



Haringey Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee

MONDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 2011 at 19:30 HRS - .

MEMBERS: Councillors Amin, Davies, Hare, McNamara and Rice(Chair)

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of late items of urgent business. Late items will be considered under the agenda item they appear. New items will be dealt with at Item 11 below.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is being considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of the consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member' judgement of the public interest.

4. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 8)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 06 December 2010.

5. MATTERS ARISING

6. CAF ACTION PLAN UPDATE (PAGES 9 - 16)

Members to consider an update on the CAF Action Plan presented to committee in December 2010.

7. FIRST RESPONSE PROCESSES AND PLANNING (PAGES 17 - 22)

This report provides information to advise the committee about the service provided by First Response and the process by which referrals relating to Children and Young People living in Haringey and believed to either be in need of support or at risk of harm are managed and appropriate action taken.

8. UPDATE ON JANUARY ASSESSMENTS (PAGES 23 - 34)

In September 2009 Members took part in a training session on Initial Assessments, and as part of that session looked at the performance data for Haringey. This report will provide an update on that data and will include information about assessments available for the training session.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the items below as they contain exempt information as defined in section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by section 12A of the Local Government Act 1985); paras 1&2; namely information relating to any individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

10. FEEDBACK ON CORE AND INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

The committee to discuss and provide feedback on core and initial assessments received at the previous meeting on December 06th 2010.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Date of next meeting 7 March 2011

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MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**MONDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2010**

Councillors Amin, Davies, Hare, McNamara and Rice (Chair)

Apologies None received

Also Present: Hilary Corrick, Marion Wheeler, Alison Botham

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
CSPAPC 20	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE No apologies for absence were received.	
CSPAPC 21	URGENT BUSINESS There were no items of urgent business submitted.	
CSPAPC 22	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest put forward.	
CSPAPC 23	MINUTES The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. It was noted that Cllr Davies had been a member of this committee in the previous municipal year and it was agreed that the minutes be amended to reflect this.	HDLMS
CSPAPC 24	FUTURE OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE At the previous meeting of the committee there had been discussion on its terms of reference, role in the committee structure, function and purpose. The Chair had met with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to discuss these issues further and compile proposals on the future of the committee for consideration at this meeting. Similarities of the committee's role to scrutiny and its position in the committee structure was discussed. It was felt that the committee was correctly aligned to the Cabinet as an Advisory Committee. This provided the committee with a long term status and allowed linkages to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee to be made. The Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee was constructed to work in parallel to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and	

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	<p>had duties for overseeing the Council's responsibility for children in need, particularly focussing on safeguarding. This included children that are at home, looked after children and children who would come into contact with safeguarding policies. Members noted that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee was also responsible for looked after children and focused on: improving their life chances, ensuring children had a voice in the safeguarding process, providing an advocacy function within the children's trust, and the council, on behalf of children in care, monitored the quality of their care and ensured that they had sustainable arrangements for their future and wellbeing.</p> <p>Members agreed that the profile of the committee should be raised and there should be more awareness of the committee's work. This would be assisted by increasing officer attendance at meetings and by amending the constitution of the committee so that it was more in line with the arrangements for the Corporate Parenting Committee. Clarification was sought on the current constitutional differences between the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Safeguarding Policy and Practice committee and these were outlined.</p> <p>It was important that the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee continue undertaking detailed case scrutiny into chosen day to day safeguarding practices as this was an essential qualitative function not carried out by any other committee in the Council. The Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee role was dissimilar to role of the Child Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committee which was involved in considering quantitative information and scrutinizing the overall performance of the child protection service.</p> <p>Members requested performance related reports on the daily activities of the safeguarding service and noted that these types of reports had been considered by the past membership of the committee. However thought would be given to adding performance related reports to committee's work programme for the year.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the committee be reconstituted and work along similar lines to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee with a report compiled for Cabinet seeking ratification of this 2. That the role of the committee, in terms of detailed case scrutiny and the understanding of safeguarding policy, procedures and performance be unchanged. 	<p>DDC&F HLDMS</p> <p>DDC&F</p> <p>HLDMS</p> <p>DDC&F</p>
<p>CSPAPC 25</p>	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for</p>	

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	<p>consideration of the items below as they contain exempt information as defined in section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by section 12a of the Local Government Act 1985); paras 1&2; namely information relating to any individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
<p>CSPAPC 26</p>	<p>CAF ACTION PLAN</p> <p>The committee considered the common assessment framework (CAF) action plan which set out activities undertaken to address issues highlighted in the audits of CAF practices undertaken in August and September. These actions would not take account of the recommendations made in the recent follow up audit work completed in November as there would not have been time to consider these proposals and add potential actions to the plan.</p> <p>The committee noted the particular issues highlighted for action in the audits which were: evaluation of assessments undertaken which had resulted in no additional service being required, level of information on CAF activity on Framework I and the backlog of CAF's to be reviewed by a manager. Members were advised that the CAF Panel continued to monitor cases where there was no service allocation agreed. Where there was poor quality information supplied on the CAF form, this was followed up by the CAF Panel, with referrers, to ensure important information was supplied. In response, to the detail of information held on Framework I concerning CAF decisions, we noted that the decisions taken by the CAF Panel were checked and ratified before addition to a child's record on Framework I which, usually meant that there was a delay in adding this information to the system following the panel meeting. The timescale for clearing the backlog of CAF cases for decision was by the end of the year.</p> <p>Clarification was sought on the training provided for referrers completing a CAF form. We were informed that Social Workers were already aware of the basic requirements of the CAF form, learned through their training. There were sessions provided by a combination of council officers and partner representatives for staff that are and should be undertaking CAF's. A new programme of training sessions on the due to start in Jan 2011.</p> <p>The committee noted the CAF action plan and agreed that it be a standing item on the agenda to enable them to be kept informed of the continuing work to clear the backlog of cases.</p> <p>There was concern expressed on the purpose, length and format of the CAF and whether it was always the right solution when seeking an additional service for a child. The committee however accepted that the information provided by the CAF could enable professionals at a CAF Panel meeting to detect any serious underlying issues the child maybe encountering. Also the discussion between the referrer and the parent, which the completion of the CAF form initiated, was recognised by the</p>	<p>AB</p>

