

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

1 DECEMBER 2016

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs McCoy

EARLY HELP PERFORMANCE UPDATE

1. Summary

The report provides Members with updated performance information regarding the delivery of early help, and updates from the report presented on 1 September 2016.

2. Recommendations

1. Members are requested to note and comment on current performance

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To ensure members are up to date on the implementation of early help.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that 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's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or

voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

1 DECEMBER 2016

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

EARLY HELP PERFORMANCE UPDATE

SUMMARY

The report provides Members with updated performance information regarding the delivery of early help, and updates from the report presented on 1 September 2016.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members are requested to note and comment on current performance.

DETAIL

1. Members agreed the revised approach to early help in July 2016.
2. That report included the outline of a performance framework for early help, which goes further than previous approaches and seeks to develop information with a clearer outcomes focus.
3. The framework for early help is based on the following elements:
 - a. Qualitative
 - i. Feedback / customer insight: what those in receipt of early help services are saying about the help and support they have received.
 - b. Assurance and audit: oversight of quality in case files, focusing on:
 - i. Assessment;
 - ii. Interventions;
 - iii. Outcomes.
 - c. Quantitative
 - i. Performance against an agreed set of indicators which can be measured over time. The indicators are set out below:

Indicator	Commentary
Increased use of Family Information Service (queries, web site hits plus feedback) plus increase in referrals direct to early help via website, phone line or email	This indicator provides a proxy measure for the effectiveness of online information and support. It does not measure quality or feedback at this stage but this will be developed further in 2016/17
Early help assessments	We will continue to track the numbers of early help assessments, the reasons for initiation and initiating agency. There will however be less of a focus on simply increasing numbers
Reducing number of Children's Hub contacts not meeting threshold	This indicator measures the understanding of thresholds – agencies should understand thresholds, and we should see a reduced number of contacts which do not meet the threshold for social care intervention and are referred to early help services, as these should be coming to early help direct.
Increased early years take up (2 year old disadvantaged numbers)	The provision of free childcare for disadvantaged children, and the uptake of this is a measure in the Council Plan. It measures our effectiveness in targeting the right families for services.
Quality of early years provision	Council Plan indicator. This indicator provides an overview of the quality of early years provision.
Reduction in children not school ready	School readiness is not a precise outcome to measure – the current proxy measure is therefore early Years Foundation Stage scores, which give an indication of the effectiveness of early years provision. We will add data on the integrated 2.5 year old check when this is available.
Reduced levels of mental health problems in children and young people	This indicator is a measure of behavioural issues which are often both a cause and effect of issues in families.
Reduction in CYP in workless households	This indicator is based on OND data and is therefore not as time sensitive as other indicators. However, it provides a measure of poverty and acts as an indicator of potential stress and potential conflict.
Reduction in CYP experiencing / witnessing domestic abuse	This indicator tracks the information from Operation Encompass and provides a guide to the prevalence of domestic abuse
Reduction in CYP experiencing parental mental ill health issues	This indicator is drawn from the factors identified at single assessment. Effective early help pathways should reduce this over time
Reduction in CYP experiencing parental substance misuse issues.	This indicator is drawn from the factors identified at CIN assessment. Effective early help pathways should reduce this over time
Numbers of children in need CIN numbers and rates	Numbers of children assessed as being in need through the single assessment process is an indicator of the effectiveness of early help provision, as children should in theory not need to be assessed for social care services. This is a relatively crude indicator of basic numbers
Numbers of children on child protection plans	This indicator is a relatively crude measure of whether early help services and interventions are reducing social care pressures
Numbers of children Looked After	This indicator is a relatively crude measure of whether early help services and interventions are reducing social care pressures

