

# Children's Services Performance Report

Children's Health, Social Care and  
Education Overview and Scrutiny

*16/17 Annual Outturn Report*

# Headline Messages from the data

Early Help

**Contacts**– Family Contact Point/MASH records all contacts. There were 13156 contacts from Apr 16- Mar 17, compared to 13313 for the same period in 2015/16. 3023(23.0%) contacts progressed to referral to children's social care. This is lower 3405 in the previous year. Swindon's referral rate is moving more in line with national average.

The number of contacts has stabilised, and slightly reduced compared with the previous year. The number of referrals has also reduced. The MASH implementation is key in this development.

**Early Help Record and Plan** – 684 records were completed in 16/17, compared to 822 in 15/16. 641 plans were completed in 16/17 compared to 665 in 15/16. Time lag in inputting means 16/17 figures may rise by 8-10%.

At the end of March 2017, 2249 families received extra support from the **health visiting** service in addition to the universal service offer, compared to 2573 at the end of March 2016.

Health visitors continue to provide additional support to those families in need. The Family service data is now available and shows a high level of support to vulnerable groups of children are receiving support.

**The family service data** is now available for reporting; 379 children were involved with the service at the end of March. 18.8% of these were children in need, 8.5% on child protection plans, and 4% in care. 34% had an EHCP (education, health and care plan).

**Children looked after**- At the end of March 2017, there were 327 children looked after. This is an increase from 292 at the end of March 16. 107 children.

The number of children looked after continues to remain at a higher level than in previous year.

**Adoption** – 19 children were adopted between April 2016 and March 2017. This compares with 6 for 15/16. There were 34 children on placement orders at the end of March 17.

The number of children being adopted is much higher than in previous year. The vast majority of adoptions take place within national timescale thresholds

**Post-16: In-learning rates** for 16 and 17 year olds (as at March 2017) was 91.4%, This is a 2.2% increase from the previous year, and below the national (92.2%) and regional (91.8%) averages. **NEET** rate (2.9%) increase for 16-17 year olds but the **Unknowns** for 16-17s has decreased to (2.9%), March 2016 (5.2%).

Participation in Learning has increased. Swindon is good compared with other in terms of knowing the learning destinations of young people

**Children with SEN** - At 31<sup>st</sup> Mar 2017 there were 1627 children with statutory SEN assessments maintained by the LA (527 with a Statement and 1100 with an Education, Health and Care plan). A further 4524 had a category of SEN Support as recorded by schools in the January census.

**School Absence** – Primary and Secondary school absence are at 3.9% and 5.1% for the Autumn term of 2016/17. Swindon is broadly in line with the National average, with local and National figures having risen compared to last year.

**School Exclusions** – 1,304 Fixed Term exclusions took place in the academic year to March 2017, higher than the 1,231 in the same period last year. There have been 41 permanent exclusions this year – more than the whole of 2015/16 and 2.5 times more than the same period last year.

There are 2.5 times more permanent exclusions in the academic year to March 2017 than in the same period last year.

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Education

# Headline Messages from Social Care Safeguarding Data.

## REFERRALS

**Referrals** – There were 3023 referrals from Apr 2016 to Mar 2017 compared to 3405 for the previous year. Of the 2356 referrals, 26.6% were re-referrals .

Less contacts are progressing to social care referral which is partly attributable to more effective screening at the contact stage in the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

## ASSESSMENTS

### Statutory Assessments

From April 2016 to March 2017, a total of 2987 statutory (social care) assessments were completed compared with 3146 for April 15– March 16. Given the lower referral rate this indicates the majority of social care referrals lead to a statutory assessment.

The demand for assessments continues at the same level, despite the decrease in contact and referrals - so the demand on the service is still high

There were 921 **child protection enquiries** (also known as **section 47 enquiries**) between April 2016 and March 2017. The percentage of enquiries going to Child Protection Conference within 15 working days has decreased from 79.6% between April 2015 and March 2016 to 65.1% between April 2016 and March 2017

Although still at a higher level, the number of children on a child protection plan in Swindon has been showing signs of stabilisation over the last 6 months. The challenges of higher numbers impacts on the capacity available to ensure constant timelines with child protection processes.

## CHILD PROTECTION

**Child Protection Plans** - 244 children were on a child protection plan at the end of March 2017. The number has increased from 238 in March 2016. The number of children on a child protection plan is above the national and statistical neighbour average. 91.7% had their child protection **reviews** completed on time as at the end of March 17 compared to 95.8% for the same period in 2015/16. This is based on those children on a plan at the end of January 17 for 3 months or more.

