?

Care Experienced

How can scrutiny support officers to ensure good education and employment opportunities, including work experience and apprenticeships are available to our care leavers?

Overview of current position regarding COVID-19 context

- There was a sharp increase in the number of positive cases in schools in the Autumn term. The peak was seen on 25th November when 1895 pupils in 214 schools were absent due to a positive Covid-19 test.
- Multi-Agency IMT meetings helped keep our schools open and children physically attending. We have seen really good engagement from all schools and from Babcock staff who stepped into cover for isolating School Leaders.
- As a result attendance has remained above the National average, universally and for those in vulnerable groups, as seen in the graph on the bottom right.
- DfE provided corporate support from Covid Outbreak Management Funds giving all state funded schools £25 per head to help support them meet the demands placed upon them and to keep the focus on education for children.
- DfE funded 'Wellbeing for Education Return Programme' was successfully delivered in Devon. It aimed to provide a greater understanding of Mental Health during COVID and support to children, families and staff and on-going supervision and support (118 schools). The below is a quote from one school.

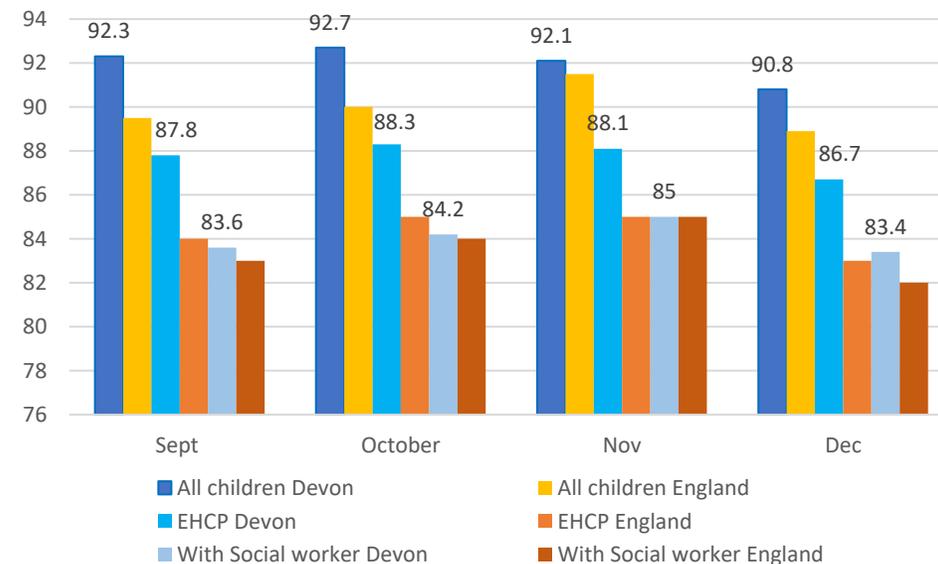
The training has really inspired the Y5 pupils to step up and act as good ambassadors for our school & wider community. They have already started to put together an action plan and have come away from the training with some great ideas.