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	<p>committee to be important in its own right.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a progress report on the actions, particularly the backlog of cases, in the CAF Action Plan be considered at our next meeting in January. 2. That a workshop session between the CAF Panel, referrers, and the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee is arranged to take place in the first quarter of the new year. The Independent Member in collaboration with the CAF Panel chair will devise a programme for this session. 	<p>AB</p> <p>AB/HC</p>
<p>CSPAPC 27</p>	<p>CAF AUDIT OF CASES</p> <p>The Independent Member of the committee had completed follow up work on a sample of CAF's assessed by the CAF Panel at their June meeting. The Independent Member had been commissioned to speak with the participants (referrers and parents) from the cases that she had audited from the June panels. These cases were disproportionately cases where the CAF Panel had decided they were not eligible for service, no further action was agreed, and where there was insufficient information provided.</p> <p>The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is essentially a tool for identifying a child's needs, what was working well in their life, then putting in place a plan to make sure they get the support they need. Members were reminded that a CAF is only used where the child has an identified need which is below the threshold required for access to social care services, when completion of an initial and core assessment is necessary by a Social Worker. The CAF Panel meetings allowed professionals to assess the range of services a child may require and share existing information held on a child. The CAF Panel meets twice a month and had a wide attendance with appropriate officers/professionals that could make decisions and recommendations on CAF forms received.</p> <p>When considering the responses from the CAF audit and follow up work, it was important for the committee to examine these results with a note of caution as this was a qualitative study and the results were not designed to provide performance information on the CAF process. We learnt that half of the parents spoken to who had not obtained an additional service for their child, had been positive about the process as it had led to discussion about their child's needs with a professional (the referrer). Some referrers, not obtaining an additional service for a child, had been successful through an alternative route. Other referrers had expressed dissatisfaction about the process when not receiving a</p>	

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service. There was negativity noted about the length of the application with requests made by referrers for a simpler form, particularly when there was a single service required such as speech therapy. Generally parents were more positive about the CAF process than referrers. There was frustration expressed by participants about lack of feedback from the CAF Panel when a service was not agreed and about delays in service provision after a service had been agreed. This raised questions about the level of involvement of participants in the decision making part of the CAF process.

The committee discussed the importance of communication and how this was important in ensuring that referrer and parents had reasonable expectations about the CAF process. They suggested a need to ensure that referrers were aware, before the start of the CAF application, of all the routes to additional services and likelihood of receiving a service through these processes. They further suggested that participants should be encouraged to seek services such as speech /language therapy, EPS, or childcare more directly with the service instead of through the CAF. This could in turn contribute to reducing the number of cases deemed ineligible for an additional service and save time for the CAF Panel.

The performance of the CAF Panel was discussed and clarification sought on how its work compared to other boroughs. It was noted that the last external feedback on the service found it to be performing well in relation to the number of assessments completed. There were also emerging national recommendations which advocated the sole use of CAF for agreeing additional services around a child, with a low threshold of need, which the Council was already in line with. Members noted that any proposed amendments to the CAF process and monitoring arrangements for decisions made by the Panel would need to be considered together with the current capacity of the service in mind. We were assured that officers were continually looking at the most efficient and effective way of dealing with CAF applications whilst also keeping to key safeguarding requirements such as information sharing.

After considering the findings of the Independent Member study and discussion of these issues the following recommendations were put forward:

RESOLVED

1. That the CAF Panel should consider undertaking or commissioning a review of time scales, both for consideration of CAF assessments by the Panel from receipt of the assessment and also for the provision of agreed service.
2. That the CAF Panel should consider how the CAF Panel discussion could be recorded in Framework I, and whether it is possible for this to be done during the Panel meeting.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. That the CAF Panel should consider some focused work with referrers about the possibility of simplifying the CAF form to make it more accessible. 4. That the CAF Panel should consider with service providers whether a full CAF is necessary for the provision of single services such as EPS and Speech Language Therapy, and whether it would be possible for schools and health professionals to apply direct for some services in some circumstances. 5. That the CAF Panel should consider providing more detailed feedback to referrers. 6. That the above recommendations from the committee are communicated to the Cabinet member for Children and Young People, in the form of a letter, for agreement and implementation. 	HLDMS
<p>CSPAPC 28</p>	<p>EXAMPLES OF CORE AND INITIAL ASSESSMENTS</p> <p>Committee members were provided with examples of recent core and initial assessments to aid their learning and understanding on how a child's need was assessed. We noted that an Initial Assessment for children in need would be completed in 10 working days. Core Assessments were completed for children with complex needs. These should be completed within 35 working days. Where there is evidence of significant harm a Child Protection Core Assessment is completed within 35 working days. Training was provided to the committee on the safeguarding work and processes followed by the Children & Young People in June 2010</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That training information provided on the services and processes in safeguarding be re - circulated to Members of the committee for reference purposes. 2. That Members return the copies of initial and core assessment documents provided to the next meeting and raise any issues or queries they have. 3. That training sessions on relevant safeguarding issues are added to the committee's work programme. 	<p>HLDMS</p> <p>All to note</p> <p>MW</p>
<p>CSPAPC 29</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>20th January 2011</p>	

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COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2010**

Cllr Reg Rice
Chair

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Briefing for:	Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee	Item number	3
Title:	CAF Action Plan Update		
Lead Officer:	Alison Botham MDT Co-ordinator		
Date:	12 th January 2010		
Cabinet member input and introduction			

1. Issue under consideration

Update on CAF Action Plan presented to committee in December 2010. See CAF Action Plan Up Date Appendix 1.

2. Background information

This update to the previous action plan sets out the current status of previously outlined action plan.

3. Options for consideration

To consider the update outlined in appendix 1.

4. Comments from the Chief Financial Officer

N/A

5. Comments from the Chief Legal Officer

N/A

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Briefing for Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee

Appendix 1

CAF ACTION PLAN Jan 2011 Update

January 2011

Introduction

This is an up date report on the CAF action plan November 2010 that set out the activity to address issues highlighted in two audits of CAF practice undertaken in August and September 2010.

Specific case issues had been highlighted and these have been addressed individually and therefore the action plan does not address individual case progress.

The particular issues highlighted for action in the audits were

- Consideration and evaluation of the numbers of CAF's undertaken and presented to the CAF panel that resulted in no additional service allocation
- Concerns about the Framework I data base and whether the reports provide the right information about CAF activity
- The back log of CAF's waiting to be reviewed by the CAF manager and the delays in a number of CAF's then getting to the CAF panel for consideration.

In addition we have considered the recommendations of Hilary Corrick's follow up work undertaken in November 2011. The CAF panel Chair is arranging a workshop for the CAF panel, referrers and key members of the Integrated Working Strategy Group. This workshop will take place in March 2011 and will consider the current arrangements in relation to the following

- agreed thresholds for CAF assessments
- the use of the nationally agreed CAF format including the possibility of
 - simplifying the CAF form to make it more accessible
 - whether a full CAF assessment is necessary for the provision of single services such as EPS and SLT
- the panel arrangements, timescales and whether it would be possible for schools and health professionals to apply direct for some services in some circumstances
- How to ensure that CAF panel feedback can be further improved to ensure effective planning for individual children and continue to improve CAF assessment practice.