4. Current performance against these indicators where data is available is set out in Annex A.

Progress in the development of a framework to date

5. Qualitative – work is underway to develop additional customer feedback from those who have been involved in an early help process or who have received services. The current consultation on early years and children’s centres is seeking views on some of these issues as part of the redesign of this element of our approach to early help. This will be embedded and included in the process for 2017.
6. Assurance and audit - early help files are included in the LSCB’s multi-agency audit process, and the Integrated Quality Assurance Group process regularly undertakes an audit of early help cases. Audits have recently been undertaken, as part of the regular audit cycle, into the work of the Family Support Team, one of the teams within early help delivering a range of support to families below the social care threshold. These highlight an area of development around persistence and assertive approaches with families which is being addressed.
7. Quantitative - overall there is a good picture of progress. Although performance against a number of early help indicators is good, there are a numbers of areas to develop further. The following points summarise the current position further, and more detailed comments are included in Annex A:
 - a. Early help assessment numbers increased significantly in 2015/16, following a sustained focus from the Local Safeguarding Children Board and senior officers. Whilst high numbers of EHAs are a sign of early help activity, the focus has shifted in 2016/17 towards a focus on ensuring that a range of additional early help intervention continues to be captured. Therefore, whilst it is proposed to continue to increase numbers of EHAs undertaken, the number is not projected to increase at the same rate, and there will be an additional focus on capturing early help activity which does not require an early help assessment, such as activity delivered by health visitors.
 - b. There will continue to be a focus on the free childcare offer of 15 hours per week for disadvantaged 2 year olds, and although rates of take up have increased significantly since 2015, there has been a drop in take up in the last quarter. This is an expected reduction, as at the art of the new academic year, new families are not familiar with their entitlement, and additional development work is required to engage them.
 - c. The outcomes from Ofsted inspections of early years provision continue to be significantly above national rates.
 - d. A significant feature of the new early help approach is a focus on the toxic trio – domestic abuse, parental mental health and drugs and alcohol as these are major factors impacting on the safety and wellbeing of children. The framework therefore proposes to measure these as indicators of the effectiveness of early help overall. Currently measures are proxy indicators. The LSCB will focus on these issues in its new business plan for 2016-18.
 - e. The rates of Child in Need, numbers of children subject to Child Protection Plans and Looked After Children will continue to be measured as part of this framework, as they are indicators of whether early help services are helping to stem the numbers requiring more specialist social care interventions. There are signs that the rates of children classed as being in need are reducing, and for some time Stockton’s rate of new children being classed as being in need has been lower than regional and national averages.
 - f. Information on the numbers of children identified as young carers in receipt of support from Eastern Ravens Trust has also been included in this version of the performance framework, as this is a helpful indicator of this particularly vulnerable group of children and young people. The information illustrates increasing numbers receiving support.

There is more to do to ensure that the pathway for the identification and assessment of young carers is well understood and embedded.

Further development of the early help approach

8. A number of planning sessions have been held with partners to further develop the vision for early help, and to undertake process mapping as part of work to embed efficiency and consider LEAN approaches to service delivery. These sessions have identified a number of areas to focus on further, including the need to differentiate early help approaches from the social care 'system' in order that the voluntary engagement of families can be promoted. It also identified a need to clarify referral arrangements especially where early help assessments are not required but where early help activity is being delivered.
9. A further session on the development of a more preventative approach is planned.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

10. None.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. There are no new financial implications from this Report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no new legal implications from this Report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

13. This issue is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk. Individual elements in the approach link to specific risk assessments.

COUNCIL PLAN THEMES

14. The approach has clear proposals for:
 - a. Protecting the most vulnerable through the proposals for early help, assessment and targeting of services;
 - b. Promoting equality of opportunity through targeted intervention through the emphasis on early intervention, prevention, targeted and specialist services;
 - c. Developing strong and healthy communities through the continued emphasis on the provision of universal and open access support.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

15. This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment because it does not relate to a new policy or strategy, and is more a refinement of an approach

CORPORATE PARENTING

16. The strategy does not directly impact on Looked After Children, but does form part of a range of interventions to help prevent children from having to come into care.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

17. Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Early Help Partnership Group

Name of Contact Officer: Martin Gray
Post Title: Assistant Director, Early Help, Partnership and Planning
Telephone No: 01642 527043
Email Address: martin.gray@stockton.gov.uk

Background Papers

Not applicable.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

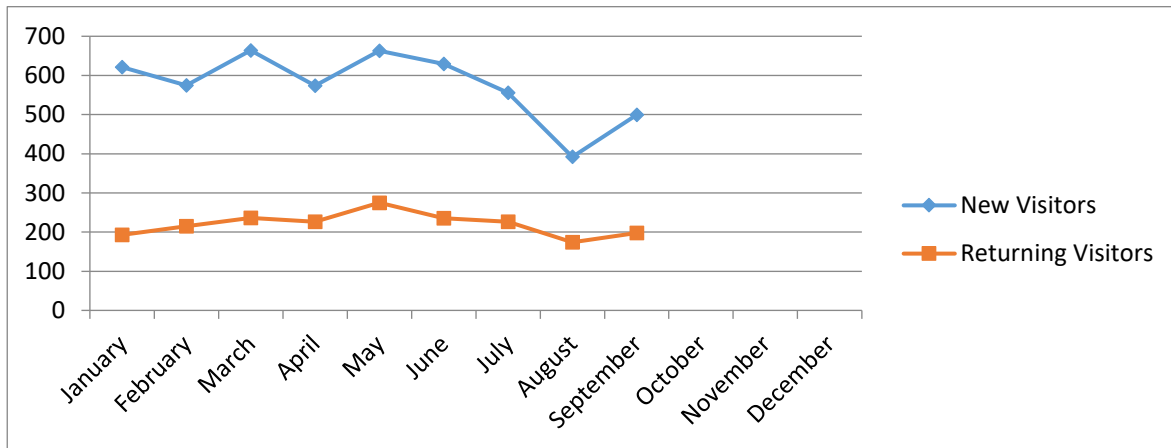
Not applicable.