- **Biggest challenge Teaching Assistant Recruitment**

Monthly totals



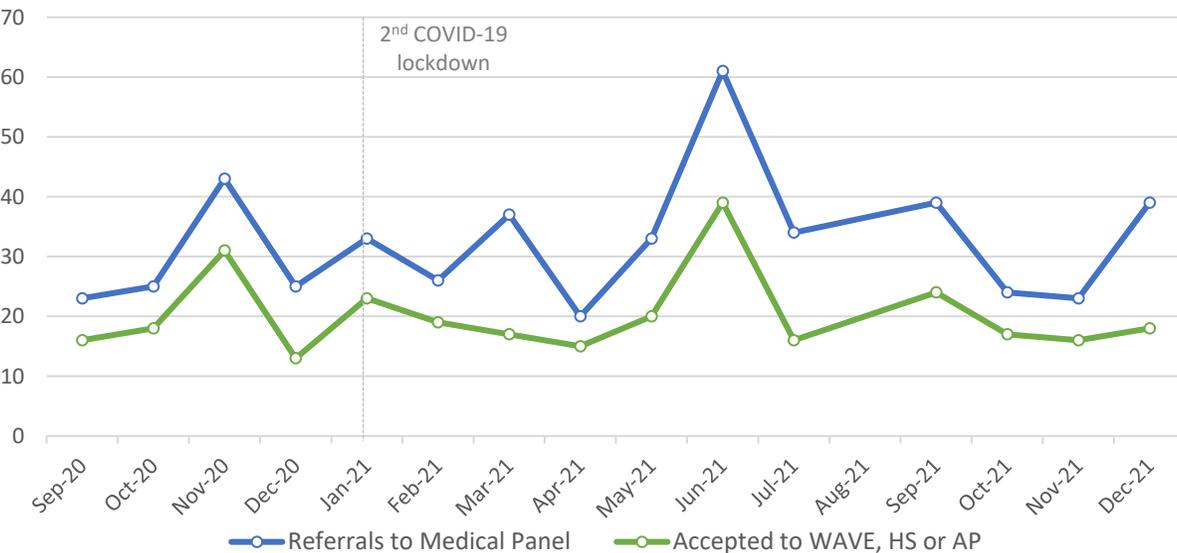
Monthly attendance



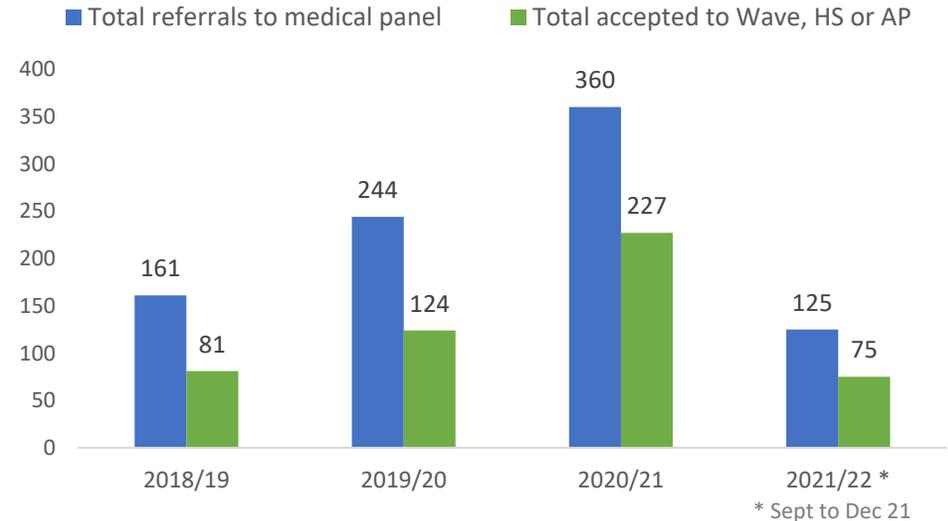
- In the Autumn term referrals to the children's panel, for those medically unable to attend their usual school, remained high but was significantly lower than in the summer term. December however, saw an upward trajectory again (as shown in the graph below).
- Based on the total number of referrals for this term (graph on the right) we are anticipating annual numbers may be similar to those seen last year
- The graph on the bottom right shows the majority of children being referred and supported are from year 8 (12 /13 years old) upwards.

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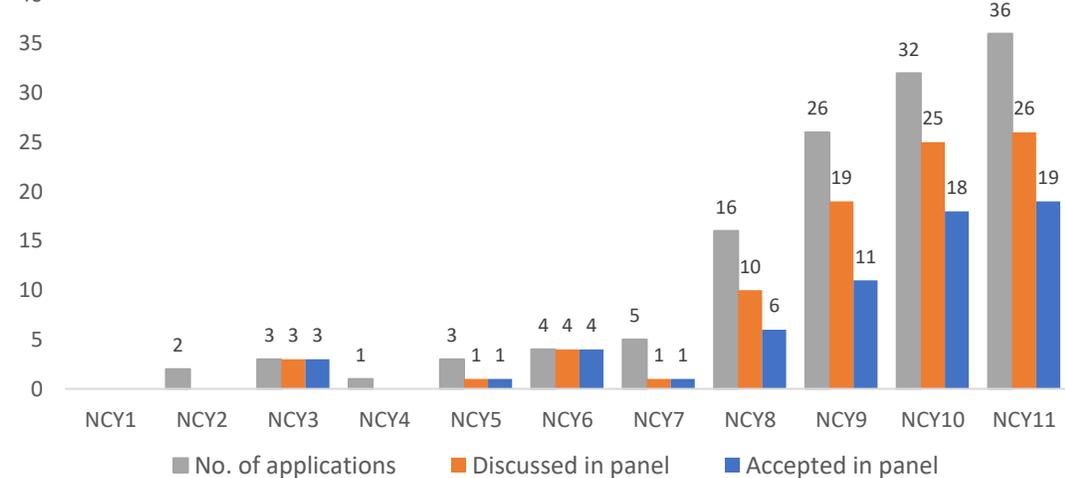
Monthly referrals to Medical Panel and accepted cases



Referrals to Medical Panel and accepted cases



Referrals to Medical Panel by NCY - Sept to Nov 2021



Pupils entitled to Free School Meals – Oct 2021 Census

- The number of Children in Devon who are eligible for Free School Meals continues to rise.
- On the Oct 2021 census day nearly 17,000 pupils in Devon LA maintained schools and academies were eligible for Free School Meals. This is an increase of 6% (982 pupils) since Jan 2021.