Briefing for Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee

Appendix 1

CAF ACTION PLAN Jan 2011 Update

January 2011

	Agreed action	Timescale	Outcome/Comments	Jan 2011 update
CAF's considered at CAF panels that result in no service allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate overall percentage beyond the panels in June considered by the auditor. 	November 2010	The percentage of CAF's presented to panel in the quarter April – June 2010 was 25% and therefore in the panels held in April and May the percentage where no service was allocated was less than 25%. The preceding year the overall percentage was just less than 25%, and figures since June indicate that the figure is less than 25%.	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review a sample of decisions where no service was allocated to ascertain whether the decision was appropriate 	October -November 2010	<p>Reasons for non allocation of service vary, and a review of decisions indicates that almost all were appropriate. Key reasons for non allocation of service include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessor to undertake more work and case to return to panel at an agreed date CAF assessment provides enough information and indicates that no additional service is warranted. This is often a decision that the CAF manager cannot make out side panel as it depends upon the professional expertise of the service/s represented at panel Insufficient information to understand the child's needs. These CAF's are generally identified by the CAF manager who will contact the assessor to ask them to undertake 	Complete

Briefing for Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee

Appendix 1

CAF ACTION PLAN Jan 2011 Update

January 2011

	Agreed action	Timescale	Outcome/Comments	Jan 2011 update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor percentage of CAF's where no service is allocated at CAF panel on an on going basis. Ensure that reasons are evaluated and feedback is given to settings undertaking CAF's about why this is happening. 	On going	<p>more assessment work or to provide more information. However there are instances where this cannot be achieved and in the interests of minimising delay for the child the CAF is presented to panel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This review of cases did highlight that since the new FWi system the minutes and decisions at panel in some parts are inserted from a drop down menu which does not reflect all the above options. This will be considered with the FWi team at a meeting scheduled in early December. In addition the chair and minute taker need to ensure more detailed minutes of decisions and the reasons for the decisions. This has been actioned with immediate effect. <p>This monitoring is taking place and themes in relation to assessment practice are informing the CAF assessor training that will start in January 2011. In addition feedback is given through SENCO forums and to Health Visitors by the senior manager representatives on the CAF panel. The overall quality of CAF assessments continues to improve.</p>	<p>The percentage of CAF's considered by panel in the last quarter of 2010 was down to just less than 10% i.e. 20 cases out of 227.</p>

Briefing for Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee

Appendix 1

CAF ACTION PLAN Jan 2011 Update

January 2011

	Agreed action	Timescale	Outcome/Comments	Jan 2011 update
FWi data base and reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current CAF process with CAF manager and CAF co-ordinator and evaluate impact of using FWi. Identify system issues that may be impacting on the performance of the team and review with the FWi team Identify how the FWi data base has been set up identifying how it needs to be changed and improved to reduce the number of separate reports that need to be run. Arrange meeting with CAF manager, CAF co-ordinator, Chair of CAF panel, Service Development manager and FWI to agree changes to the CAF FWI system and data base. 	October 2010– Jan 2011	This work is in progress and meetings have taken place within the team. A meeting has been arranged to agree how to improve the FWi data base, and the reporting arrangements. This meeting will then be able to agree changes and a time scale for these.	Meeting took place in December with a meeting re reporting scheduled for mid January. Impact will be reviewed at the end of March 2011.
Back log	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAF manager to continue to ensure that all cases where the CAF has been undertaken by a Health Visitor, by a social worker, or is identified by an assessor as urgent are dealt with as a priority. These cases are all reviewed when they come in by the CAF manager who then prioritises activity on these cases. Review of backlog by MDT co-ordinator to ensure prioritisation is working effectively. 	On going October - November 2010	This is on going. Review of the back log undertaken by chair of CAF panel and she confirmed that prioritisation system is working. In addition	The additional panel in De most of the back log. An additional panel was also

Briefing for Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee

Appendix 1

CAF ACTION PLAN Jan 2011 Update

January 2011

	Agreed action	Timescale	Outcome/Comments	Jan 2011 update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan how to reduce the backlog. 	<p>October - December 2010</p>	<p>she reviewed and agreed the actions on the backlog up to end of October.</p> <p>Plan agreed to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ prioritisation system to continue ○ requests for SEN statement assessments to go direct to SEN team ○ CAF co-ordinator remit changed so that work that does not require review by CAF manager can be actioned by CAF co-ordinator. ○ Additional CAF panel agreed to take place mid December to clear Back log ○ If all back log cases are not cleared by the additional panel consideration will be given to some CAF's being agreed by an additional special panel to be held before Christmas. ○ In addition provisional plans will be put in place for one further additional panel in January if necessary ○ Plans are being considered to increase the capacity of the CAF team on an on going basis. 	<p>held on 7th January, and the back log of CAF cases cleared.</p> <p>We also have additional CAF management arrangements in place for January and February 2011.</p> <p>The need for ongoing additional CAF management capacity will be reviewed in February 2011</p>

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Haringey Council

Briefing for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Panel
Title:	First Response Processes and Planning
Lead Officer:	Sylvia Chew, Head of Service, First Response
Date:	24 th January 2011

1. Introduction

This report is produced to advise the panel about the service provided by First Response and the process by which referrals relating to Children and Young People living in Haringey and believed to either be in need of support or at risk of harm are managed and appropriate action taken.

2. Team Structure

- 2.1 First response consists of 6 social work teams:
- The screening team** is a multi agency triage service consisting of a core team of Metropolitan Police, Health Visitors and Social Work staff. Aligned with this is an extended team including part time support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health, the Youth offending Service, Education Welfare and the police Child Abuse and Investigation Team. The role of the team is to screen all contacts and ensure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner.
- 2.1 **The 4 duty Teams** work on a rota basis to provide social work assessment and support to the 60 cases per week which meet the threshold for children's social care. Should families require long term social work intervention transfer occurs to the long term social work teams.
- 2.3 **The No Recourse to Public Funds Team (NRPF)** is a bespoke service for families with children who are destitute and unable to access public funding support. Many of these are single parent families with a history of domestic violence. The team works closely with the Home Office and Border Agency.



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- 2.4 The Emergency Duty Team (EDT)** provides an out of hours service to both adults and children outside office hours including weekends and Bank Holidays.
- 2.5 The Local Authority designated officer (LADO)** This specialist post co-ordinates the assessment and management of cases where an allegation is made against a professional.

3 Process

- 3.1** In keeping with the current computerised data system (FWI) information , queries and referrals into the service are all designated as a '**contact**' This typically includes notifications from the Police Public Protection Unit that a child has come to their notice (known as PACS. Police), information from the out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT), requests for information from other agencies and expressions of concern from members of the public or other professional bodies inside and outside the service , typically schools, health and adult social services.
- 3.2** Contacts come into the service either electronically, by post or by fax. All contacts are considered by a manager and are logged onto FWI. The latter process includes ensuring all personal details are recorded and family records are linked together to give an accurate picture. The number of contacts per week varies enormously but currently stands at between 100 - 150 per week. This is a significant reduction on 2009/2010 level and relates to increased work undertaken by the Public Protection Desk and increased confidence in partner agencies about their ability to manage risk through the Common Assessment Framework and universal services.
- 2.1** Consideration of each contact will lead to a variety of outcomes. These are made in keeping with Haringey's Threshold guidance. Some contacts will be designated for No Further Action. These would include police notifications relating to older Young People reported missing but who have returned home at a reasonable hour or Young People victims to petty crime.
- 2.2** At times the information received on the contact is insufficient to enable decision making. In this case the dedicated screening officers, all social workers, will ring the referrer for more information and to offer information and advice. Currently 60 – 70% of contacts into the service are managed in this way. This again demonstrates the ability of the multi agency screening service to advise and support families and professionals without the need for social worker intervention. Examples of work undertaken at this stage are requests for information from other agencies such as the courts, work with mothers who have acute post natal depression who can be supported by their health visitor and GP or parents who need to talk through issues around parenting an adolescent



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who is challenging boundaries but who can be supported by community resources.

