

<p><b>SUBJECT: Performance report Q2 2018/19 – Children’s Social Services</b></p> <p><b>MEETING: Children and Young People Select Committee</b></p> <p><b>DATE: 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019</b></p> <p><b>DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All</b></p>
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**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To present the committee with latest, quarter 2 2018/19, performance of Children’s Social Services.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members use this report to scrutinise how well the authority is performing and seek clarity from those responsible on whether performance can improve in any areas of concern identified.

**3. KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The report card explains Children’s social services key process and performance during the first half of 2018/19 alongside benchmarking of performance in 2017/18. This comprises of data from the measurement framework introduced in 2016/17 as part of the Social Services and Well-being Act and further information that is used to evaluate performance. Children’s services performance against the full set of measures from the framework is summarised in the how we are performing section.
- 3.2 The performance measures are a blend of quantitative (numerical) data and qualitative data which includes asking children and parents about their experience of social services and whether this has contributed to improving their well-being. The qualitative measures within the framework are derived from questionnaires to children and parents that social services are supporting. During September questionnaires are posted to recipients and further responses are being encouraged to provide a higher return rate.
- 3.3 Welsh Government have again not published local authority level performance data for 2017/18. Wales level means and quartile data for 2017/18 has been published and is included in this report. Qualitative benchmarking data for 2017/18 has not been published.
- 3.4 There are ongoing discussions and workshops on revising the standards and measures as part of the Social Services and Well-being Act performance framework in the future.

**4. REASONS:**

- 4.1 To ensure that members have an understanding of current Children’s Social Services performance and how we compared during 2017/18.

**5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None

**6 WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, CORPORATE PARENTING AND SAFEGUARDING)**

6.1 There are no specific implications identified as a result of this report although some of the performance indicators relate to our safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities.

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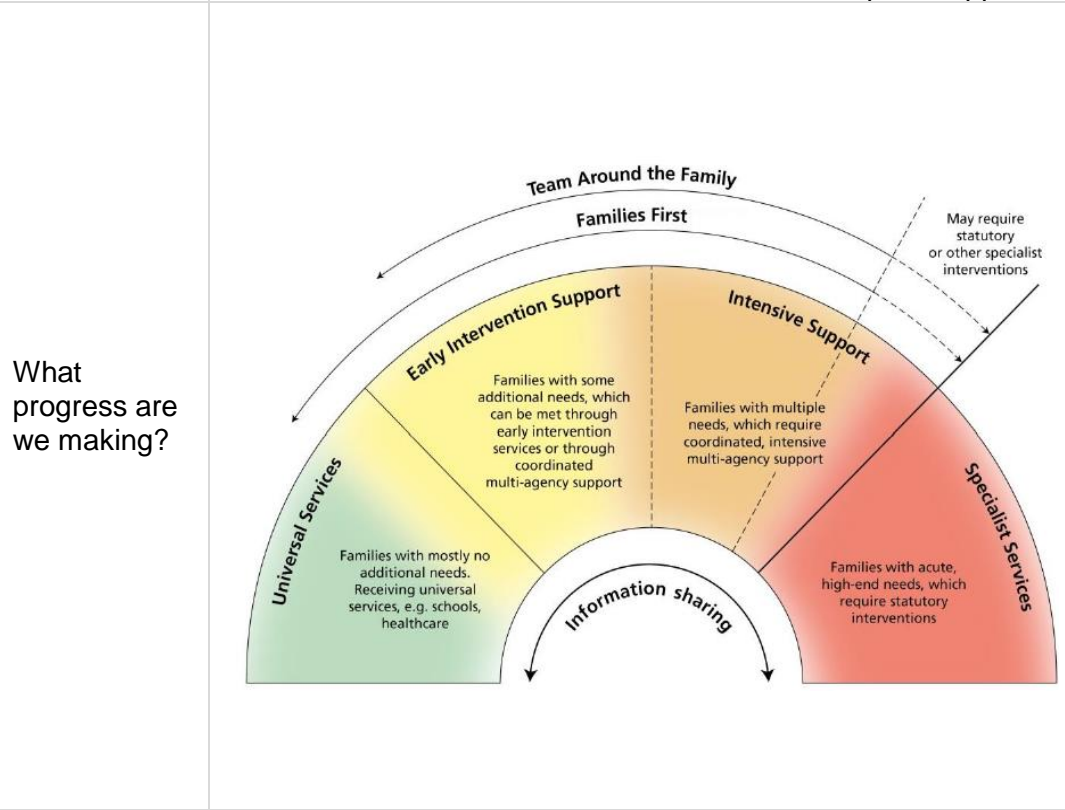
Children's Social Services 2018/19 Quarter 2 Performance Report

Corporate Plan Goal Contributed to : Best possible start in life

**Why we focus on this**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2016 and is transforming the way care and support is delivered. The vision for Children's social services in Monmouthshire is 'It is our priority to ensure that we will find safe and appropriate ways to work with families to help them meet their children's needs, including their need to be protected from harm. We will, whenever it is safe to do so, always look for ways to support children and young people to remain with their birth family or extended family and avoid the need for children and young people to become looked after.'