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This means that 16.9% of the Devon pupil population in state funded schools is eligible for Free School Meals. This remains significantly lower than the National Average which now stands at 20%.

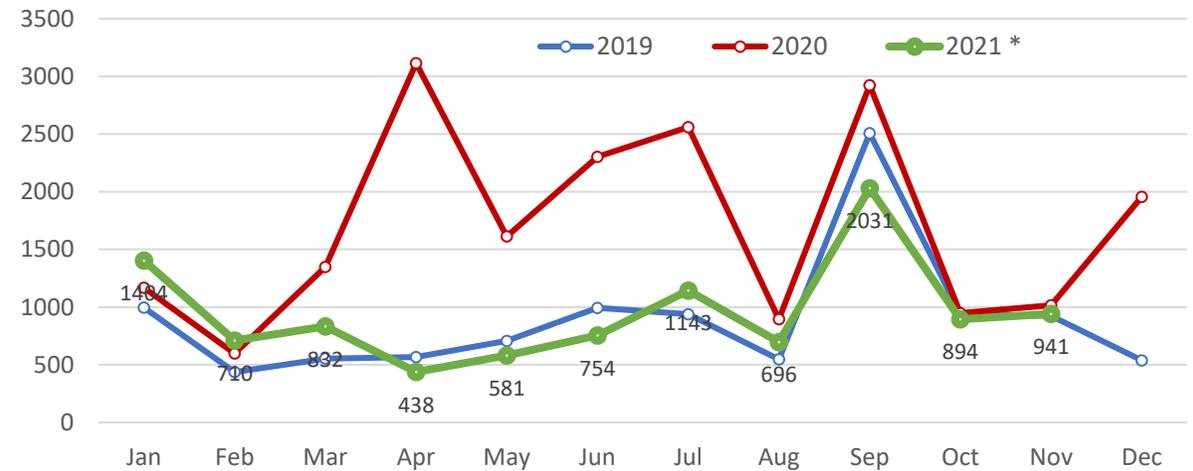
- The graph opposite shows that applications (claims) for Free School Meals have now (Green line) returned to a level similar to that of 2019 (Blue line).

October 2021 school census

Devon School Phase	Number of eligible pupils eligible for FSM	% of pupils on roll eligible for FSM
Nursery	22	16%
Primary	9,631	17%
Secondary	6,311	16%
All Through	333	21%
Special	608	40%
Pupil Referral Units	74	33%
Grand Total	16,979	16.9%