Property

There are no implications for Council property.

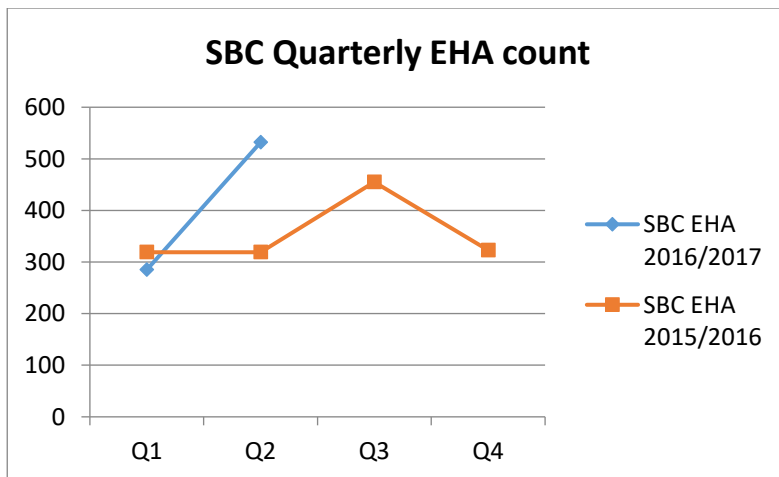
Annex A – current performance

Family Information Service website hits



This indicator will be refined over time to become a more sophisticated guide to the extent to which families are accessing online support services. Additional resources will be added, including access to online parenting programmes, which will help to develop the use of the website. The current consultation on early years and children’s centres includes consultation on the extent to which families would prefer to receive (some) information online as this facilitates greater engagement out of office hours.

Early Help Assessments



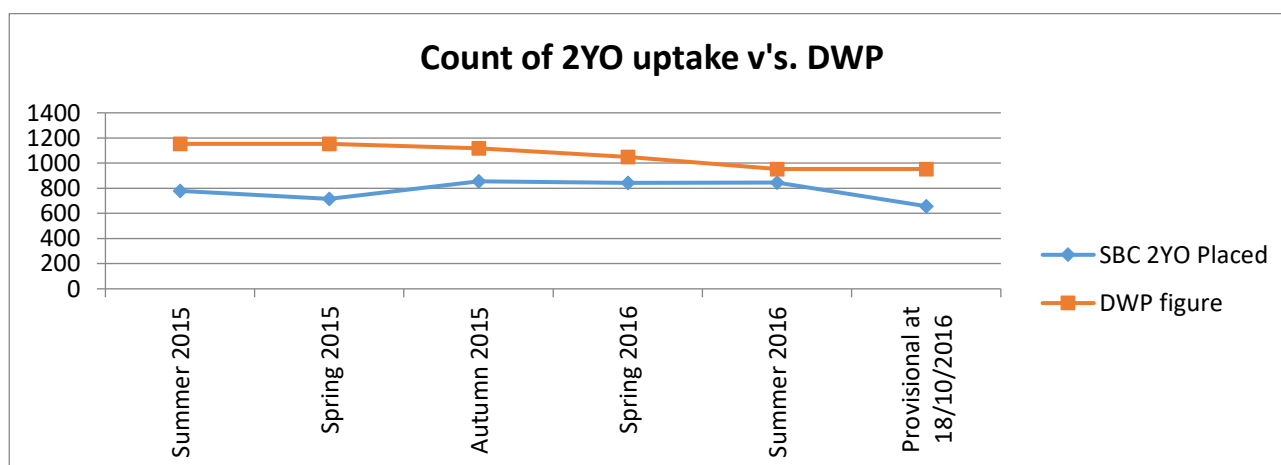
The number of EHAs undertaken, and monitoring which agency commences the process will continue to be a focus. However, we will move away from the simple assessment of numbers, and focus more on the quality of plans and outcomes in 2016/17. The further evolution of our approach will also focus less on the need for early help assessments as being the only assessment of the extent to which early help is being provided – early help assessment should only be for those cases where there is a need for a multi-agency responses and Team Around the Family Arrangements.

Children’s Hub – reduction in inappropriate referrals

	Ref	Indicator	LA	Preferred direction of travel	Baseline 2015/16	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
1. Reduction of inappropriate referrals	1a	Percentage of social care assessments resulting in No Further Action (RC8)	SBC	↓	21.83%	7.91%	8.77%	Reported Year to Date each quarter

There is some evidence that the level of referrals into the Children’s Hub which do not meet the threshold for social care intervention is reducing. This is potentially evidence of more effective early help approaches as agencies understand thresholds and have more confidence in early help services.

