



Date of Meeting: 15th July 2019

Lead Member: Cllr Andrew Parry – Lead Member for Children, Education and Early Help

Lead Officer: Sarah Parker – Executive Director for People – Children

Executive Summary:

This report provides information in respect of the Children who are Disabled (CWAD) Service performance and covers the year from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

As at 31.03.19 there were 49 children who are disabled in our care supported by the CWAD Service. Of these, 26 were placed with foster carers with 3 placed at home with their parents while subject to Care Orders. 18 were placed in residential care due to the level and complexity of their needs.

Timeliness of assessments has improved through the year, starting at 44.5% in Q1 and rising steadily throughout the year to 97% in Q4.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

N/A

Budget:

Risk Assessment:

N/A

Other Implications:

Recommendation:

N/A

Reason for Recommendation:

N/A

Appendices:

N/A

Background Papers:

N/A

Officer Contact

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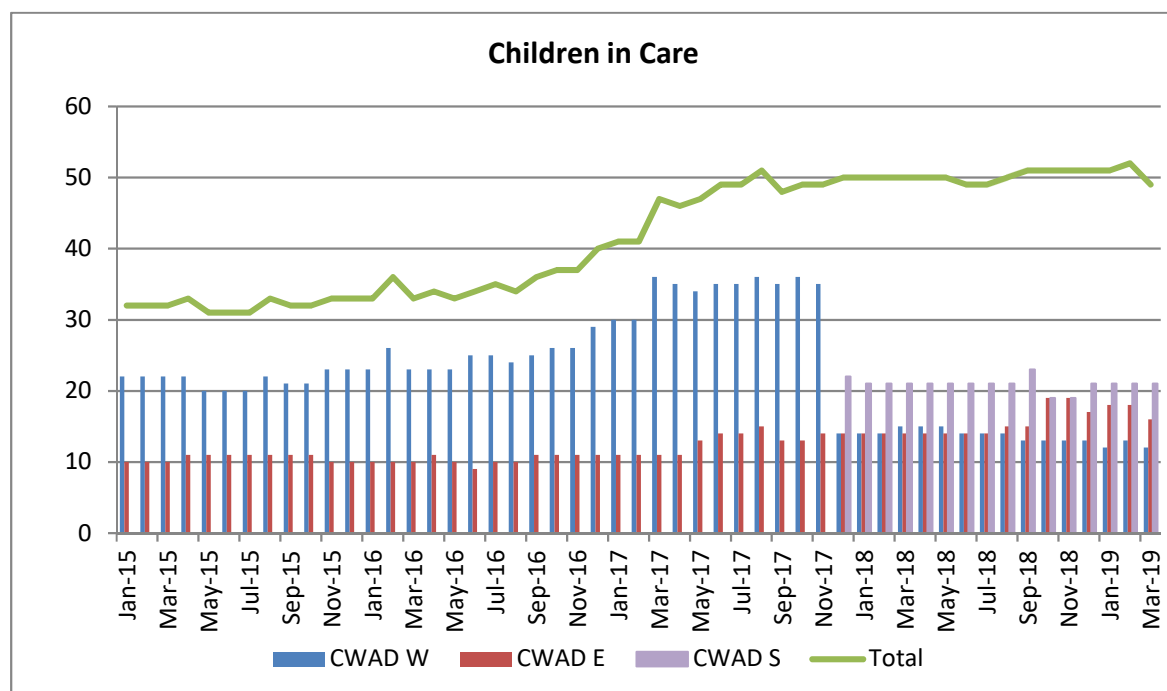
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Corporate Parenting Board Report June 2019 - Children who are Disabled

1: Introduction

- 1.1:** Dorset Council's Children who are Disabled (CWAD) Service provide support, care and protection services to children who have complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- 1.2:** There are three social work teams covering East, West and South areas. Paediatric Occupational Therapy and specialist Early Help services are provided on council wide basis and are located within the wider service structure.
- 1.3:** Staffing levels with the social work service have stabilised over the last 6 months having previously shown high levels of vacancies and staff churn. Vacancies remain in the Dorchester base. Staffing levels within the occupational therapy and early help services have remained stable throughout this period.
- 1.4:** The social work teams support both children who are disabled and are looked after and those that remain cared for by parents or carers in the community, including those children and young people in receipt of short breaks. The social work teams therefore provide both child in need and child protection services as well as services to looked after children on a specialist basis
- 1.5:** Some children who are disabled have multiple physical, intellectual and sensory impairments which result in substantial long-term difficulties in daily living. They can experience societal barriers and discrimination.
- 1.6:** Children who are disabled and who are looked after may have experienced abuse and neglect prior to coming into care and have been subject to care proceedings. However, many will be in care only because their needs are too complex for their parents or carers to meet safely within their family homes. Children in this latter group may pose a risk of significant harm to themselves or others by reason of their level of need and can require highly specialist care settings.