The rate of children starting a **child protection plan** for a second or subsequent time is consistent with 20.2% between April 16 and March 17, compared to 19% in 15/16. This is slightly higher than national average (17.9%), and Statistical neighbour average (18.8%).

The number of children on repeat plans reduced in year, but increased to be slightly above the national average by the end of year. The vast majority of children cease their child protection plan by 2 years. No children had been on a plan for more that 2 years based on those on plans on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 17.

At the end of March 2017, 3.6% (11 children) of children ceasing a protection plan had been on a **plan for 2 years or more** compared to 3.2% March in 2016.

### Performance Assessment

**Early Help Record (EHR).** During 16/17, 684 Early Help Records were completed, compared to 822 for 15/16. The inputting backlog has now been cleared. It is still expected that the 16/17 figure will rise when reports are re-run later in the year. Time lags can occur, due to late submissions by schools. In 15/16 the number of Early Help Records recorded went up by 8% between the initial report and the re-run later in the year.

**Early Help Plan (Plan) and Early Help Review (Review).** The Early Help Record will always lead to a plan being created for the child. The plan may be delivered in a number of ways depending on its complexity. The number of Early Help Plans in 16/17 was 641 compared to 665 for 15/16. As with the records, the 16/17 figure is expected to increase due to late submissions. In 15/16 the number of plans went up by 10% between the initial report and the re-run later in the year.

In addition to the number of early help records and plans, over half of social care referrals have a previous early help involvement. It is recognised that more work is required to maximise the step up/step down from social care processes, and this will be a key focus for 17/18.

The LSCB established an Early Help Working Group to support further understanding and usage of the EH R&P as tool for engaging, assessing, planning and intervening early on in child's lives; when need is identified.

### Family Service

As a relatively new service, the Family Service is building up its caseload. As at 31/03/2017, there were 379 children with an open Family Service involvement, involving 160 families. The service is supporting vulnerable groups, including children in need (18.8%), child on protection plans (8.5%), as well as children in care (4%). There is also a significant percentage of those receiving a service on EHCPs's (34%). Key performance indicators have been identified and built into the electronic child management system that will allow for reporting on outcomes for these children and families.

### Strengths

- Establishment of a cross agency Early Help Working Group (as above)
- Outcomes for children in receipt of early help services are now being routinely reported as part of quality and performance reporting arrangements, including a quarterly quality and performance board
- Family Service providing additional support for vulnerable groups

### Challenges/Risks

- We need to increase the number of Early Help Records and Plans that are created and utilised to support children early on, to record, analyse and support children and families and to prevent escalation of cases to children's social care.

### Performance Assessment

As at the end of 2016/17 there were 786 Active families on the **troubled families programme**, which exceeded our 2016/17 target of 751. There is still too heavily a reliance on families open to social care and more proactive work needs to be undertaken to ensure a more even distribution of Troubled Families across Early Help teams.

The payment by results (PBR), criteria remains stringent which brings challenges. As at the end of 2016/17 Swindon had claimed for 113 families meeting outcomes, which was 37% of our target although this is broadly in line with other LAs who are experiencing the same issues. There may need a change of direction from government re the PBR. The Troubled Families programme in Swindon would benefit from improved partnership buy-in of the TF methodology. Initial findings from the Maturity model exercise show that this is not currently the case for some key partners at this time.

#### Targeted Mental Health Service:

There continues to be high activity in TAMHS which demonstrates how the service is delivering direct treatment work to children and young people. The traded service orders remain strong - £296K for 2016/2017.

The referral to assessment within 4 weeks is a priority area for performance improvement. Actions include employing three additional members of staff (started in November 2016), changing the referral criteria in order to reduce the amount of referrals, employing a specialist business support worker to “modernise” our processes, and using a joint screening process with CaMHS.

### Strengths

- Of the families being worked with on the Troubled Families programme, 54% are in the 30% most deprived LSOAs nationally.
- A Troubled Families “Task Force” has been formed to identify families with few outstanding outcomes remaining and work intensively with lead practitioners to move families into a claim position. This has already started to generate results.
- 61% of families that have been claimed for were on the Trouble Families programme for 12 months or less

### Challenges

- Managing the conflict between the pressures on Early Help service teams to close cases whilst Troubled Families outcomes remain outstanding.
- Ensuring and evidencing that “Active” families have had an assessment incorporating the needs of the who family and the services are in place to support the family across all identified TF issues.