Take up of free 2 year old childcare for disadvantaged families

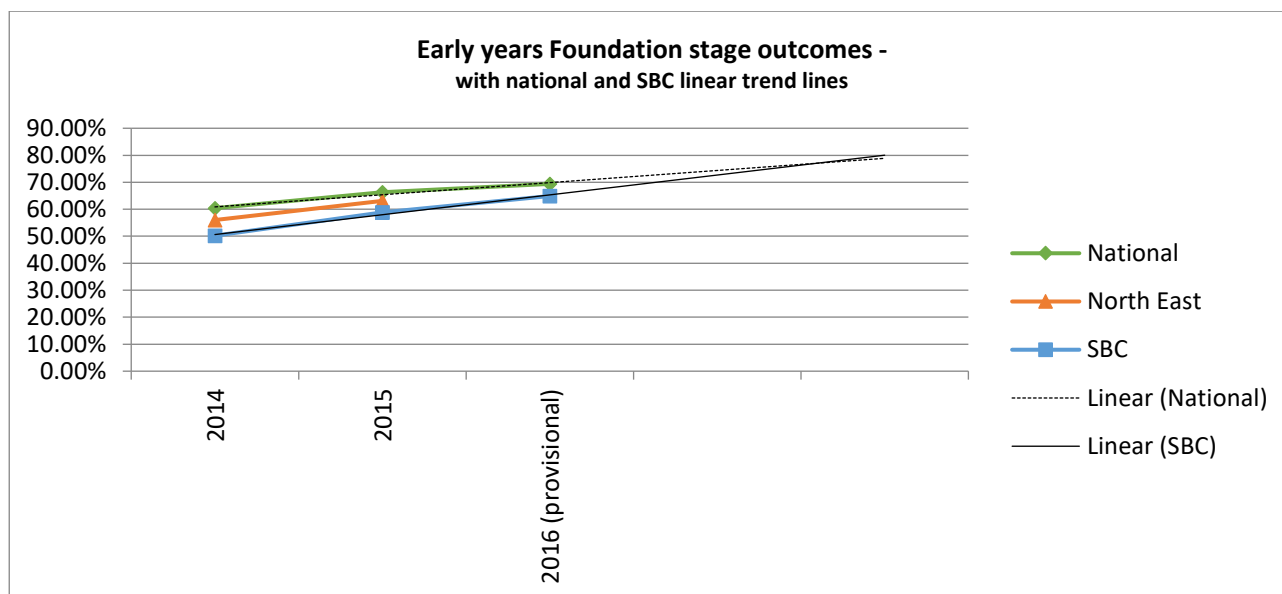


The provisional data for the period to 18 October illustrates a reduction in the take up of placements. This is usual, as there is a period in the new Academic Year when the rates drop as new families become eligible and the development work to engage them commences.

Quality of early years provision

All provisions	Number of providers						Percentage of inspected providers			
	EYR providers	Total number inspected	O	Good	RI	Inadequate	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
National	69,116	56,461	8,233	40,265	7,353	610	15%	71%	13%	1%
North East	2,648	2,254	271	1,689	280	14	12%	75%	12%	1%
Stockton-On-Tees	258	198	23	155	19	1	12%	78%	10%	1%
Stockton on tees as at Q2 2016		176	22	150	4	0	13%	85%	2%	0%

Early Years Foundation Stage



This is a current proxy measure for school readiness.

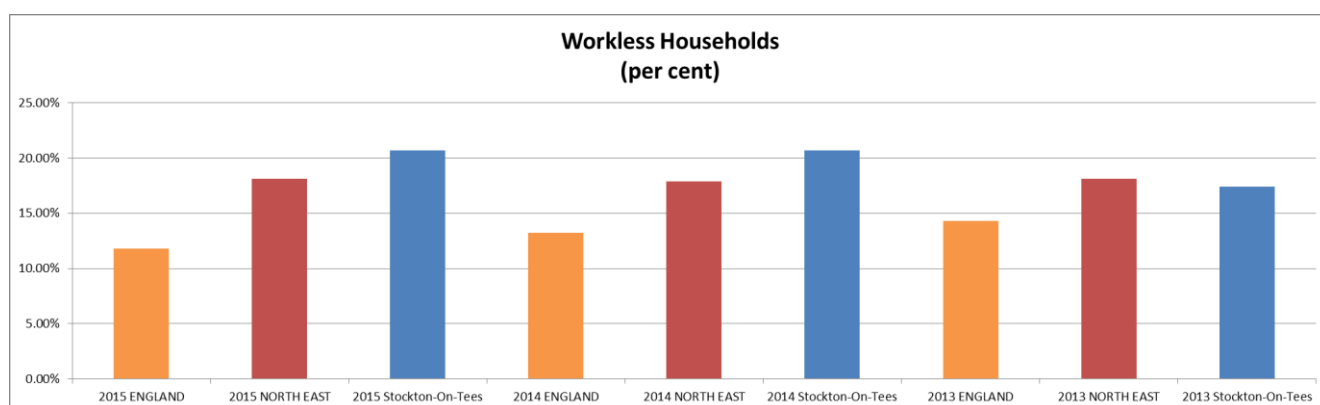
Performance in early years foundation stage continues to rise, with a faster rate of progress than nationally.