data source: DfE Autumn School Census 07/10/21

Total claims for Free School Meals



* as at 01/12/21

data source: ONE database, accessed 01/12/21

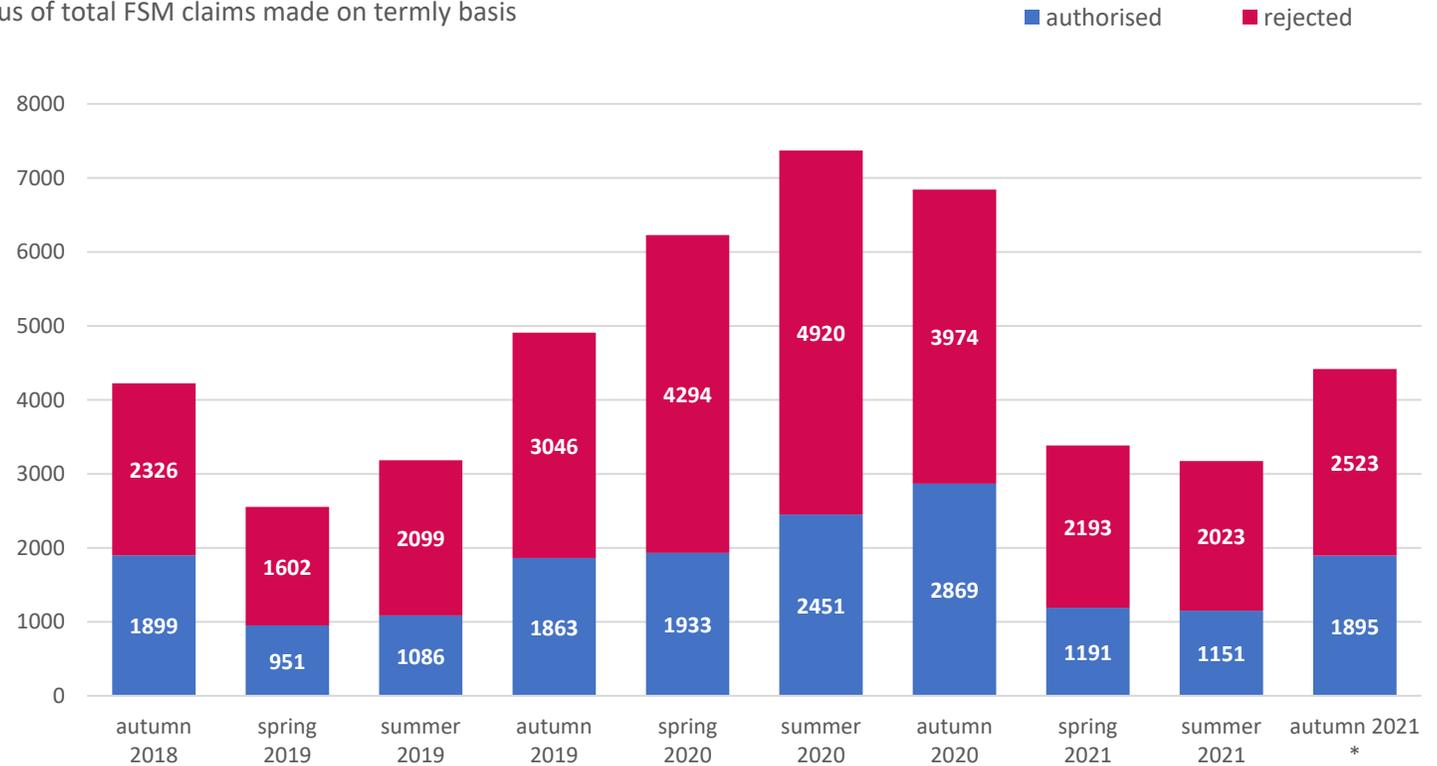
Free School Meal claims that met National Criteria

The figures on the previous chart reflect the claims (applications) made but do not show the number of claims that met or did not meet the nationally set criteria.

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The chart opposite reflects the successful applications and the number rejected on a termly basis.

The chart shows that during the pandemic there have been many more families requesting Free School Meals than the National Criteria allowed to be authorised.

status of total FSM claims made on termly basis



Note: Autumn: Sept to Dec, Spring: Jan to Apr, Summer: May to August

* data source: ONE database 15/12/21

In the November Annual Education report we shared that, despite a rise at various points throughout the last academic year, by the time we reached the October 2021 census the number of children being Electively Home Educated (1519) had returned to levels similar to the October 2020 census (1508).

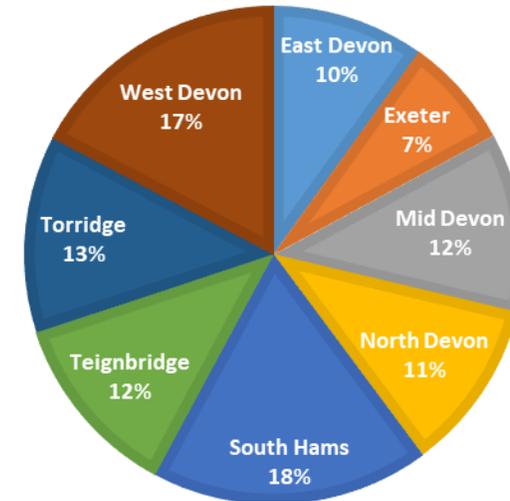
The pie chart opposite now shows how children registered as Electively Home Educated in Oct 2021 are split across the districts.

The chart opposite shows the number of children becoming Electively Home Educated in this academic year (2021/22 - green line), is lower than seen in the last 2 years.

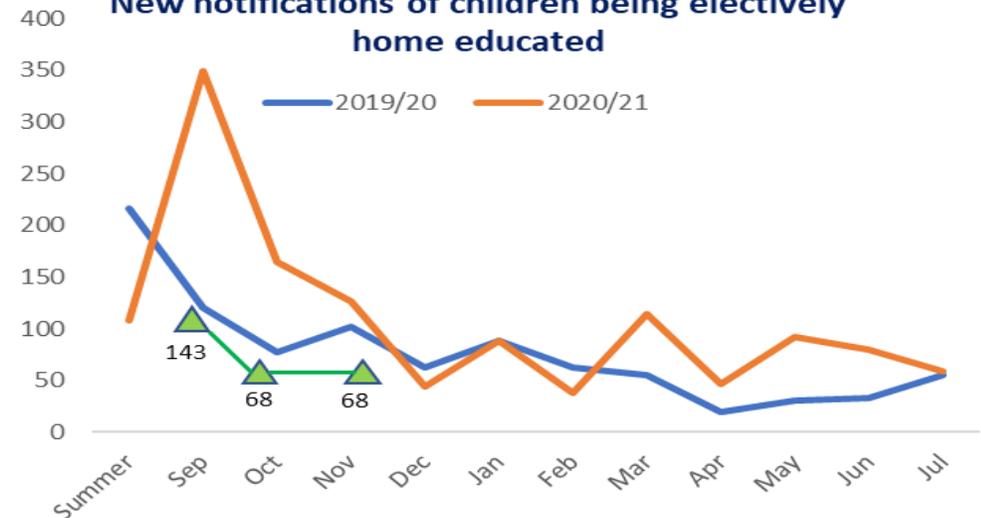
In addition between September and November 2021, 215 children stopped being Electively Home Educated;