The Act introduced a performance measurement framework for local authorities in relation to their social services functions. This framework forms the basis of information in the report, supported by further data and information that is used to evaluate performance.

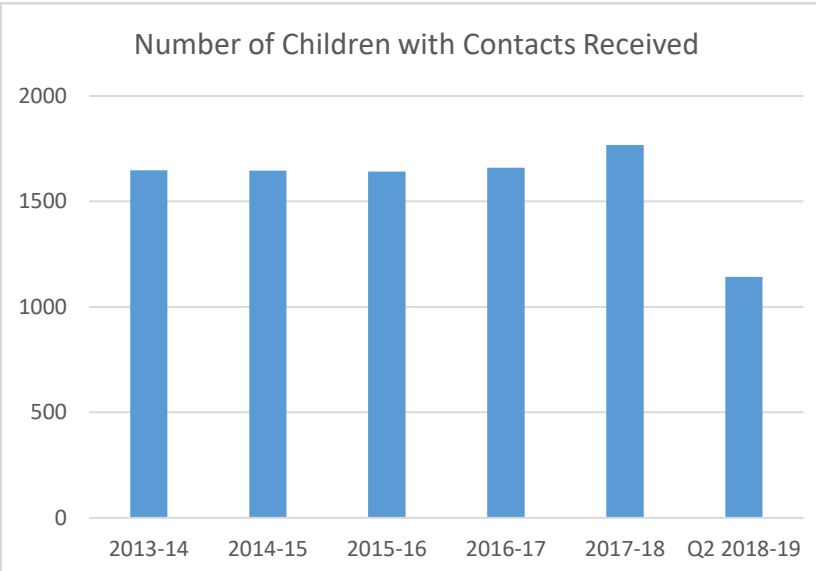


**Prevention and Early Intervention**

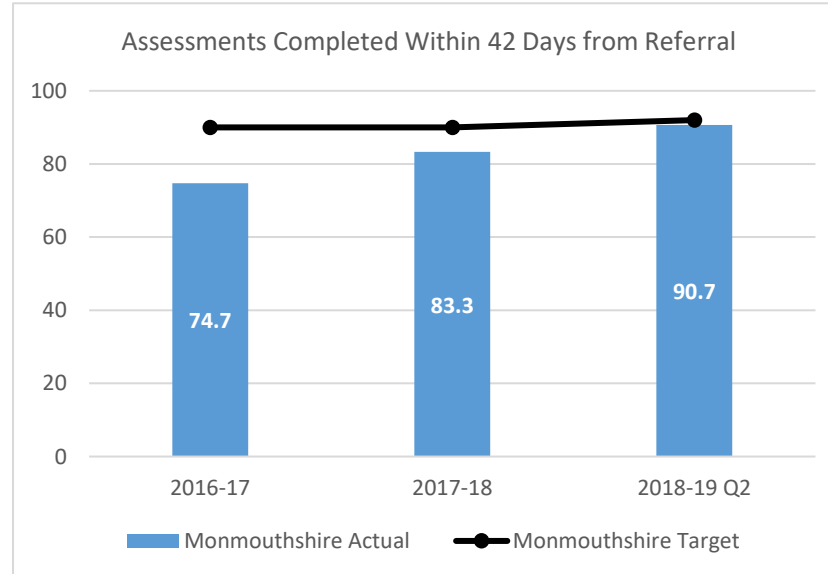
The importance of preventive work and early intervention is well-recognised and is a fundamental principal of the Act. The Act clearly aligns itself with the belief that the provision of early intervention and preventive services will ultimately contribute to the prevention, delay or reduction of people needing care and support, including children suffering abuse and neglect. It draws on the significant evidence that exists that shows that preventing the emergence of problems rather than tackling their consequences offers a 'triple dividend' in terms of improving social outcomes, reducing costs to the state, and strengthening prospects for growth.

In Monmouthshire, the delivery model for pre-statutory threshold support has been realigned from a service predominantly focussed on co-ordinating the activity of other services, to one which delivers family intervention. This has been situated within a wider service network with a single referral and intervention pathway in order to ensure that families get the right support first time.

The Building Strong Families Team delivers programmes of direct work with families. The team supported 44 families in quarter 1 and the same number during quarter 2. During the six month period, 27 cases were closed, of which, 13 to be stepped up to statutory services and 9 closed with a successful outcome.