### Performance Assessment

**Contacts** Family Contact Point/MASH records all contacts for children's services in their wider sense (i.e. includes Early Help) as well as contacts that become referrals to Children's Social Care. There were 13156 contacts to Family Contact Point between April 2016 and March 2017, compared to 13313 for the same period in 15/16. This is a 1.2% decrease. This is the first time in the last 5 years that a steadying in the number of contacts has occurred. Improved partnership working linked to the MASH operating model helps in ensuring agencies are signposting correctly into Children, Families and Community Health.

**Referrals and Re-Referrals** 3023 referrals were received in Children's Social Care between April 16 and March 17, compared to 3405 for the same period in the previous year. Swindon's referral rate is still above the national and statistical neighbour averages based on the cumulative rate of referrals between April 16 and March 17. (Swindon 616.9 per 10,000 under 18 compared with 527.1 statistical neighbour and 532.2 national average). However, the gap between Swindon and the national and statistical neighbour averages is narrowing. Of the 2356 referrals between April 16 to March 17, 26.6% (804) are **re-referrals**. This is a decrease from 27.9% for the same period in the previous year. The national average is 22.3% (15/16).

**Statutory Assessments** Between April 16 and March 17, a total of 2987 assessments were completed, taking an average of 39 working days to complete. This compared to 3146 for the same period in the previous year. The national average for duration was lower at 28 days. The completion of timely, good quality assessments is an area of focus within the service, in order to improve the timely response to families and the clarity of planning for a child.

**Number of children in need (section 17 social care)** The number of children in need (this does not include children subject to a child protection plan or children in care) was 1184 at the end of March 2017, down from 1283 at the end of March 2016. This is still above the national average(1150) and the statistical neighbour (999) average.

### Strengths

- Improved information gathering in the MASH results in better quality referrals to social care; with a reduction in the number of referrals requiring statutory intervention in social care
- The number of contacts received has stabilised following continuous increase in the previous 4 years

### Challenges

- Re-referral rate has increased during the last quarter, and this raises questions in relation to whether a child is referred for a new reason, or if original need was not met. Routine audits are undertaken, and action taken on a case by case basis as required. The Step Down process is also promoted to ensure children are 'handed over' to support services, outside of social care, in a planned manner.

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## Child Protection Processes and Outcomes

### Performance Assessment

**Child Protection Enquires (also known as Section 47's) going to initial child protection conference:** 921 child protection enquires were completed from April 16 to March 2017. This is an increase from 766 in the same period in 2015/16. 370 out of the 921 (40.1%) of child protection enquires completed went to **child protection conference** between April and March 2017, this is compared to 334 out of 766 (43.6%) , in the same period in 2015/16. The percentage of enquires that went to initial child protection conference within 15 working days was 65.1% between April 16 and March 17. This is below the national average of 76.7%. This indicates that potentially too many enquiries are undertaken that lead to no Initial Child Protection Conference.

**Children on Child Protection Plans** 244 children were on a child protection plan at end March 17. This is higher than the national average. The average duration of a child on a plan was 179 days based on those on plans at the end of March 17, compared with 199 at the same point in the previous year.

**The number of children having second or subsequent plans** was 20.2% between April 2016 and March 2017, an increase from 19% in March 16. This is above the national average (17.9%) and the statistical neighbour (18.9%). This measure should be considered alongside duration, as a high percentage of second and subsequent plans and low duration could indicate that children's plans are being ceased prematurely, or that intervention outcomes are not sustainable. It is also important to note that a percentage of children will have subsequent plans due to family circumstances changing and for different reasons to their original plan. Regular auditing is undertaken to understand any practice changes that are required in relation to repeat plans.

**Duration of children on child protection plans:** 3.6% (11) of children ceasing a child protection plan remained on a plan for two years or more between April 16 and March 17, compared to 3.2% in the previous year. This is above the 2015/16 national average of 3.6% and the statistical neighbour average of 3.7%. AS at the end of March 17 no children had been on a plan for two years or longer.

**Timeliness of Child protection visits.** Of all children who have been on a child protection plan at any point between April 2016 and March 2017, 78.9% had their visits within 6 weeks of the previous visit. This is an improvement from 66.0% recorded for the same period in 2015/16. One late visit means the child will be late in terms of performance for the whole year. Data analysis has identified areas of excellent practice in terms of visit timeliness by social workers, and will be building on this across teams to improve the overall timeliness of visits experienced by each child for every visit throughout the year.

