

Report Title:

December 2005 and January 2006 Performance data for Children's ServicesReport of: **The Director of The Children's Service**Wards(s) affected: **All**Report for: **Information****1. Purpose**

1.1 To inform Members of CSAC of the Children's Service performance against national and local indicators.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members of CSAC are asked to endorse the contents of the report.

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Signature:

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3. Executive Summary

3.1 This paper contains children's social care performance data for December including data relating to looked after children, child protection, referrals and assessments, family support and staffing.

4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development

4.1 Not applicable

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

5.1 Not applicable

6. Background

6.1 This paper contains children's social care performance data for December 2005 and January 2006, including data relating to looked after children, child protection, referrals and assessments, family support and staffing.

7. Description

7.1 This report is the latest in a series of regular monitoring reports for CSAC

8. Consultation

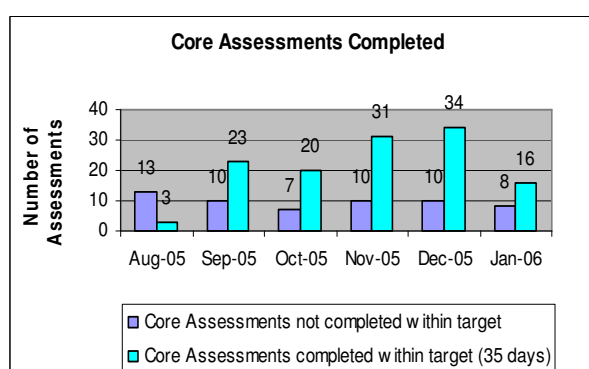
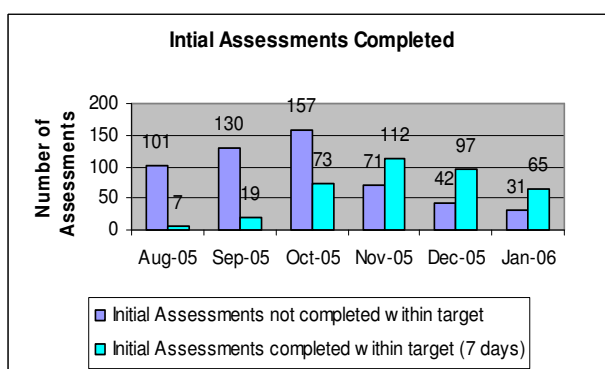
Not applicable

9. Summary and conclusions

December 2005 and January 2006 data

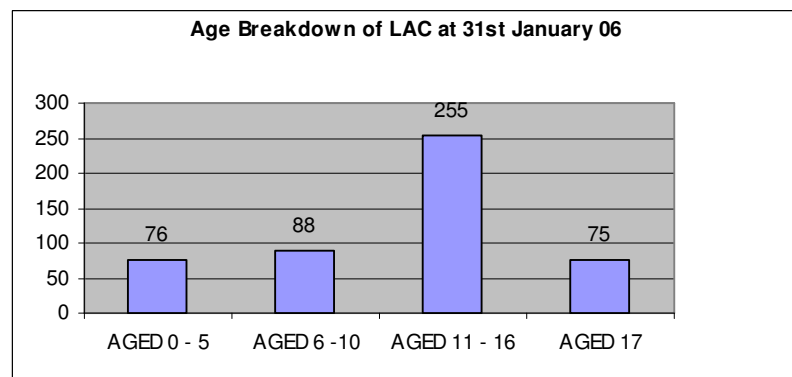
9.1 Referrals and Assessments

- 9.1.1 197 referrals were received in December and 206 in January.
- 9.1.2 70% of initial assessments were completed in timescale in December and 68% in January evidencing a sustained improvement in performance in this area over the past three months. The year to date position for initial assessments in timescale is 39.7%. Our outturn for 2004/05 was 56%.
- 9.1.3 77% of core assessments were completed in timescale in December and 67% in January again evidencing a sustained improvement in performance. This indicator now forms part of the PAF (Performance Assessment Framework – PAF C64) set of indicators from April 2005. Our outturn for 2004/05 was 50.6%. The average of our comparator Boroughs was 55.4%. Our current year to date position is 63.9%.