- 2.3 In addition there is close liaison with the manager of the CAF Team. Some referrers will be offered a consultation with her to enable support to be provided via the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- 2.4 Contacts which require further action are designated as a '**referral**' on the FWI system. Currently this constitutes an average of 25.3% of all contacts. A key indicator in the ability of the screening team to manage this process is the conversion rate from referral to assessment. Currently our conversion rate is 92%, some 20% above national Averages.
- 2.5 Referrals of an urgent nature, such as those relating to Child protection concerns (between 10 -12 referrals per week) are dealt with immediately via a referral to the police Child Abuse and Investigation team (CAIT) and a strategy meeting. These referrals are actioned as part of our statutory responsibilities under S47 1989 Children Act. This relates to children and Young People at risk of significant harm.
- 2.6 Referrals of a less urgent nature are designated as Child In Need cases and will be actioned for Initial assessments and should be completed in 10 working days. Work on these cases is undertaken under S17 1989 Children Act which relates children and YP who may not reach their developmental potential without service provided by the Local Authority.
- 2.7 Subject to parental consent being given other agencies including GP, health and schools and other agencies as appropriate are contacted. The family home is visited, parents interviewed and the child seen alone if age appropriate. Parental consent will be dispensed with if the child if information collection is required to ascertain if the child is at risk of significant harm.
- 2.8 In the rare circumstances where parents do not agree to an initial assessment being completed the case is reviewed by a manager and the referrer contacted again. At this stage a decision is made whether the concerns are such that the matter needs to be escalated to a Child Protection Investigation, in which case other agencies can be contacted without parental consent in order to safeguard the child or whether no further action will be taken. In the latter instance the referrer will be advised and asked to contact the service if they have any further concerns.
- 2.9 Complex cases are subject to a core assessment, a more detailed piece of work taking 35 days.



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2.10 Contacts regarding children or Young People known to other parts of the service such as Children in Care or Safeguarding and Support are passed to the named service. Information about children known to other Local Authorities is passed to their allocated social worker.

3. Current referral rates and workload

3.1 The Service continues to assess the needs of large number of Children and Young People with 1555 families being the subject of an Initial Assessment and 926 children requiring a Core Assessment.

3.2 Following Assessment there are a variety of outcomes. Where it is safely possible families are supported to care for their children through the use of universal services or through a multi Agency Team around the Child following a CAF Assessment.

3.3 Some children's needs will be discussed at a Child Protection Case Conference. This is a multi agency forum where parents and professionals in the child's life meet to discuss and develop and plan to safeguard the child. It is chaired by an independent chair. Between April 2010 and December 2010 226 children and Young People were made the subject of a Child Protection Plan. Following the development of the plan case responsibility transfers to the Safeguarding and Support Services.

3.4 In a minority of cases children and Young People will come into Haringey's care. This occurs in a variety of ways and for some children may only be for a short period. Some children may come into our care as the result of Police Protection. This is an emergency measure and the result of police officers assessing that the child cannot safely be cared for at home. This could be because young children have been left home alone or in uninhabitable home conditions. Police Protection lasts 72 hours after which the child must either return home, remain in Haringey's care on a voluntary arrangement often referred to as s20 or via a court order

3.5 Some children remain in our care as part of a voluntary arrangement with parents. This is referred to as s20 after the section of Children Act relating to this. This arrangement is used primarily for older children or for short term arrangements, for example if a child or young person has no one to care for them.

3.6 Where it is assessed that a child cannot safely remain at home a court order will be sought. This can be on an emergency basis and called an Emergency Protection Order. This order lasts 7 days and can be extended for a further 8 days. It allows for the child to remain in a safe place such as a foster placement or hospital whilst assessment and investigation to take place



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- 3.7 Where it is assessed that Haringey may need to be the key partner in planning for the child's future needs including where they live an Interim care order may be sought. This gives Haringey shared parental responsibility with parents and the power to make plans for children and to keep them safe.
- 3.8 Once this piece of work has commenced and it is clear that the child or Young person will remain in Haringey's care, for example for the duration of court proceedings, then social work responsibility passes to the Long term Children in Care Team for planning for the child's permanency.

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Briefing for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee
Title:	Assessments January 2011
Lead Officer:	Hilary Corrick, Independent Member
Date:	24th January 2011

1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2009 Members took part in a training session on Initial Assessments, and as part of that session looked at the performance data for Haringey. This report is an update on that data and includes information about assessments available for the training session. The data used are nationally available data submitted in May each year to the Department for Education. Officers will be able to update Members about end of 2010 figures, especially in respect of timescales, which will be an area of concern for Members.

2. BACKGROUND

The Children Act 1989 placed a duty on local authorities **to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area**. Safeguarding has two elements: the need to protect the child and the need to prevent harm to them. Promoting a child's welfare has the wider meaning of maximising a child's opportunities for development.

A child is defined as **in need** if they are unable to achieve a satisfactory level of health and development without the provision of services, or are disabled.

In 2000 the Government published a **Framework for Assessment** to provide a systematic way of analysing, understanding and recording what is happening to children within their families and the wider context of where they live in order to support clear judgements as to whether:

- a child is in need;
- suffering or at risk of significant harm;



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and what actions must be taken and what services would best meet the needs of this particular child in this individual context.

The framework was based on evidence drawn from research and theories from a wide range of disciplines and experience of policy and practice.

Principles which underpin the Framework:

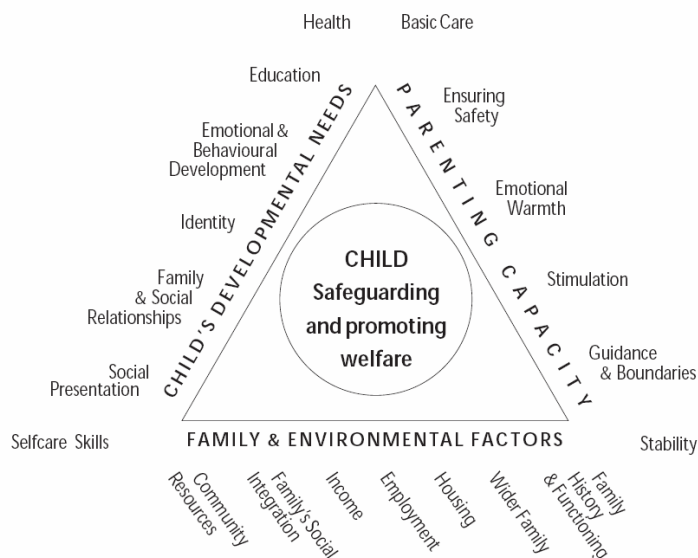
- child centred;
- based on child development;
- consider the whole context of the child’s life;
- involve working with children and families;
- focus on strengths as well as identifying difficulties;
- are inter-agency;
- a process not an event;
- do not delay the provision of services;
- ensure equality of opportunity;
- are grounded on evidence based knowledge.

