

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
COUNCILLOR	PORTFOLIO	DATE
Mhairi Doyle	Children Services	December 2022

Children's Social Care

- We are starting to see the positive impact of Targeted family support, Family time and the Academy on Social Work caseloads in Help and Protection. These are starting to reduce to enable social workers to focus on support and intervention with families. This is further supported with the launch of the court teams which will focus on children in care proceedings.
- The Academy is now into its second month. This service will be fully recruited to by January 2023.
- There has been a review of social workers terms and conditions, to improve recruitment and retention.
- Adverts for the new MY SPACE service are now live. Launch due in January.
- Work with Leeds is ongoing, we have reviewed the initial implementation plan we are now focusing on specific areas of practice such as assessment and plans and devising a training package for our team managers and Social Workers.
- Support from Together to Children is ongoing and they are now moving their focus onto child in need and child protection
- We have extended the short breaks family support team within CWCN, this is already showing positive outcomes and ensuring children stay at home with families and creating some cost savings.
- We are in the process of reviewing our financial offer for Care Experienced children and Foster carers.
- Risk assessments are being reviewed and updated on children who are in unregulated homes (children who are not in Ofsted registered provision)
- We are holding a session with semi independent providers in January on the new Ofsted quality standards. 70 providers have been invited and it will be an opportunity to look at what the new regulations mean, how we can support registration and a chance for informal networking.
- Senior management oversight continues to take place weekly on children in Unregulated homes, homes outside of the borough, children approaching adulthood and children who's permanence plan has not yet been achieved.

Youth Justice Service

Performance

Sefton's performance against the current Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) is positive. The current indicators are reoffending, First Time Entrants (FTE) and the use of custody. The First Time Entrants numbers have reduced marginally, and the reoffending rate has also reduced. This does not reflect the levels of need and complexity that children accessing the service present, although the new suite of KPI's will provide greater context. The new reporting arrangements commence in early 2023. Custody rates, specifically remand have also reduced.

Audit Plan

YJS has refreshed the Audit Plan to capture some areas identified for development. A recent audit for out of court work identified some areas that framed a staff workshop, resulting in additional Practice Standards being created to ensure improvement. A further workshop is planned for January 2023, and this will focus on Transitions to Probation. The workshops support and demonstrate the YJS commitment to improvement.

Turnaround Programme Funding

The Ministry of Justice has awarded Youth Justice Teams a sum of money to strengthen the prevention offer. Sefton YJS has been awarded £250K between Dec 2022 to end March 2025. The programme plan is being developed as whilst the eligibility criteria is tight, there is flexibility for interventions and delivery. The intended cohort of children is those at the point of entry into the criminal justice system, the aims of the project are to prevent offending and improve outcomes for children.

Community Connectors

Localities managers have successfully secured additional funding for Community Connectors from the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership. This project is in response to recent case mapping for girls within the Youth Justice system in Sefton. The funding will be used to recruit four Community Connector posts who will work with girls to support their mental health needs and reduce their offending and risk-taking behaviour. The project also includes raising suicide awareness through school's settings.