Health visiting

Health Visitor data relating to 2/2.5 year checks Q1 2016

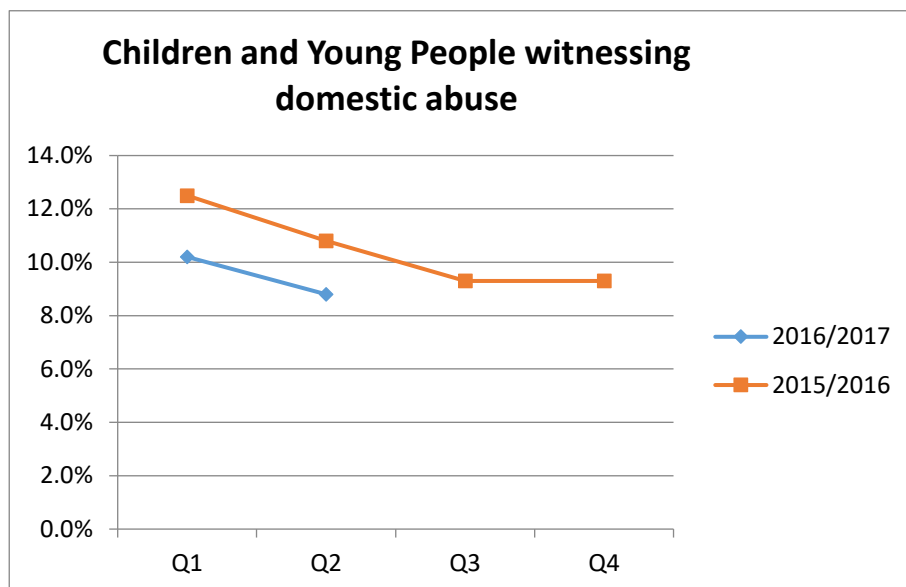
Outcome target	Measure	Performance target	Data collection/Report	Q1
2-2.5 year assessment	Numerator: Total number of children who turned 2.5 years in the quarter who received a 2-2.5 year review, by the age of 2.5 years of age. Denominator: Total number of children who turned 2.5 years, in the appropriate quarter. Formula: Numerator/Denominator x 100	100% 20% tolerance	Quarterly Area Team Dashboard	78.25%
2 - 2.5 using ASQ	Numerator: The number of children who received a 2-2.5 year review by the end of the quarter for whom the ASQ-3 is completed as part of their 2-2.5 year review. Denominator: Total number of children who received a 2-2.5 year review by the end of the quarter. Formula: Numerator/Denominator x 100	100% 20% tolerance	Quarterly Area Team Dashboard	74.03%

Children in workless households is a proxy measure for disadvantage, and for potential stress and conflict in families.



Stockton's rate of children living in workless households has risen in the period 2013-15, and is now significantly above the rate for the North East. Research is planned to examine the potential impacts of worklessness on the types of need families are experiencing.