Conceptual map

The Framework for Assessment provides a conceptual map for gathering and analysing information about a child, its family and the context in which they live. It requires a good understanding of the

- developmental needs of children;
- capacity of parents or carers to respond appropriately to those needs;
- impact of wider family and environmental factors on parenting capacity and child development.

ASSESSMENT TRIANGLE





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Process of Assessment

- Within one working day of a new referral or new information received about an open case, a decision must be made about what response is required.
- A decision to gather more information constitutes an Initial Assessment and this is deemed to have started from the point the referral or new information was received.

An Initial Assessment (IA) should include the following elements:

- Seeing the child, alone if age appropriate;
- Meeting family members;
- Gathering information from other agencies, usually at least two, and always with the permission of the parent unless there are grounds for believing the child to be at risk of significant harm.
- Analysing information gathered;
- Discussion with manager;
- Decision about action and services needed and to be offered;
- Feedback to referrer and family in writing.

Until the end of 2009/10 the timescale for IAs was completion within seven working days. From 2011/12 the timescale will be ten working days, and in 2010/11 both timescales are measured.

A Core Assessment is a more in-depth assessment which may take up to 35 working days from the end of the IA, or when a Section 47 enquiry (Child Protection) has commenced, or when new information has been received.

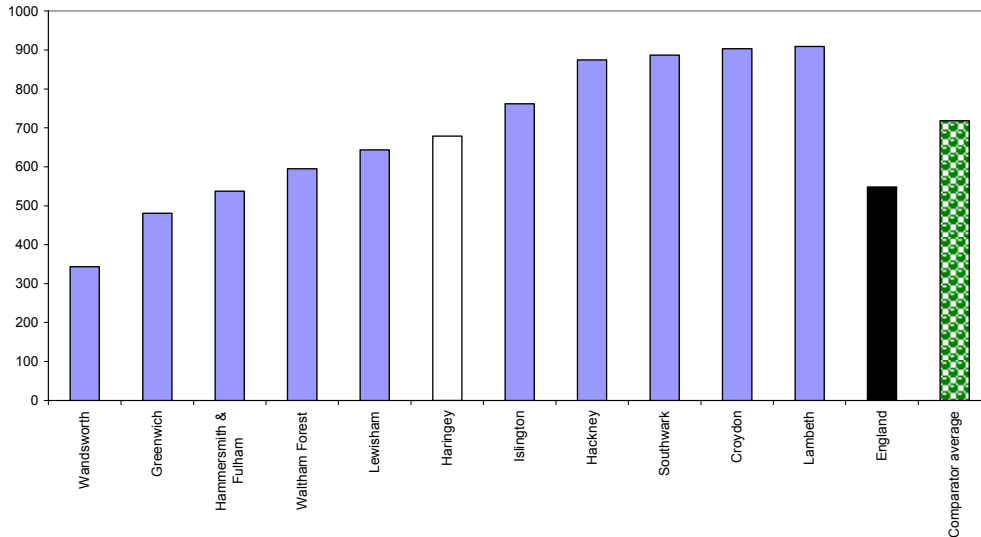
The format of the assessment documentation has been designed in age bands to support the understanding of children's developmental needs.

3. REFERRAL RATES

We discussed referral rates at the last meeting of the Panel and the proportion of referrals which proceed to an IA. Nationally figures are available for all local authorities for 2009 – 2010:



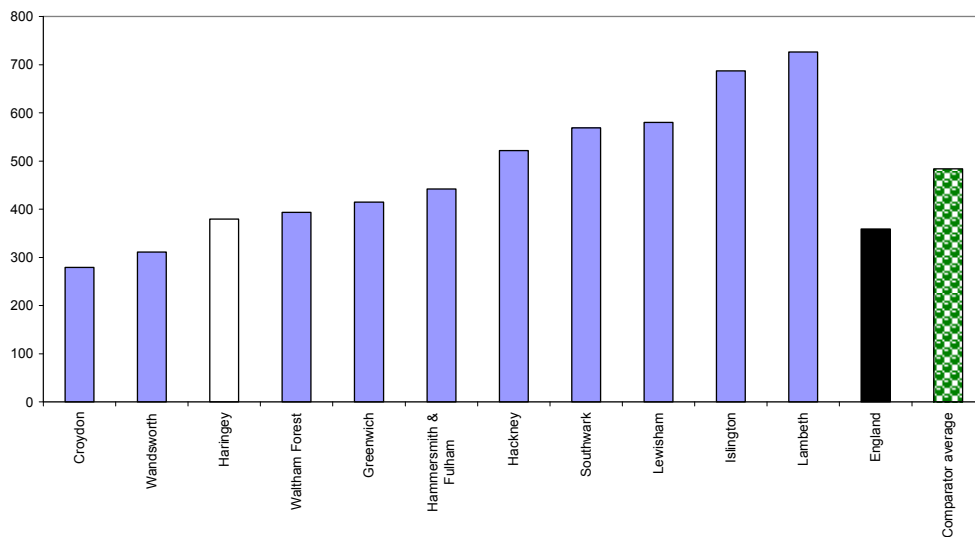
Referrals per 10,000 children, 2009/10



Haringey’s level of referrals per 10,000 children in the authority (678.7) is an increase from the previous year, 08/09, when it was 575. It is below the average for its comparator group (717.9).

4. INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

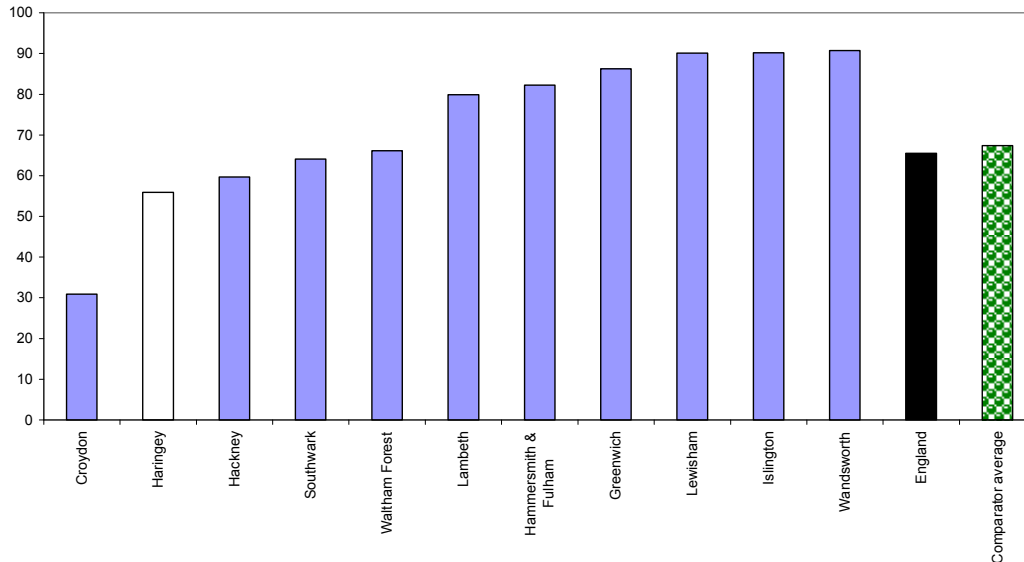
Initial Assessments per 10,000 children, 2009/10



Haringey’s level of IAs per 10,000 children (379.6) is below the average for its comparator group (483.7), although it increased from the previous year (255).