- 175 (81%) returned to school
- 12 (6%) became CME (EHE unsuitable)
- 8 (4 %) moved abroad
- 20 (9%) moved out of county

% OF PUPILS WHO ARE EHE OCT 2021



New notifications of children being electively home educated



Permanent Exclusions

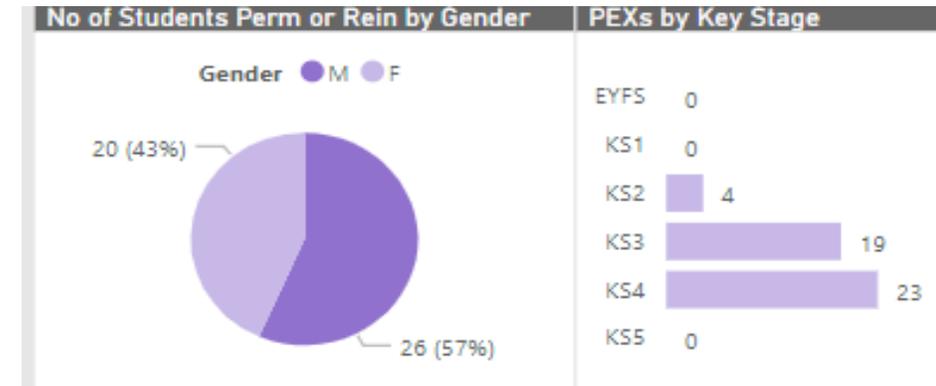
Since 2017 we have seen a downward trend in the number of permanent exclusions – this has been supported by the introduction of the Devon Inclusion toolkit which provided strategies, advice and training to schools to support inclusive practice. The 2020/21 figures however, need to be treated with caution as lockdowns will have impacted numbers.

Permanent Exclusions	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Number of permanent exclusions in Devon ⁽¹⁾	105	93	60	51
Devon exclusion rate (exc'ns as % of school pop'n) ⁽²⁾	0.11%	0.09%	0.06%	0.05%
National exclusion rate ⁽³⁾	0.10%	0.10%	0.06%	not avail

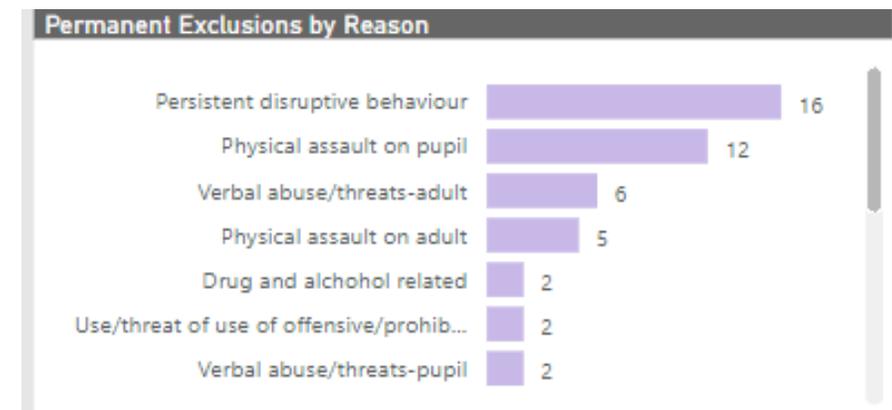
During the recent Autumn term 46 permanent exclusions were made (41 of which were from secondary schools); 4 of these exclusions were later overturned by the Governing body and 1 more was overturned by an independent appeal panel. Meaning that 41 children were permanently excluded from their school. This is a significant and concerning rise for the start of the 2021/22 academic year and schools attention has been drawn to this. The inclusions team continue to support schools and governing bodies to ensure support and appropriate challenge is in place

Of these 46 children, at the time of the exclusion, 1 student had an Education Health and Care plan (out of a cohort of 8000 children with an EHCP).