### Strengths

### Challenges/Risks

- To improve visit timeliness so that vast majority of children receive ALL visits on time; every time



**Performance Assessment**

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**Number of children in care.** 327 children were looked after at the end of March 2017; this compares with 292 at the end of March 2016. Swindon is above the national average (291 children in care when scaled to the Swindon population). 21.7% of children in care were placed more than 20 miles away from their home address as at the end of March 2017, up from 18.8% at the end of March 2016; this is above the national average of 13%.

**Adoption** - 19 children were adopted between April 2016 and March 2017. In the previous year there were 6 children adopted. A further 19 children also became subject to special guardianships between April 16 and March 17. Swindon was below the national average in 15/16, but performance in quarter 3 for 16/17 has shown improvement, and this will be monitored closely going forward. 34 children were on placement orders, which will reflect in further adoptions during 17/18.

**Timeliness of Adoption** – The average number of days between becoming looked after and being placed for adoption is still high, at 649 days at the end of March 17 based on the 3 year rolling average as reported in the adoption scorecard published by the Department of Education annually. This compares with 593 nationally (2012-2015). Swindon's performance has improved since end of March 16 when 905 days was recorded. We know this figure is also higher due to the legacy of poor performance in previous years as well as the complexity of the children that were found placements. The majority of children are placed well within national threshold.

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**Strengths**

- The number of special guardianships shows these are being used as a good alternative to adoption where in the child's best interests.
- Adoption timeliness has remained good for the majority of children, with a very small number of cases where needs were complex, skewing the average. The number of adoptions is higher than in previous year

**Challenges/Risks**

- Reduction in placement stability for children looked after
  - Higher number of children looked after brings resourcing impacts on placement options
  - Increase in unaccompanied asylum seeking children and their placement requirements
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## Children, Families and Community Health Quality Assurance Framework

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Children, Families & Community Health have continued to strengthen and embed its Quality Assurance Framework. The scrutiny role of the Quarterly Performance Board which oversees the audit and performance activity has continued to be more challenging with clear expectations for all managers to embrace their QA role, especially in relation to audits as well as practice improvement. The Board continues to review the Key Quality Indicators (KPIs), its Performance indicators and has now introduced the monitoring of action plans from Serious Case Reviews and their learning. It can consider qualitative as well as quantitative information, as well as its key performance indicators for improvement (known as “obsessions”).

Monthly Case File Audits have continued to take place throughout the year and in Q4 we had our highest return showing the improvement with embedding this practice. We have continued to commission 6 independent audits to measure against our internal judgements of practice. It is reassuring to note that the findings are similar. The judgements given regarding these audits across the year were that practice requires improvement with some elements of good practice.

In this year we have also evaluated the refreshed child protection conference model. As part of this we had feedback from partner agencies and parents who attended. This feedback was very positive. We also dip sample protection plans and observed conferences and can confirm that the model is working well however due to the high staff turnover of conference chairs the consistency of practice and further embedding is required.

The Independent Reviewing Officer's team has continued to increase their escalations where they see that practice requires improvement and this process is becoming more embedded.

### Strengths

- Clear evidence of the areas which need to improve.
- A proportionate approach to the audit and survey work we do so that we can concentrate on skilling the workforce with the skills and knowledge to provide “good” practice and service to the children and families in Swindon.

### Challenges/Risks

- Continued focus on consolidating the learning through audit activity and for teams to understand the journey of the child and what ‘good’ looks like.
- Staff turnover and permanent recruitment to the IRO/CP Chair teams so that consolidation and embedding of practice can continue.

### Performance Assessment

The service has commenced on a project to develop a workforce strategy and action plan for the whole of the Children's Service. Working closely with relevant teams across the authority, this project will make use of best practice – both within and outside the organisation.. Progress and achievements on this work will be reported regularly. The project will focus on four key themes:-

- **Workforce Planning &** effective workforce analysis to meet our service users' current and future needs at the most effective cost.
- **Career Progression and Staff Retention**
- **Leadership and Management, Learning and Development**
- **Horizon Scanning** - Identify and respond to the issues that have the potential to change or that present significant new or changed knowledge and skills needs for the department over the medium to long term.

#### **Social Worker Recruitment:**

Our focus on recruitment, development and retention of social workers (SW) and their managers has achieved a reduction in SW Vacancies from 42.5 at September 15 to 7.5 at 22nd May 2017. The current vacancy rate stands at 6% (well below the national average of 14%). Following a successful investment bid, an additional 12 social work posts and 1 Independent Reviewing Officer post have been agreed and these posts will be incorporated into the establishment which will increase the number of vacancies to be filled over the coming months. Further work on this area will be encompassed within the workforce development project within the service.