**Chart 1: Number of children that Children's Services have received contacts on**



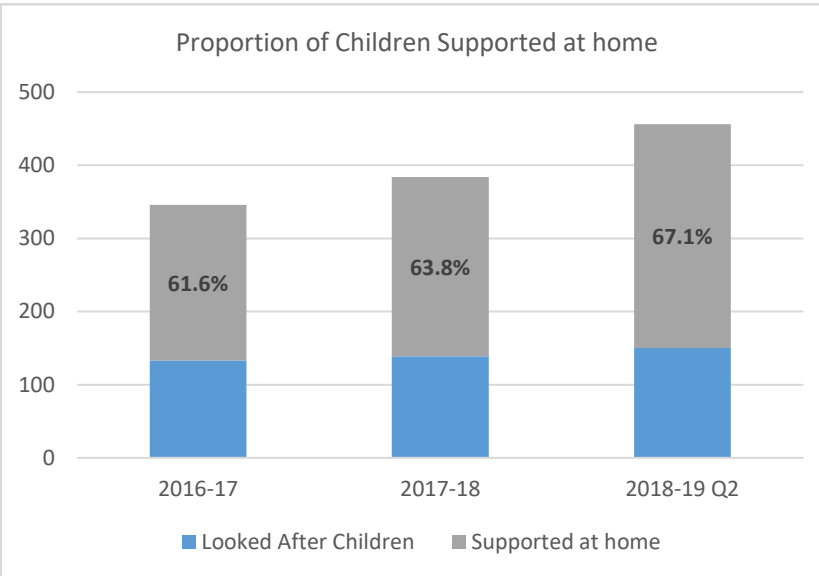
**Chart 2: Assessments completed within 42 working days from referral against target**

## Front Door

Children's Services received 2,311 contacts on 1,142 children during the first six months of 2018/19. The number of children that Children's Services have received contacts on had remained fairly constant until a rise was noted in 2017/18. Based on the first six months of the year the number of children is expected to increase this year (see chart 1). The increase is consistent with national picture. Locally, more robust processes at the front door mean more work such as checks are being done early. This allows prompt decision making and screening so that less children are being allocated. The average caseload of the Early Help and Assessment Team was 196 children in 2017/18 which has decreased to 174 on average over the first six months of this year.

Contacts are most commonly received from police, within the local authority and health. Decisions on what, if any, action is required should be taken within 24 hours and was in 96.2% of cases. 832 children and families received advice or assistance at the front door and 530 children progressed either to assessment and if required to child protection strategy discussion.

During 2017/18, the timeliness of children's assessments was agreed as an area requiring improvement. Further improvement is planned this year with the target increased to 92%. So far during 2018/19, 90.7% of assessments were completed on time (see Chart 2).



**Chart 3: The proportion of children supported at home**

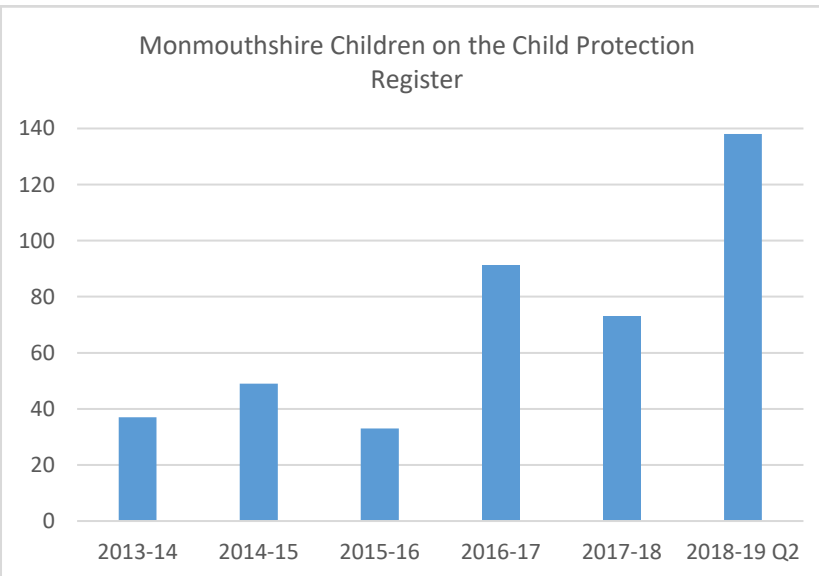
### Children Receiving Care and Support

Following an assessment care and support may be arranged if a child or family required additional support. This is set out in a care and support plan which is reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate.

The recently completed census of children receiving care and support in Monmouthshire shows that almost one third of children have parents experiencing mental ill health and a quarter have parents with substance misuse issues. 1 in 5 children have experienced domestic abuse within their families.