25 of the children excluded had Special Educational needs being supported at school level. As there are 14,500 children in this cohort it means they are disproportionately represented as a percentage of the excluded cohort. This reflects a national picture but the Inclusion Teams at DCC and Babcock are working with schools to provide further training to support this group of young people.



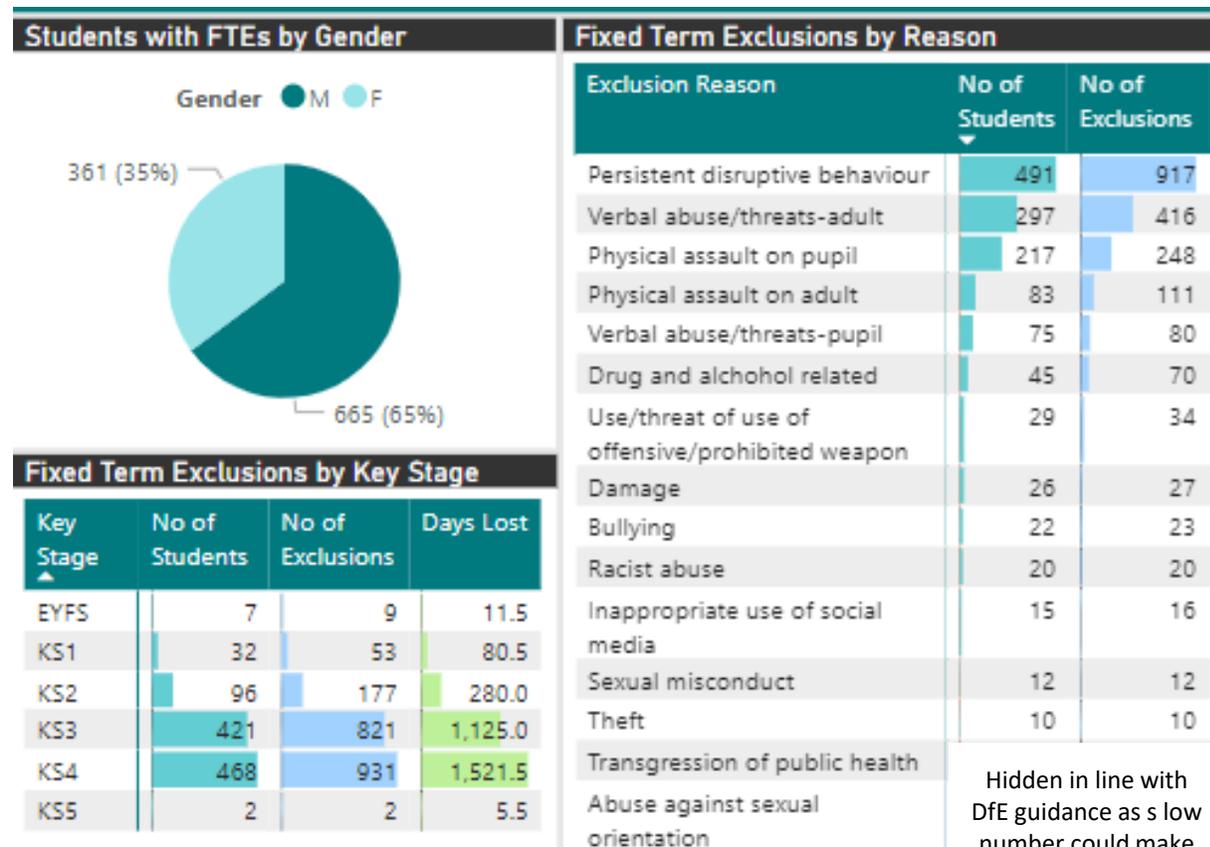
The chart above shows that the majority of permanent exclusions occur in key stage 3 and 4 (secondary schools). The most common reason remains persistent disruptive behaviour (as shown below).



Suspension from School (previously known as Fixed Term Exclusion)

- During the Autumn term 1026 students experienced at least one suspension from school - (1.15% of pupils in state funded schools).
- 891 of these young people were in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (Secondary school).
- 65% of the pupils were male.
- The most common reason for the suspension was persistent disruptive behaviour.
- 140 of the children suspended had an EHCP (1.7% of the cohort).
- A further 388 young people had SEN needs which were being supported at school level (2.6%).
- Children with SEN have higher levels of suspensions nationally. For example the national rate for all pupil suspensions in the whole 2019/20 academic year (latest available) was 3.76 compared to 10.98 for those on SEN support.