#### **Caseloads for social workers:**

Quarterly analysis is undertaken in relation to caseload weighting for social workers within the social work teams. In December 2016 caseloads were between 17-22 children per social worker in the long term teams. This can vary depending on the experience of the social worker and the complexity of cases.

In March 2017 this reduced to 16.4 children per social worker. The aim is to have an average of 15 children per social worker.

### Strengths

- Good progress in developing potential managers from existing workforce
- New Academy approach to developing Newly Qualified Social Workers introduced and assists in 'growing our own' social workers

### Challenges

- Continuous recruitment activity to reduce caseload for social workers

## Primary Education: Validated 2015/16 Results

### Performance Assessment

**Early Years:** Performance in the headline Early Years measures for Swindon pupils has fallen slightly below the national average. The percentage of Swindon pupils with a Good Level of Development is 68.8% (69.3% nationally), and the percentage of Swindon pupils meeting all 17 Early Learning Goals is 67.1% (67.3%) nationally. The average total points score from Swindon pupils (34.6) is still just above the national average (34.5).

**Phonics:** The percentage of Swindon Year 1 pupils achieving the required standard of Phonics decoding continued to increase, reaching 76% in 2015/16 (75% in 2014/15 and 73% in 2013/14). However, the gap between Swindon and England has grown. In 2015/16, 81% of Year 1 pupils in England achieved the required Phonics standard, up from 77% in 2014/15. The percentage of Swindon Year 2 pupils achieving the required standard of Phonics decoding remained level with the England average at 91%, having increased from 90% in 2014/15.

*The 2015/16 Key Stage 1 and 2 cohorts were the first to be assessed against the new, more challenging curriculum that was introduced in 2014. The results are now reported as scaled scores rather than levels. Because of these changes, Key Stage 1 and 2 figures for 2015/16 are not comparable to those for earlier years. A new measure of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is being reported from 2015/16, replacing the previous 'expected progress'.*

**Key Stage 1:** In Swindon, 71% of pupils reached at least the expected standard in reading, with 63% reaching the expected standard in writing and 70% in maths. The comparable figures for England were 74%, 65% and 73% respectively. The percentage of Swindon pupils reaching the higher standard for reading, writing and maths were 21%, 12% and 13% compared to 24%, 13% and 18% in England.

**Key Stage 2:** The attainment of Swindon pupils in tests was broadly similar to the national average. 67% achieved at least the expected standard for reading (66% in England); 70% reached this standard for maths (70% in England) and 73% reached the standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling (73% in England). Writing is assessed by teacher assessment. Only 60% of Swindon pupils were assessed as being at the expected standard for writing compared to 74% in England. This is very different to previous years when writing achievement was similar to the national average. Nationally, 54% of pupils reached the new expected standard in all of reading, writing and maths. In Swindon, this figure was 46%, with the gap due primarily to the writing assessment results.

The new progress measure compares pupil's Key Stage 2 results to those of other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment. A score of zero means pupils on average performed as well as those with similar prior attainment nationally. A positive score means pupils did better and a negative score means pupils did worse. The Swindon average progress scores for reading, writing and maths were -0.3, -3.6 and -0.4 respectively.

### Strengths

- Attainment in the KS2 tests continues to be broadly in line with the national results in reading, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling, as it had been in previous years and despite the higher expectations
- KS2 progress, from pupils' KS1 starting points, is broadly average for reading and maths

### Challenges/Risks

- Secure accurate teacher assessment in all subjects at the end of KS1
- Secure accurate teacher assessment in writing and science at KS2
- Improve the teaching and learning of phonics in Year 1

### Performance Assessment

#### Fixed term school exclusions (FTEs)

Figures for September 2016 to the end of March 2017, show that 1,304 Fixed Term exclusions were given to pupils, higher than the 1,231 given in the same period of the previous year. There is a considerable time-lag for official DfE exclusion figures (due to appeals, reviews etc.) but the 2014/15 data for the full academic year shows Swindon with a FTE rate of 5.6%, compared to 3.9% nationally and 3.8% regionally.

After last year's rise in primary exclusions, this year the number has stayed approximately the same. In the academic year to March 2017, 83% (1,078) of FT exclusions were given to secondary-aged pupils and 17% (226) were given to primary pupils; the previous year had 1,006 secondary and 221 primary exclusions. 21% (274) of pupils with an FTE in 2016/17 were Female, while 79% (1030) were Male.