Children experiencing domestic abuse



Operation Encompass

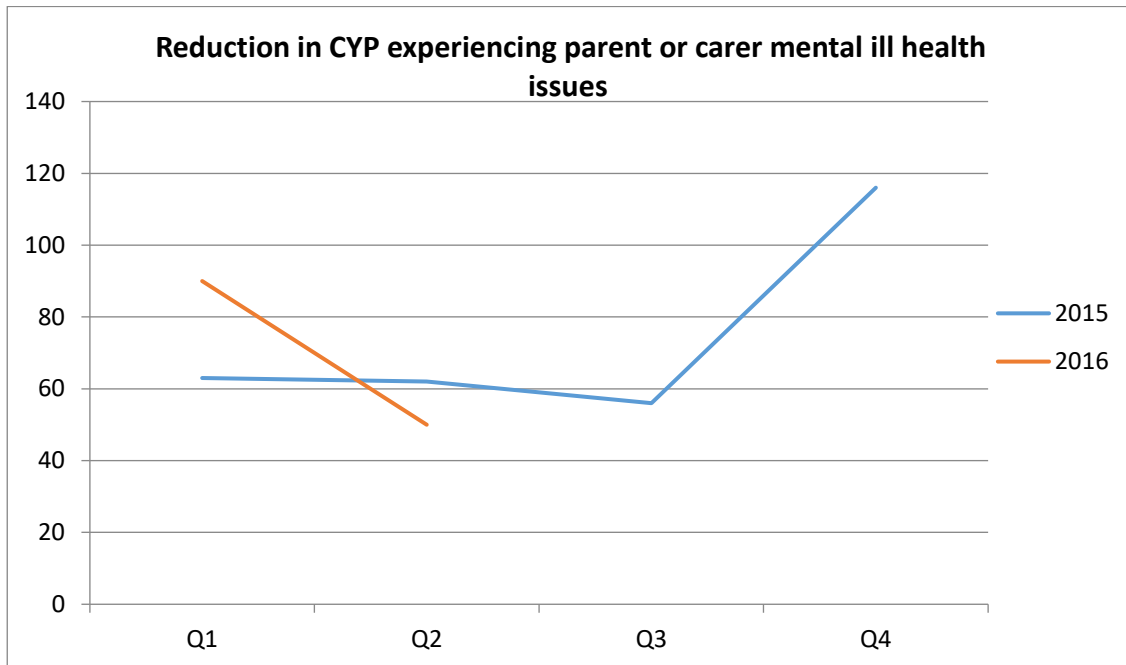
<u>Performance indicator</u>	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Number of QL23* Domestic Abuse incidents were recorded during the month	341	429	361	370	TBC
The number of QL23 Domestic Abuse incidents where children were present, witnessed , or were involved in the abuse	53	67	73	44	NA
Number of disclosures made to Nurseries, schools, academies, sixth form colleges or colleges of further education	41	55	68	37	NA
Number of children present, witnessed or involved in Domestic Abuse incidents	75	93	106	72	NA

*The term QL23 is a closure code for an incident having been reported to the police that is identified as domestic abuse.

Significant numbers of disclosures of domestic abuse incidents are being reported to nurseries schools and further education providers. This data is being fed into the Domestic Abuse Steering Group.

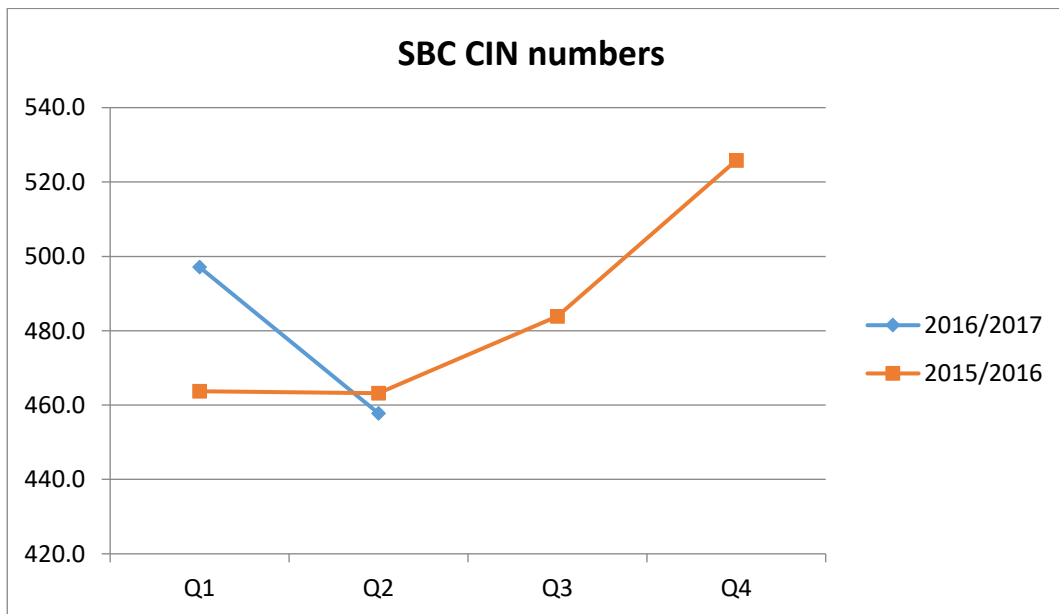
Children experiencing parental mental ill health

This data is taken from the factors identified in single assessments and is therefore a proxy indicator for this measure, which firms part of the 'toxic trio' of risk factors which are often a cause of neglect. Latest information shows a reducing trend of identification of this as a factor in single assessments.