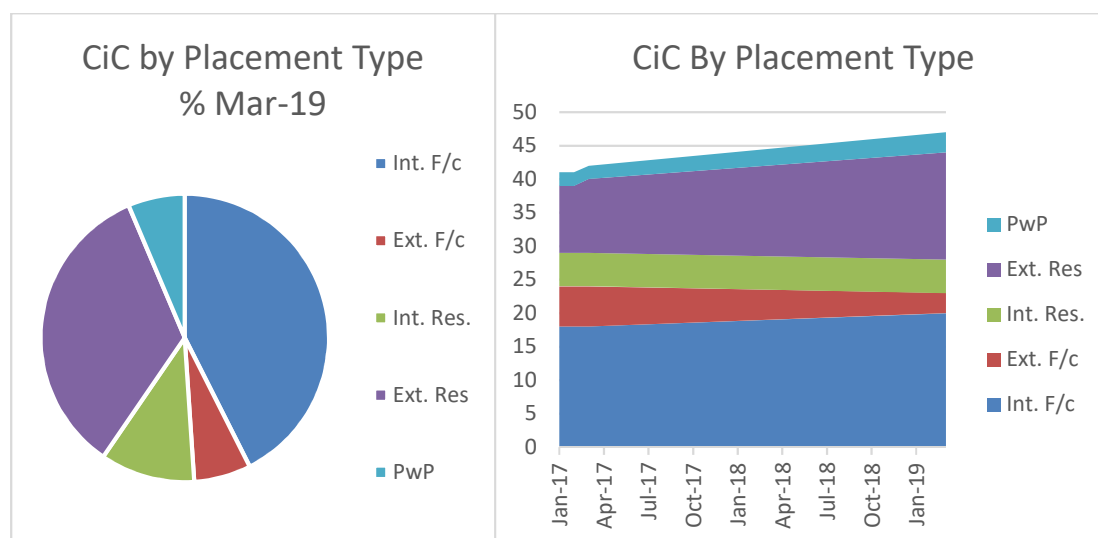
2: Children who are disabled and in care as of 31/03/19



Comment

- 2.1:** The 2016-17 increase in the number of children in care in CWAD teams does not reflect an increase in the overall number of disabled children in the care of Dorset but those allocated specifically to a social worker within CWAD. This was due to the expansion of the service criteria in September 2016 to include children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and those children transferring in from other social work teams into the CWAD service.
- 2.2:** The overall number of disabled children in care for Dorset has remained stable since January 2017
- 2.3:** Many children who are disabled are looked after in specialist placements where they receive intensive support due to their level of need. These are often outside of the Dorset Council area
- 2.4:** As of 31st March 2019, CWAD East had 16 children in care, CWAD West had 12 and CWAD South had 21 resulting in an overall total of 49

3: Children who are disabled and care: placement type as of 31/03/19



Comment

- 3.1:** 53% (26) of children were placed with foster carers (DC and IFA)
- 3.2:** 6% (3) children were placed with parents under placement with parent arrangements.
- 3.3:** 36% (18) children were placed in residential care of which 5 were placed at the Cherries
- 3.4:** 2% (1) young person was placed in a semi-independence placement (has since moved on)
- 3.5:** 2% (1) young person was placed in an unregulated placement with a plan for return home following completion of building work to the family home to give him his own bedroom. This building work has now commenced

4: Children who are disabled and in care: LAC Care plan and visit performance up to 31/03/19

Timeliness of Visit Status	Number of Visits	Percentage %
Completed Late	97	20.42
Completed on Time	369	77.68
Overdue	9	1.89
Total	475	100