Persistent Disruptive Behaviour is still the most common reason given by schools for exclusions, at 42% (545). This is followed by Physical assault against Pupil (15%, 202 pupils), Verbal Abuse against Adult (14%, 187 pupils). The average length of a FTE is 1.76 days, compared to 1.63 for the same period in 2015/16.

#### Permanent school exclusions (PEX)

41 children have been permanently excluded from Swindon schools in 2016/17 (up to end of March 2017); this is 2.5 times as many as in the same period of the previous year (16 pupils). In addition to formal permanent exclusions, parents/carers of a further 19 pupils who had reached the point of permanent exclusion, accepted their Head Teacher's offer of a 'withdrawn permanent exclusion'. This is a local agreement implemented from 2009 which is part of the Swindon Fair Access Protocol and enables pupils to move on without the stigma of a formal permanent exclusion. During the same period in 2015/16, 16 parent/carers had accepted permanent exclusion withdrawal.

33 PEXs were from secondary pupils, while 8 were primary-aged (in 2015/16 this was 12 and 4, respectively). 6 PEX were from Year 11. 36 pupils with a PEX in 2016/17 were Male while 5 were Female.

2014/15 national data show Swindon with a 'Permanent exclusions as percentage of school population' rate of 0.09%, in comparison to 0.07% nationally and 0.08% regionally.

### Strengths

- Swindon challenge initiative

### Challenges/Risks

- Fixed term exclusion rates still above the national average rate
- Over representation by vulnerable pupils receiving school exclusions
- More children permanently excluded in this academic year so far than in the whole of the previous year

## Performance Assessment

In January 2016, the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in Swindon was 3.8%. This is higher than the 2.8% reported for England and Statistical Neighbours. These figures are published annually in July, but for Swindon the latest census in January 2017 shows a small reduction in this figure to 3.7%.

It is worth noting that, in 2015, Swindon received more requests for assessment per 10,000 population than Statistical Neighbours and England. However, despite Swindon's figure remaining stable in 2016, England and Statistical Neighbour requests have increased notably. In Swindon in 2015 the rate was 39.0 per 10,000 population and 40.4 in 2016. Statistical Neighbours have increased from 28.6 to 43.4 and England from 34.2 to 45.0.

During 2016, 191 new EHCPs were issued; this compares to 147 for 2015. As a rate per 10,000 under 18 population in 2016 Swindon had 39.0, this is higher than England (30.9) and Statistical Neighbours (28.8).

In the calendar year 2016, Swindon issued 65.4% of EHCP plans within the required 20 weeks (excluding exceptions) a huge improvement on 37.6% for 2015. Swindon also performed better on this indicator in 2016 compared to Statistical Neighbours (59.7%) and England (58.6%).

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms require authorities to convert SEN statements to EHC Plans by July 2018. Of statements and LDAs open as at January 2016, Swindon had converted 26.6% of these by January 2017, this is in line with Statistical Neighbours (26.7%) and lower than England (34.4%).

Commissioners are working closely with partners to refresh Swindon's SEND strategy and develop an action plan to drive improvement. This has included the development of a SEN performance dashboard and audit framework to track progress. A "turning the curve" exercise has been undertaken to address the high prevalence of children who have a statement/ EHC plan in Swindon. The resulting action plan being developed will focus on:

- Ongoing review of SENRAP (Special Educational Needs Resources and Assessment Panel).
- Workforce development re quality first teaching.
- A review of the SEN funding formula including the notional SEN budget to increase the funding to schools without the need for a statutory plan.

## Strengths

- Embedding the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms
- SEN Performance Dashboard and audit framework development completed

## Challenges/Risks

- Higher rate of children who are SEN compared with the national average
- Conversion rate for statements to EHC plans

## School Attendance, NEET, Participation in Learning and Youth Unemployment

### Performance Assessment

*The DfE introduced a more rigorous Persistent Absenteeism threshold from 2015/16. Pupils are now classified as PA if they miss 10% or more of all possible sessions – up from 15% in 2014/15.*

**Primary School Absence** has experienced a rise, bucking the previous downward trend, with a figure of 3.9% for the Autumn term of 2016/17, up from 3.4% in the previous year. This, however, reflects a similar rise to 3.9% nationally and 3.8% regionally. In terms of Persistent Absenteeism, 10.2% Primary pupils (1,715) hit the threshold in the Autumn of 2016/17, up from 8.6% in 2015/16 (1,595 pupils). Primary persistent absence in Swindon is now a little higher than national (10.0%) and comparable to regional (10.2%) averages, both of which have also risen for this period compared to last year.