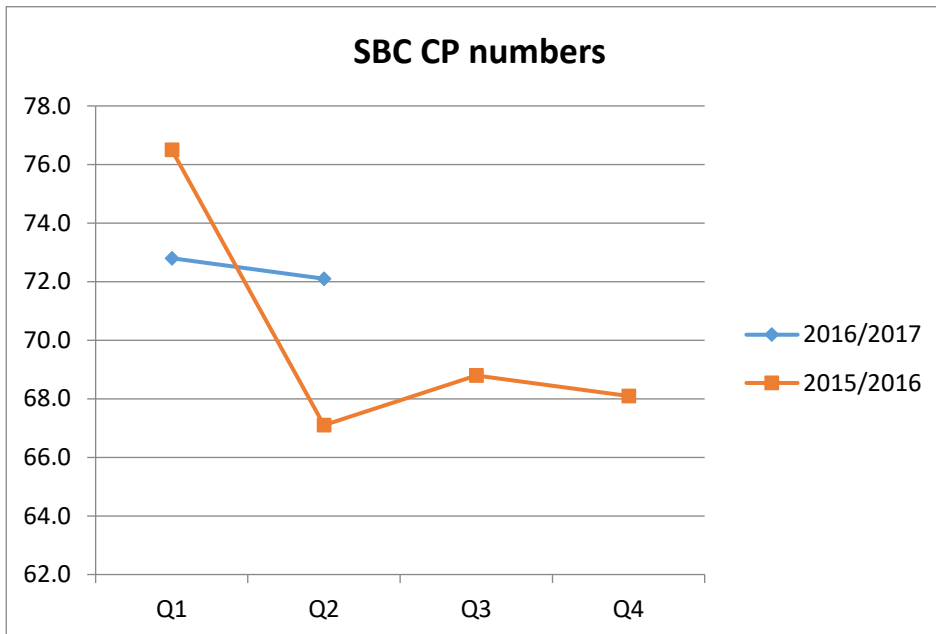
Children In need

Children in need is a specific designation associated with being identified in need following a single assessment. Rates in Stockton indicate a reducing trends over time, which is evidence of increasingly effective early help services and appropriate decision making in the Children's Hub.



Children subject to child protection plans

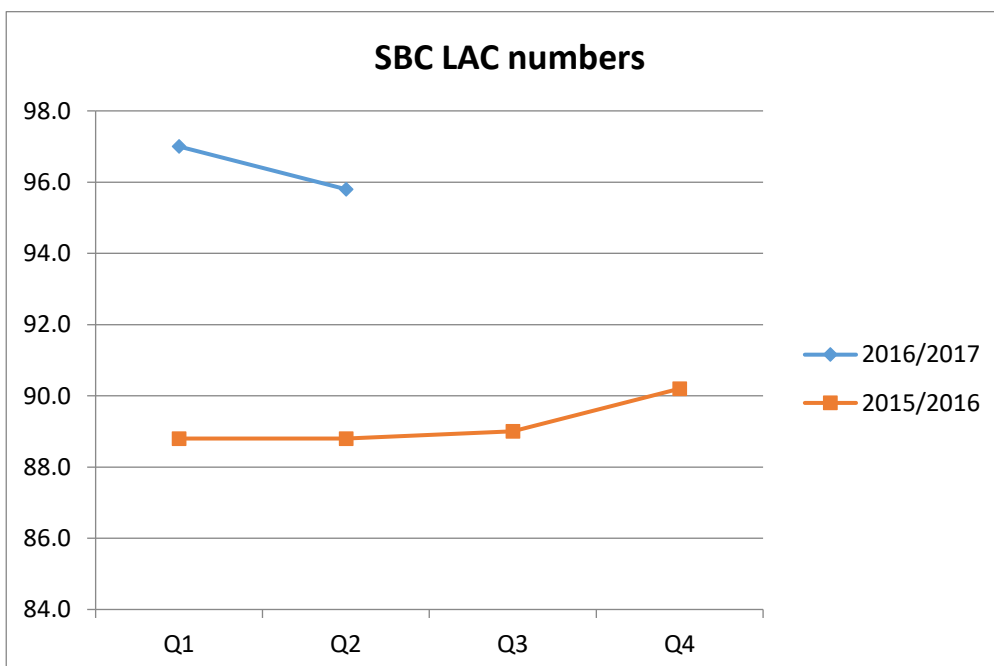
After a trend of general reducing numbers, there has been a more recent increase at the start of 2016/17, though this now appears to be reversing.