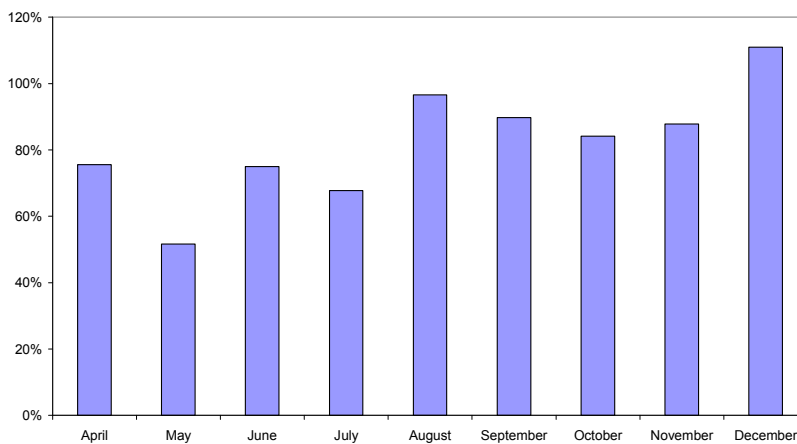
Initial Assessments as a proportion of referrals (former NI 68), 2009/10



Haringey’s figure for Initial Assessments as a proportion of referrals (56%) is below average for its comparator group (67%), although it had increased from the previous year (44%). This raises concerns for Members about eligibility thresholds and partnership working, suggesting that more referrals are being received that do not meet thresholds.

In 2010/11 rates increased, particularly in Quarter 3 of the year:

IAs as a proportion of referrals (former NI 68), monthly for 2010/11



Although there have been fluctuations over the year, this graph shows an improving trajectory. The cumulative figure for the year so far is 79% (based on data in monthly performance pack). Weekly data is available.

5. CONTACTS AND REFERRALS

Many children are notified to the service, especially by the Police, for information only. There may be an enquiry about a child for example. Everything that is received is deemed a **contact** and recorded. Contacts



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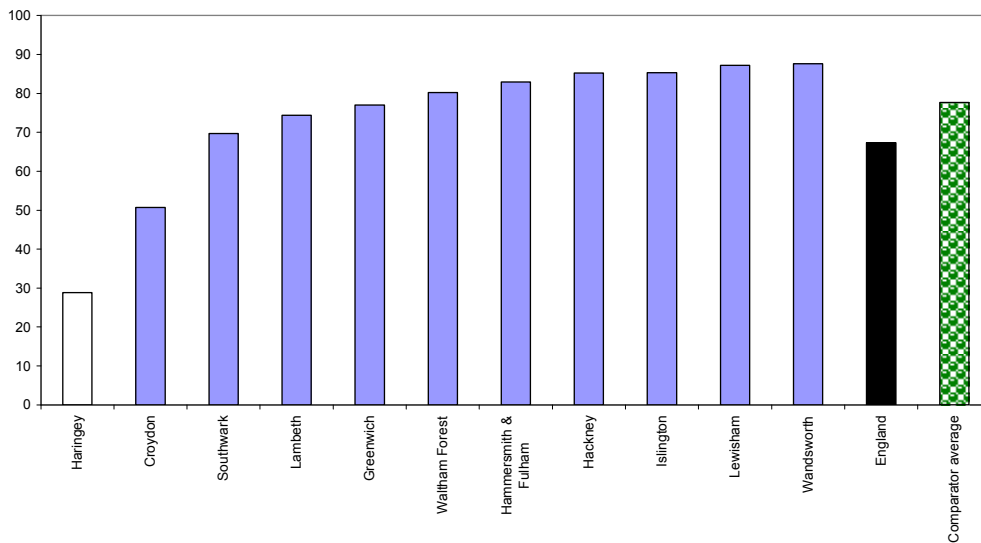
which require further action are designated as a 'referral' on the FWI system. Currently this constitutes an average of 25.3% of all contacts. A key indicator in the ability of the screening team to manage this process is the conversion rate from referral to assessment. Currently our conversion rate is 92%, some 20% above national Averages. This suggests that the First Response Service is very accurate in identifying those children who need further action.

Data is available on some inner London Boroughs and the proportion of contacts which become referrals, and the proportion of referrals which need assessment.

6. TIMESCALES

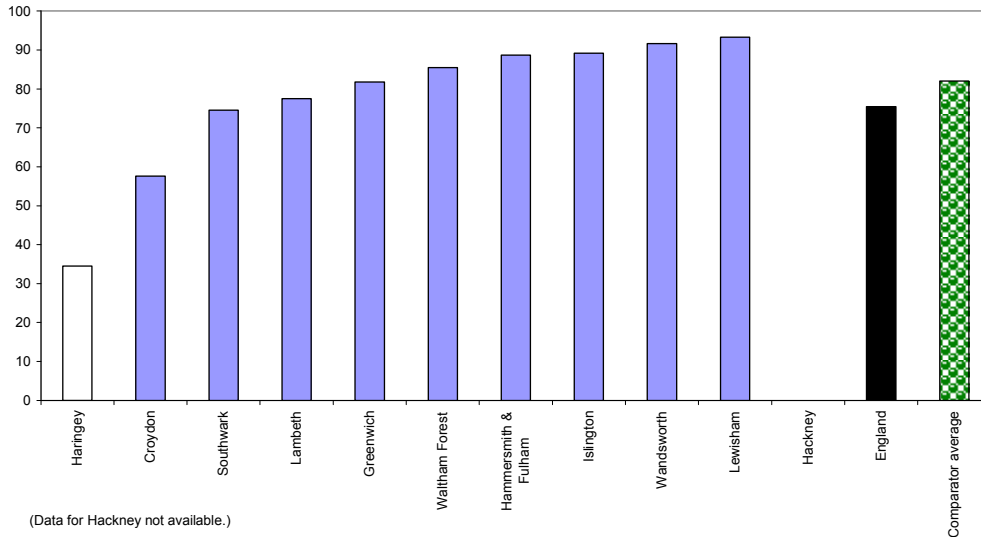
In 2009/10 the national timescale for Initial Assessments was to complete them within 7 days. From 2010/11 the measure will be 10 days. Many authorities began using the 10 day timescale in 2010. For 2009/10 both figures are available:

Initial Assessments within 7 days (former NI 59), 2009/10





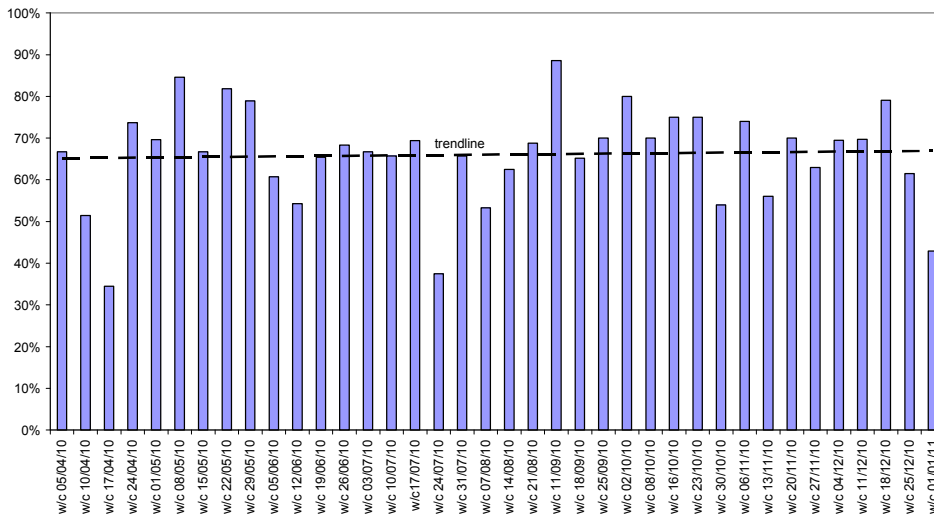
Initial Assessments within 10 days, 2009/10



Haringey’s timescales for both 7 days (29%) and 10 days (35%) for 2009/10 were the lowest in its group. The comparator average was 78% for 7 days and 82% for 10 days. Haringey’s figure for 7 days for the previous year was 79%, so this represents a considerable fall.

Weekly and monthly data for 2010 suggest that timescales are improving, though not yet up to the comparator average:

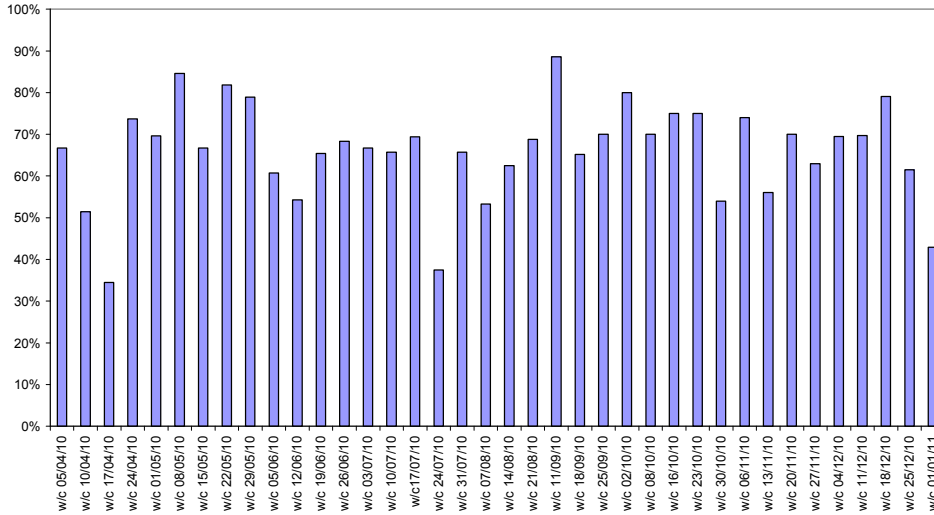
Initial Assessments completed in 10 days, weekly data for 2010/11



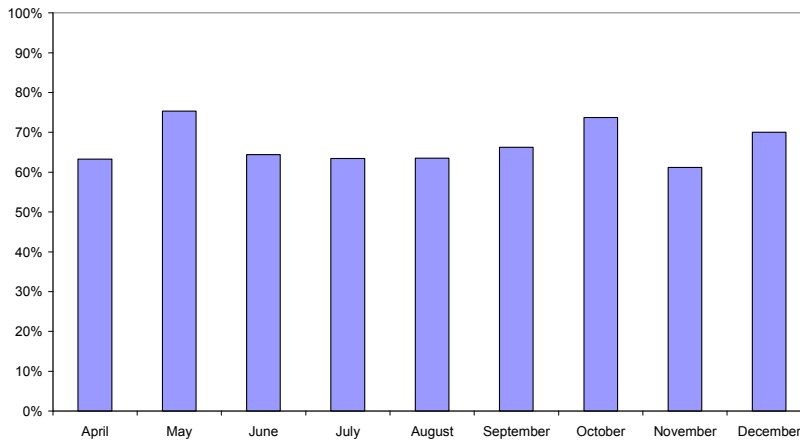


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Initial Assessments completed in 10 days, weekly data for 2010/11



IAs completed within 10 days, monthly for 2010/11



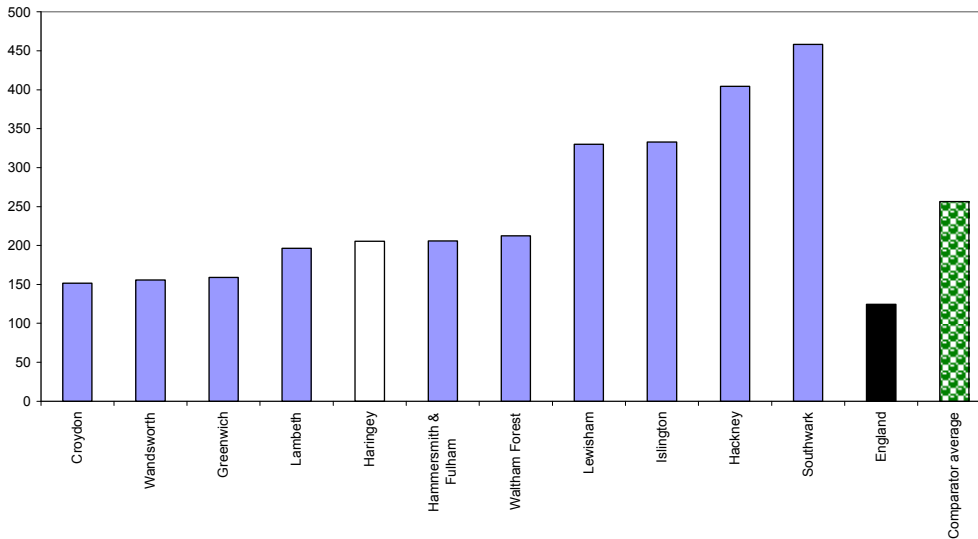
10-day timescales in 10/11 have improved from 09/10; the cumulative figure for the year so far is 67%.