**Secondary School Absence** has also increased, with a rate of 5.1% in the Autumn of 2016/17, up from 4.6% in the previous year. This is a little above the national average (5.0%) and in line with the regional average (5.1%), both of which are increases on last year. In terms of Persistent Absenteeism, 15% Secondary pupils (1,703) hit the threshold in the Autumn of 2016/17, up from 13% in 2015/16 (1,454 pupils). Persistent absence in Swindon is still above regional (14.1%) and national (13.4%) figures although both of these have also risen compared to last year.

Locally reported monthly absence data show both primary and secondary absence rates are higher than this time last year (3.8% and 5.4% respectively compared to 3.4% and 4.8% in April 2016.)

#### **Pupils attending good or outstanding schools**

As of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016, 94% of Swindon primary pupils were attending good or outstanding schools, above both the national (90%) and regional (92% averages). However, only 48% of secondary pupils were attending good or outstanding schools, compared to 82% in England and 88% in the South West.

#### **Post-16 activities of young people: NEET, participation in Learning and Youth Unemployment**

January 2017 figures show that the proportion of 16-17 year-olds **in learning** (education or training) activities in Swindon, at 91.5%, is up on the previous year (89.3%) – a difference of 62 young people, out of a possible 4500. The learning rate is currently below the national average (92.2%) and South West average (91.8%). Looking at previous years we know that Swindon is quick to track most destinations before the October data submission. However 'In Learning' national and regional figures will start to level between November and December.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to track young people's post-16 activities, with the primary aim of identifying those not participating so that support can be provided for those to take on positive activities. The proportion of young people in '**unknown**' activities was 2.9% (145) for 16-17 year-olds in January 2017, 2.3%pts lower than the previous year, (5.2%), relating to 274 young people. This is equal to the national and regional averages. The proportion of 16-17 year-olds that were **NEET** in Swindon as at January 2017 was 2.9% (145 young people) – higher than last year's figures of 2.3% (121), and just above the national average. The increase of NEETs can be mostly explained by more young people being tracked, therefore moving from the Unknown cohort to NEET.

In terms of the wider cohort (16 to 24 year-olds), the **Youth Unemployment rate** - *those working out of all those 'available' for work* - was on average 11.6% during October 2015 to September 2016, compared to 12.6% in 2014/15 and compares favourably to a national average of 14.0% and regional average (12.8%).

### Strengths

- Primary and secondary school absence rates lower than the national average
- Reduction in the youth unemployment rate (16-24's)
- An increase in young people 'In Learning' and a drop in the Unknown rates

### Challenges/Risks

- Persistent Absenteeism & % pupils attending good or outstanding secondary schools
- Keeping our figures stable and performing in line with national average

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## NEET – in relation to Care Leavers

### Performance Assessment

As well as reporting NEET for the Swindon population as a whole there are also some key measures in relation to NEET and EET that are reported to the Department of Education as part of our statutory reporting responsibilities for our care leavers.

We have a responsibility to keep in touch with our care leavers up until the age of 21 and promote, encourage participation in learning opportunities. We also have a responsibility to actively monitor whether young people are engaged in Education, Employment and Learning activity.

#### Care Leavers in NEET (Low is good)

Care leavers who are NEET decreased from 48.3% in 15/16 to 44.3% (77 out of 174 young people) in 16/17. The 14/15 National average was 39% & Statistical neighbour was 39.3%. Although a positive direction of travel since 14/15, Swindon is still above national and statistical neighbour average.

**Relevant context of NEET population:** 19 of the NEET care leavers (10.9%) were due to disability or illness as at the end of March 2017. This is higher than the 8% recorded nationally in 15/16, and is higher than the 9.1% outturn for 2015/16. 5 (2.8%), was due to parenting responsibilities; lower than 20% for 2015/16 and lower than the national average of 6%. The reason for the decrease in this group in January 17 is that a number of young parents moved out of the NEET cohort as turned 22.

#### Care Leavers in EET (High is good)

Care leavers EET increased from 48.9% in 15/16 to 55.2% in 16/17 (96 out of 174 young people) - National 14/15 comparator was 48% and the Statistical Neighbour average 46.6%. High is good for this performance measure, and we are now above national average. This is positive.