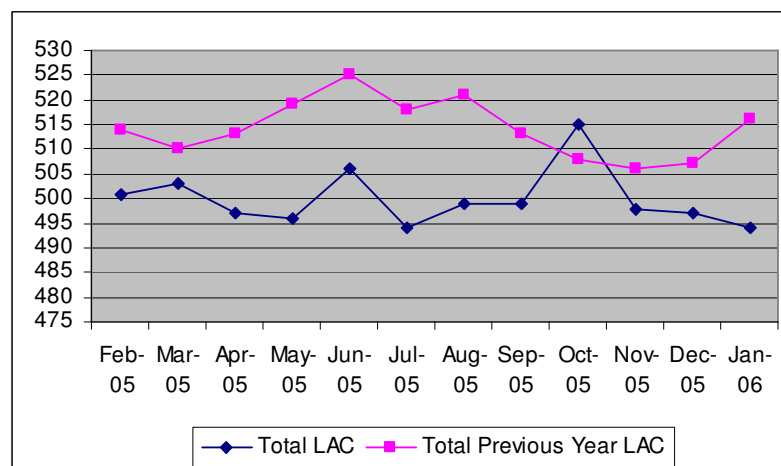
9.2 Children Looked After

9.2.1 The number of children looked after in December was 497 and this went down to 494 in January. The age breakdown of children looked after is demonstrated in the graph below:



9.2.2 At the end of December 93 LAC were unaccompanied minors and 92 at the end of January.

9.2.3 The following table demonstrates the differences in the total numbers of children looked after in comparison to the same period in the previous year. If we compare the number of children looked after at the end of January 2006 compared to the same time last year, we see that there are now 22 fewer looked after.



9.2.4 In December 15 children started to become looked after and 16 ceased. The figures for January were 22 starting and 15 ceasing. Care proceedings were initiated on 5 children in December and 4 children in January.

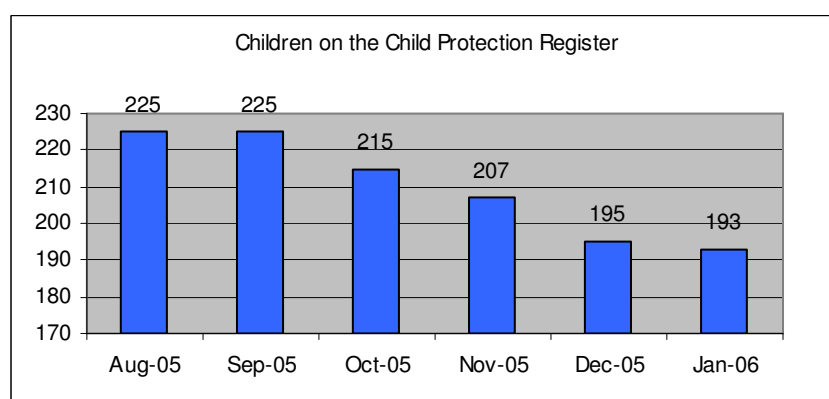
9.2.5 92.8% of looked after children had a review in timescale in December and 95.4% in January. Our year to date position is 93.8% and our target for 2005/06

is 96%. We need to at least maintain the level of performance achieved in January if we are to come very close to meeting our target.

- 9.2.6 In January 417 children required a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and, of those, 93% had one in place.
- 9.2.7 82% of looked after children had an up to date visit at the end of December and 82.9% in January. We are currently looking carefully at the recording of data about visits as we think this will improve our performance in this area.
- 9.2.8 The proportion of children looked after placed in foster care or placed for adoption was 74% in December and 73% in January. The proportion of children under 10 placed in foster care or placed for adoption (PAFC22) was 97% in December and January. Our outturn for 2004/05 was 98.4%, which put us into the top performance banding. From April 2005 this is no longer a PAF return.
- 9.2.9 The percentage of children who communicated their views to a statutory review (PAF C63) in December was 98.5% and 98.9% in January. Our outturn for this indicator was 93.7% in 2004/05 and our target for 2005/06 is 98%.
- 9.2.10 All looked after children had an allocated worker at the end of December. There was one child without an allocated worker at the end of January. This case has now been re-allocated. Our outturn for 2004/05 was 98.8%. In 2003/04 the average of our comparator boroughs was 97%.
- 9.2.11 Children missing from care – next update April 2006

9.3 Child Protection

- 9.3.1 The number of children on the Child Protection Register went down again in December to 195 and 193 in January.