Team	Total LAC	Total LAC 0-15	Total LAC 16+	Total Care Plans Completed	Care Plans last 7mths	Total Pathway Plans Completed	Pathway Plan last 7mths	Total with a Plan	% With a Plan	% Plans last 7 Mths
East	16	11	5	13	10	4	3	15	93.75	81.25
South	21	11	10	16	10	10	10	21	100	95.24
West	12	7	5	12	8	1	1	12	100	75
Total	49	29	20	41	28	15	14	48	97.96	85.71

Comment

- 4.1:** Numbers within CWAD of looked after children are relatively small and so percentages can be significantly impacted by 1 or 2 children numerically
- 4.2:** There will be a 4-week period after care entry when a LAC care plan has yet to be confirmed via LAC review which presents a challenge in maintaining a 100% performance figure for this Service
- 4.3:** Care Plan performance in CWAD showed improvement over quarters 3 & 4 (October 2018 – March 2019) across the service and this improvement has been sustained into the current reporting year
- 4.4:** East performance regarding care plans within 7 months dipped slightly in quarter 4 due to impact additional work to prepare cases for transfer to BCP due to LGR. Performance has now stabilised again within that team
- 4.5:** Visiting performance can be impacted by children who are looked after and having more than 75 nights short breaks but remain within the care of their parents and by those that are designated long term placements through permanence arrangements. Both such arrangements will have a less frequent visiting pattern agreed through LAC reviews but can show as late LAC statutory visits as the Mosaic report measures the fixed statutory visiting requirements. Work is now being undertaken on the Mosaic reporting to differentiate such arrangements and give improved accuracy of visiting frequency reporting

5: Assessments completed within the statutory 45 working days.

Team	Quarter 1: April – June 2018	Quarter 2: July – September 2018	Quarter 3: October – December 2018	Quarter 4: January – March 2019	End year performance full year 2018/19
CWAD East	47% (23)	61% (34)	71% (14)	94% (18)	67%
CWAD South	32% (28)	87% (16)	100% (15)	100% (12)	70%
CWAD West	33% (36)	39% (23)	100% (21)	100% (9)	58%
Total Service performance by quarter	Quarter 1 44.5%	Quarter 2 58%	Quarter 3 93%	Quarter 4 97%	66%
Total no of assessments	96	81	58	44	Assessments in year 279

Comment

- 5.1:** Assessment performance showed marked improvement over quarters 3&4 in 2018/19 from a low baseline in quarters 1&2. This was as a result of sustained focus and weekly management oversight.
- 5.2:** CWAD West were the last team to stabilise staffing and so did not show sustained improvement in assessment performance until quarter 3 when this was achieved
- 5.3:** It is important that all assessments are undertaken and completed within the maximum of 45 working days a timely assessment gives a more responsive service and support to families. It also ensures that those families that do not require social care involvement are linked to appropriate services appropriate to their needs quickly
- 5.4:** Strong assessment performance has been maintained so far into this reporting year by CWAD. Performance for Q1 2019/20 is 93% of assessments completed within 45 days across the Service

6: Summary

- 6.1:** The CWAD social work service has showed sustained improvement across a number of statutory requirements such as LAC visits and plan completion and assessment timeliness over the last three reporting quarters in 2018/19. These improvements have been sustained so far into 2019/ 2020 reporting period suggesting that the needs of children who are disabled and in the care of Dorset Council continue to be generally well met
- 6.2:** The number of children who are disabled and in the care of Dorset Council has remained largely unchanged for the past reporting year. This would suggest that families are continuing to be successfully supported to continue to care for their children within communities through short break provision and support. The most popular source of short break support continues to be through a Direct Payment with a small number of children with complex needs (and often challenging behaviour) receiving residential short break support
- 6.3:** There continue to be challenges in securing new placements, particularly for children whose behaviour challenges, and especially for those whose behaviour towards others can be violent and present risk.
- 6.4:** Additionally, there has been an increase in the identification of young people who may be at risk from Criminal Exploitation/ Child Sexual Exploitation and those who have missing episodes. This is due to the widening of the disability criteria for the service to include young people who have capacity to make choices that can result in them being potentially exposed to risk coming into the CWAD service, having previously been supported through District teams.
- 6.5:** Social Work recruitment to the Dorchester base continues to be an area of focus, while other teams have seen increased stability over the year.

Tanya Hamilton Fletcher
Service Manager Care and Support
28th June 2019