Rate of children on CP plans per 10,000 children

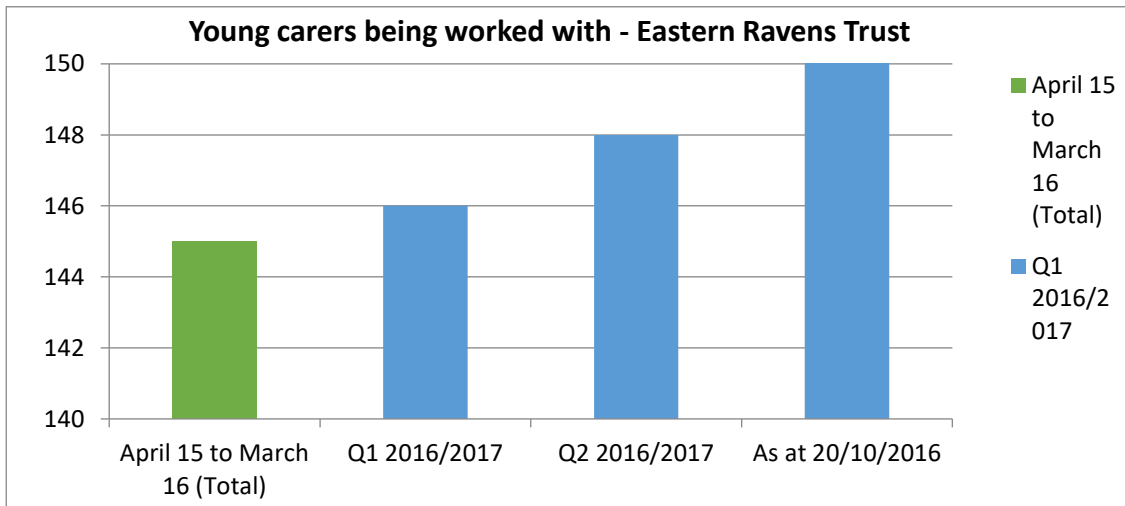
Children in care

After a period when numbers of children in care were relatively stable at around 380, numbers have increased in the first quarter to around 410. This is partly explained by the redesignation of some family and friends arrangements which were formally not children in care.

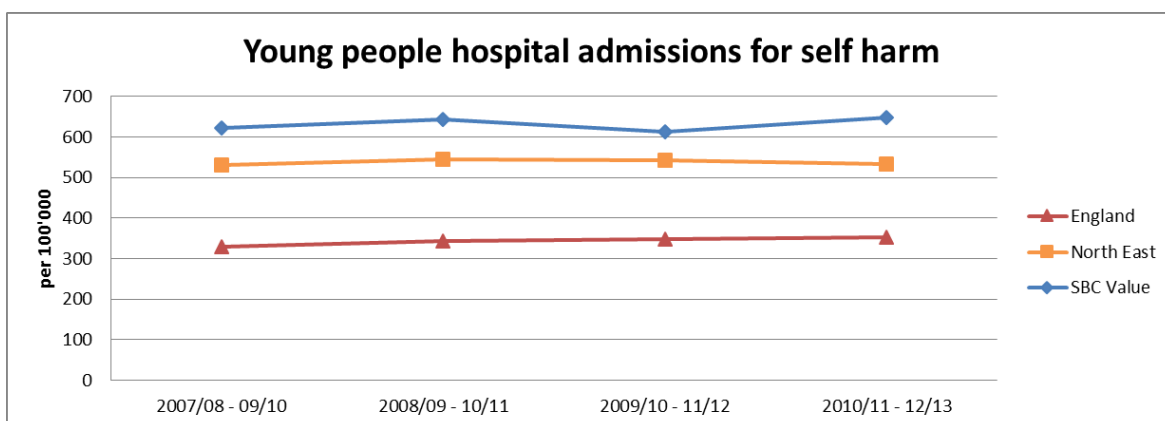
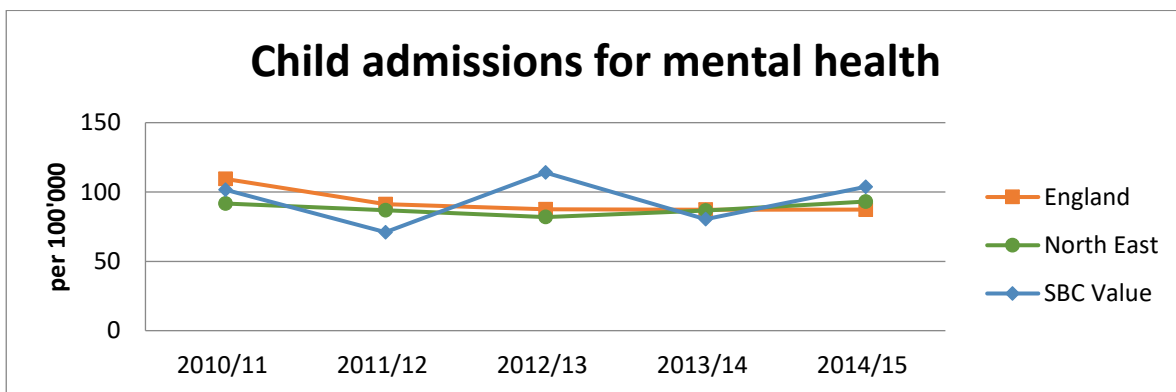


Rate of children in care per 10,000 children.

Young carers



Mental health and emotional wellbeing



Rates of admissions remain higher than regional and national rates and are continue to be a priority as part of the CAMHS redesign activity.