### Strengths

- EET has increased significantly from last year and is now in line with national average
- Swindon has a very low number of “unknowns”, meaning that we are in touch and actively engaged with our care leavers .
- Care leavers in NEET has reduced during 16/17

### Challenges/Risks

- Swindon has a high number of NEET with a disability compared with others, and routes to EET for this group is challenging



#### Number of Young People committing offences for the first time – First Time Entrants (FTE)

The locally set target is to maintain low numbers of first time entrants (FTEs) into the justice system. Based on previous year's outturns our local target is to have less than 30 first time entrants into the justice system per quarter. Whilst investigating the discrepancy between national and local FTE figures we have recently identified that system issues have resulted in local reporting being understated. We have therefore undertaken some significant data cleansing and reproduced the FTE figures for the whole of 2016/17. This revised reporting shows **26 FTE's in Q4, 2016/17** which is better than target and shows a decrease from its peak of **38 in Q2 2016/17**. The cumulative **full year** position for **2016/17** is **124 FTE's**. Work is continuing in terms of reconciling National and Local datasets however the Police are unable to confirm from their records which of the data sets are used by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to record against Swindon FTEs. For this reason, the YOT is arranging to enter into a data sharing agreement directly with the MoJ who will then be able to provide details of names, dates of birth and outcomes for checking against local data, for both pre court and post court disposals. The timetable for completion of the data agreement suggests that it will be around July/ August before the YOT has secured all the data it needs to reconcile figures on first time entrants to the satisfaction of all parties.

#### Re-offending rates

Nationally published datasets show Swindon's re-offending rate has been reducing year on year since it's peak of 43.2% in 2012/13. Latest data shows Swindon's reoffending rate at 36.6% for Apr 14 – Mar 15 which is lower than the national average of 37.7%. Whilst the decrease shown is welcome it does not reflect current data, trends or concerns. The overall re-offending rate for **2016/17** was **14.8%** which is significantly lower than previously recorded figures.

#### Strengths

- Re-offending rates continuing to show a positive direction of travel both on national and local reporting datasets

#### Challenges

- Ensuring cautions and pre-Court disposals are used appropriately and consistently.
- Reconciliation of PNC and local datasets for First Time Entrants to ensure data is accurately reported and guides strategy (including possible pre-court / charge interventions).
- Locally identified issues of offences involving possession of, or use of weapons (including knives) and ensuring a partnership response in tackling this.
- Continuing and predicted on-going reduction in core funding.

### Performance Assessment

**Healthy Child Programme – Health visiting data was only available for quarter 3 at the time of reporting. Full year data will come to the next committee meeting.**

#### Breastfeeding

Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 weeks was 48.7% of all eligible babies (747) during Quarter 3 of 16/17 (up from 47.1% in Q2), compared with 44.1% nationally and 40.4% for Statistical Neighbours. The coverage in Q3 was 95.4% in Swindon which is in line with Q2 16/17 at 95.9%. Nationally, coverage in Q3 was 88.4% and for Statistical Neighbours it was 87.6%. Coverage is measured in terms of all eligible babies receiving a 6-8 week visit from their health visitor.

#### Health Visitor Contacts

Following the change of reporting on this data from CHIMAT to Public Health England, Q3 data for comparators was still unavailable as at 1<sup>st</sup> June.

There were 450 antenatal visits by Health Visitors at 28 weeks in Quarter 3 of 16/17, this compares to 463 in Quarter 2.

New Birth Visits were completed for 99% of eligible babies in Quarter 3 (78% before 14 days and 21% after). Nationally, this figure was 98% in Q2.

In quarter 3, 6-8 Week Reviews were completed for 86% of 747 eligible babies by the time they were 8 weeks old, which is higher than the 84% reported for Swindon in Q2 and the 82% reported nationally for Q2.

12 Month Checks were completed for 79% of 747 eligible children prior to them reaching 15 months in Q3. This has increased from the 78% reported in Quarter 2, but is lower than the Q2 national figure of 83%.

2-2.5 Year Checks were completed for 75% of 780 eligible children in Q3, increasing from 72% in Quarter 2 but lower than the national figure of 78% in Q2. In Q3, of those visited, 75% had a developmental test (known as ASQ-3 test), completed compared with 80% in Quarter 2.

### Strengths

- Coverage for the 6-8 week visit and breastfeeding advice remains high and is above national performance.
- The vast majority of new birth visits are taking place within 10 days

### Challenges

- 12 month checks have improved considerably since Q1 (7.4ppts), but still have a gap of 4.6ppts compared to national performance.
- Following an increase in Q1 of antenatal visits, in Q2 it has dropped slightly. This will need to be monitored to ensure it stabilises.