- 9.3.2 Excellent performance around children on the Child Protection Register who were reviewed in timescale has continued throughout the year to date, with 100% of reviews being completed in timescale to the end of December. This dropped very slightly to 99.3% in January when one review was held out of timescale. The London average for this indicator in 2003/04 was 98%.

9.3.3 The percentage of children on the Child Protection Register who were visited in timescale in December was 92% and 90.2% in January. Our target for 2005/06 is 95%. This figure excludes those children registered in the last week of the month.

9.3.4 There were no children on the Child Protection Register without an allocated social worker at the end of December.

9.4 General overview of performance

9.4.1 This report shows generally good or improved performance across the range of statistical responsibilities. Our performance around allocation of children looked after and children on the child protection register remains good.

9.4.2 The number of family support cases without a named social worker was 6 at the end of December falling to 3 at the end of January. They were all in the Long Term Team in Tottenham. This number has reduced significantly over the past 4 months.

9.5 Key Thresholds

9.5.1 From April 2004, four of the PAF indicators now form part of the key thresholds that limit the judgements made for children's services if they are not met; these limits may in turn result in limits to star ratings. Current performance around these indicators is as follows:

9.5.2 PAF A1 – Stability of Placements of looked after children. This indicator looks at those children with 3 or more placements in the year. Our outturn for 2004/05 was 14.7%, which put us in the top performance banding (<16%). We have set a target to reduce this to 13% for 2005/06. Our performance at the end of January was 11.5%.

9.5.3 PAF C20 – Reviews of Child Protection cases. This calculates the percentage of children due a review in the year, reviewed in timescale. The 2004/05 outturn for this indicator was 100%. The year to date position for this indicator is 99.3%.

9.5.4 PAF A2 – Educational qualifications of looked after children. This indicator looks at all children aged 16+ who have left care in the year with one or more GCSEs at grades A*-G (or GNVQ equivalent). The 2004/05 outturn for this indicator was 34.2%. Our plan for 2005/06 is 45%. The year to date figure at the end of January is 34.4%.

9.5.5 PAF C23 – Adoptions of children looked after. By the end of March 2005 the percentage of children adopted was 5.1%. Our plan for 2005/06 is 6% (approximately 20 children). 13 children had been adopted by the end of January (3.9%) and a further 9 have dates scheduled for their final adoption hearing before the end of March.

9.6 Staffing

- 9.6.1 The staffing position in the Children's District Teams for the end of January is summarised in the attached appendix 1, including a breakdown of agency staff in service for less than 3 months and more than 3 months.
- 9.6.2 Both Service Managers are covered by permanent members of staff
- 9.6.3 There are 6 Senior Team Manager posts, 5 are covered by permanent staff, and 1 by an agency worker.
- 9.6.4 There are 14 Team Manager posts, 13 are covered by permanent staff, and someone is acting up into the other post.
- 9.6.5 There are 20 Senior Practitioner posts, 12 are covered by permanent staff, 5 are covered by agency workers and 3 are vacant.
- 9.6.6 There are 59 Social Worker posts, 22 are covered by permanent staff, there are 34.5 agency staff and 2.5 vacancies.
- 9.6.7 There are 10 Social Work Assistant (SWA) posts, 4.5 are covered by permanent staff, 2.5 by agency and 3 vacancies. There are 4 Social Services Officer posts, all are covered by permanent staff.

10 Recommendations

- 10.1 Members of CSAC are asked to endorse the contents of the report.

11 Comments of the Director of Finance

- 11.1 The activities mentioned above form part of the core activities of the authority for which budgetary provision in 2005/06 has been made.

12 Comments of the Head of Legal Services

- 12.1 Legal Services have been consulted on the contents of this Report and have no specific comments.

13 Equalities implications

- 13.1 The improving performance within the Children and Families branch of the Children's Service assists socially disadvantaged service users, especially children. The trend around growing numbers of children subject to safeguarding concerns suggests that more of these service users are being appropriately protected.

14 Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

14.1 Appendix 1 – Staffing, including graph on agency staff – length of time in service

14.2 Appendix 2 – Timescales for key indicators