Autumn Term 2021 Suspension Data



Hidden in line with DfE guidance as a low number could make children identifiable

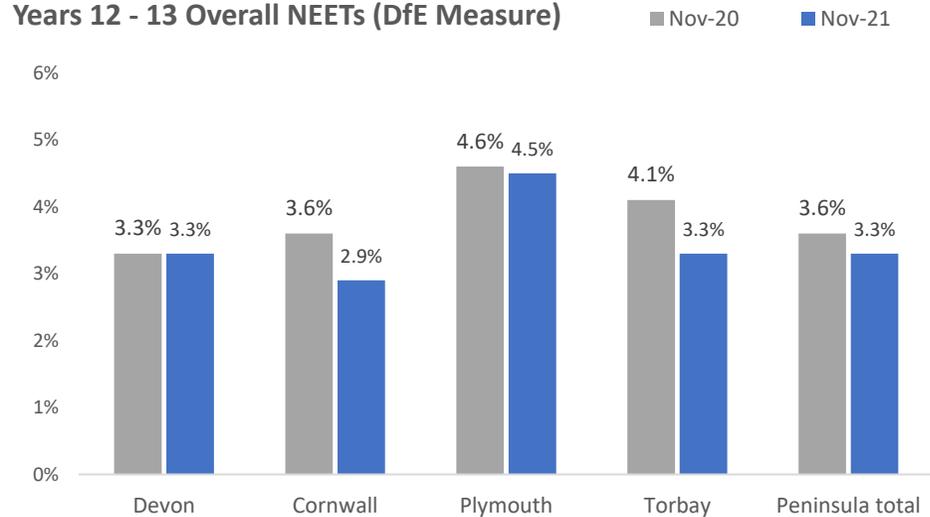
NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

In November the number of young people in Devon in years 12, 13 and 14 (age 16 to 18) who were not in Employment, Education or Training was in line with that seen in the other Peninsula Local Authorities.

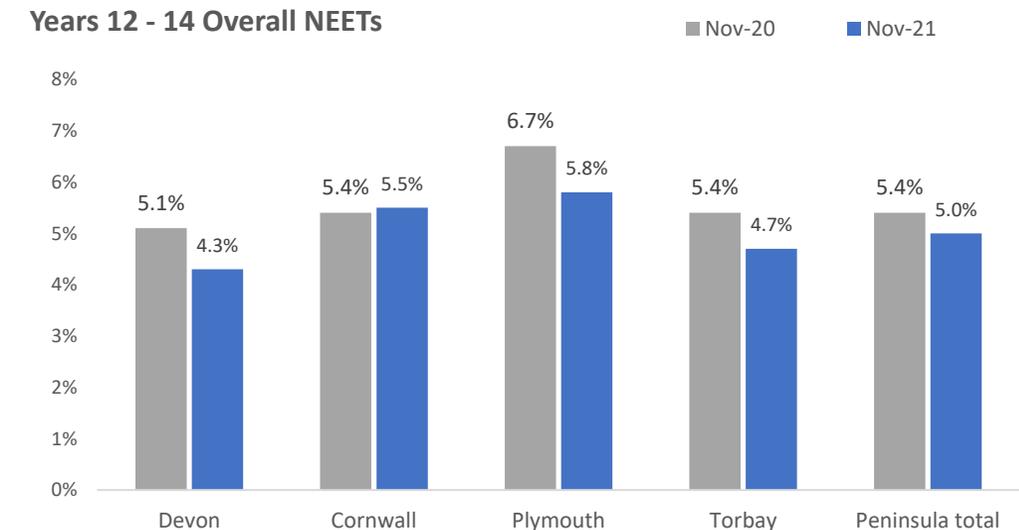
Nov 2021 rates	Devon		SW Peninsula	
	NEET	Not Known	NEET	Not Known
Years 12 - 13 overall *	3.3%	1.7%	3.3%	2.1%
Years 12 - 14 overall	4.3%	3.3%	5.0%	3.5%
Year 12 – 14 vulnerable groups;				
Learning Difficulties and Disabilities	10.1%	2.7%	9.5%	2.7%
Children in Care	16.0%	6.5%	17.7%	5.9%
BME	2.6%	3.5%	3.5%	4.0%

A comparison with the same period last year is shown opposite and shows the figure for Devon for year 12 and year 13 young people is the same as last year but the figure for year 12 to year 14 young people has improved.