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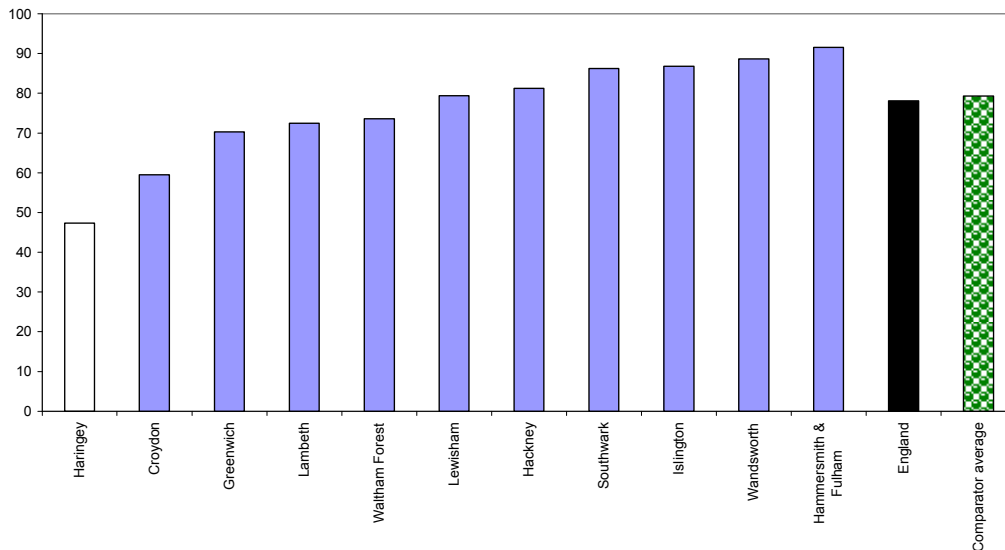
7. CORE ASSESSMENTS

Core Assessments per 10,000 children, 2009/10



Haringey’s rate of Core Assessments per 10,000 children (205.5) is slightly below the average for its comparator group (256.4), although as with IAs this rose from the previous year (166).

Core Assessments within 35 working days (former NI 60), 2009/10

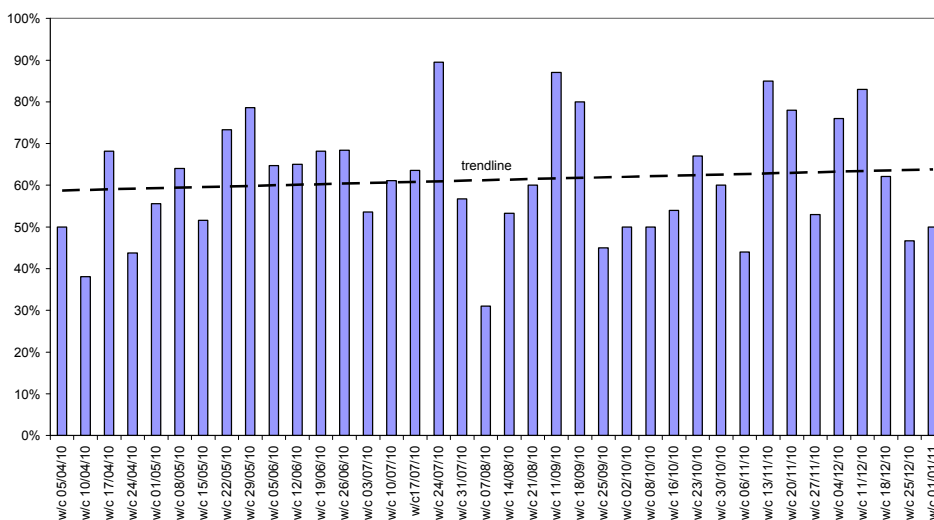


Haringey’s CA timescales (47%) are the lowest in its group. The comparator average is 79%. Haringey’s figure for 08/09 was much higher, at 83%.

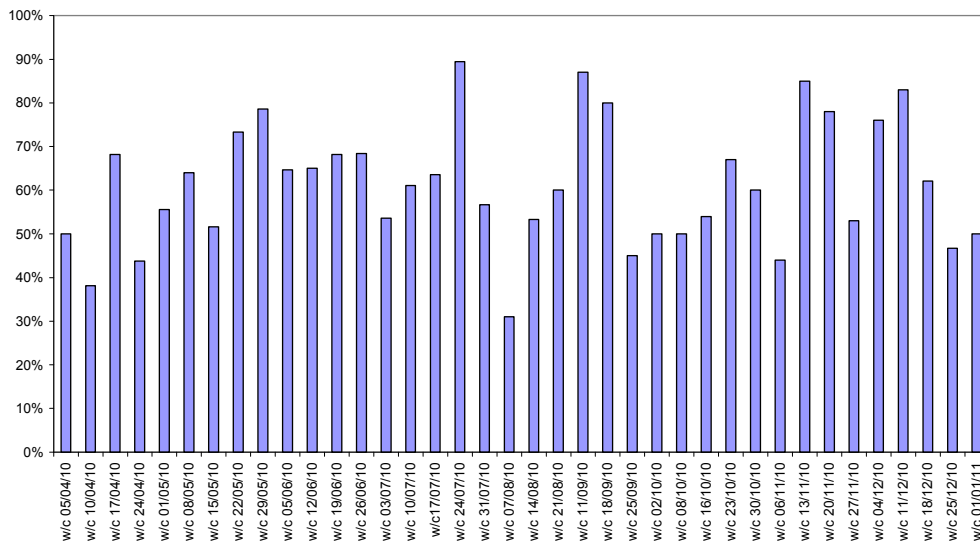


Weekly and monthly data for 2010 suggest that timescales are improving, as with IAs, though not yet up to the comparator average:

Core Assessments completed in 35 days, weekly data for 2010/11



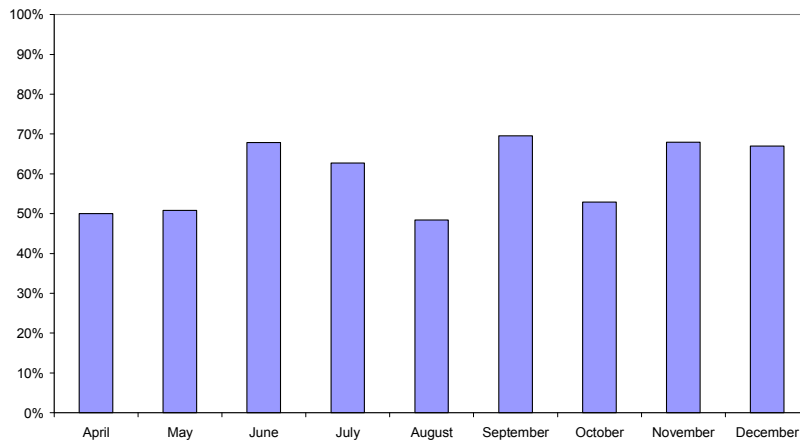
Core Assessments completed in 35 days, weekly data for 2010/11





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CAs completed within 35 days, monthly for 2010/11



Timescales in 10/11 have improved from 09/10; the cumulative figure for the year so far is 61%.

8. SUMMARY

Members now have some familiarity with the complexity of issues managed by the First Response Service and have studied some Initial and Core Assessments. The data suggest that the service is able to identify those children needing assessment at an early stage, but is less good at completing those assessments in a timely way. Timeliness is important but Members may also wish to be assured about the quality of assessments.

There may be questions too about how realistic plans to improve timescales are, given that the monthly data suggest a rather static picture.

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