Years 12 - 13 Overall NEETs (DfE Measure)



Years 12 - 14 Overall NEETs



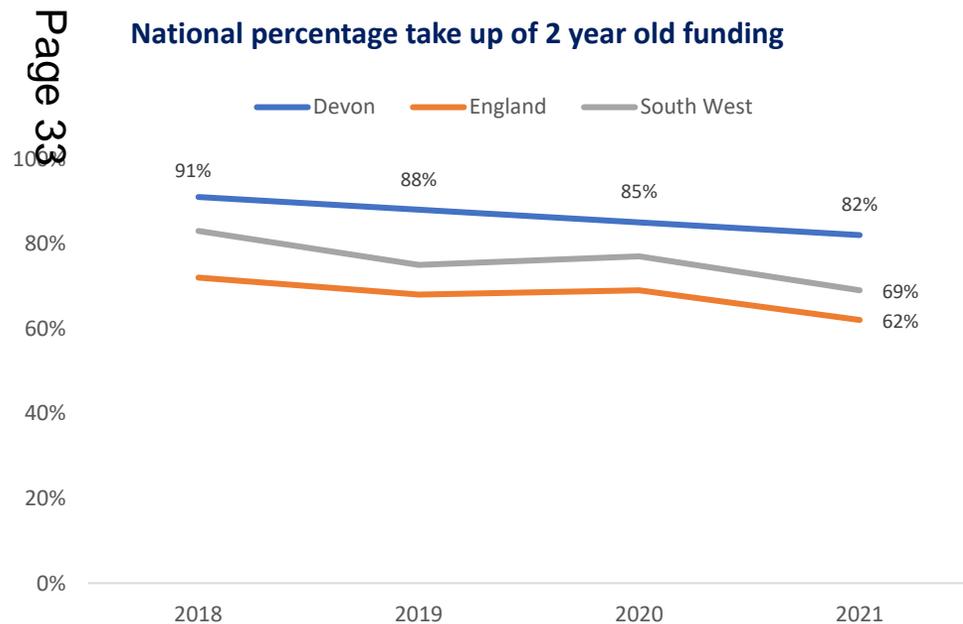
* DfE bench marking measure

data source: CSW Group, November 2021 monthly MI package

DfE Information – annual update

The % of children accessing the allocated 2-year old funding in Devon is consistently higher than national and regional – which is positive.

The 2021 figures are lower due to Covid lockdowns.

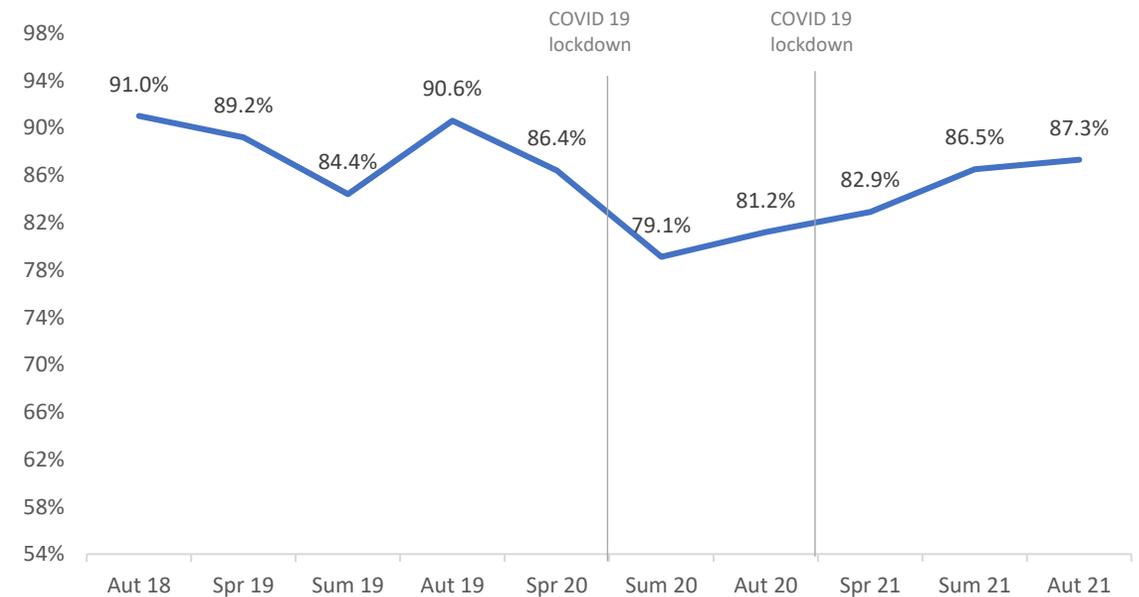


data source: DfE Education provision: children under 5 years of age 2021, 01/07/21

Local Information – termly update – provisional rate for Autumn 2021

Autumn 2021 figure are currently draft as they are based on take up during headcount week. The take up rate is therefore likely to increase once the full term's data has been analysed.

% Take Up Of Early Years Funding For 2 Year Olds



latest available benchmarks from Spr 2021: national: 62% regional: 69%

data source: DCC Early Years team, draft figures 10/12/21