Stepping in early to support children is important in helping children stay in their families. An increasing proportion of children are supported to remain living within their family (measure 25), at 67.1% (see chart 3).

Children's questionnaire responses indicate that 70% of children feel they have had the right information or advice when they needed it and that 77% feel their views about their care and support have been listened to. 54% of parents felt actively involved in all decisions about how their child's/children's care and support was provided.

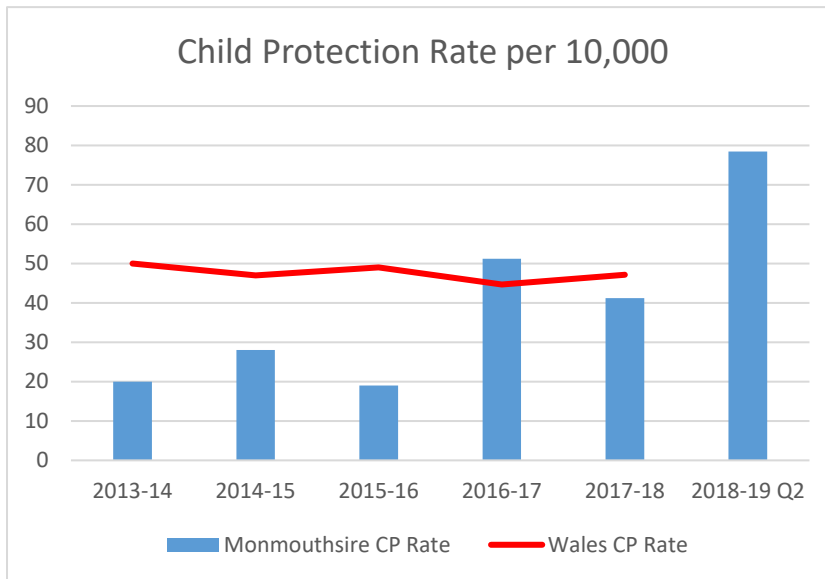


**Chart 4: Number of children on the Child Protection Register**

### Child Protection

The number of children on the child protection register has increased substantially by the end of quarter 2. At the end of 2017/18, 73 children were listed on the child protection register, this has increased to 138 at the end of September 2018 (see chart 4). Chart 5 shows the rate of children on the child protection register compared to the rate across Wales. The increase in numbers within Monmouthshire during the first six months of the year takes the rate some way above that of Wales at the end of 2017/18.

105 children were registered during the first 6 months compared to 114 during the whole of last year. Meanwhile, 41 children were deregistered between April and September this year, compared to 132 during the whole of 2017/18. This demonstrates both an increase in children becoming registered and a decrease in the number being deregistered.



**Chart 5: Rate of children on the Child Protection Register per 10,000 child population**

Of the 105 children added to the child protection register during the first six months of the year, 5.7% had a prior registration which ended in the preceding 12 months (measure 27).

Children have regular reviews while on the child protection register at which the plan is reviewed and the child's continued registration is considered. The 41 children deregistered during the year, they spent on average 261 days on the register (measure 28), well within the 12 month target.

Of the children deregistered during the year, 20% went on to be looked after.

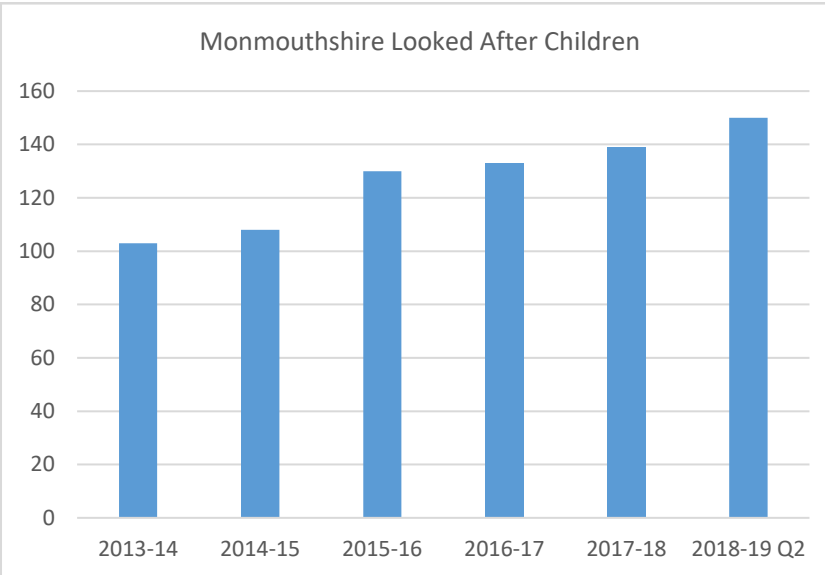


Chart 6: Number of Monmouthshire Looked after Children

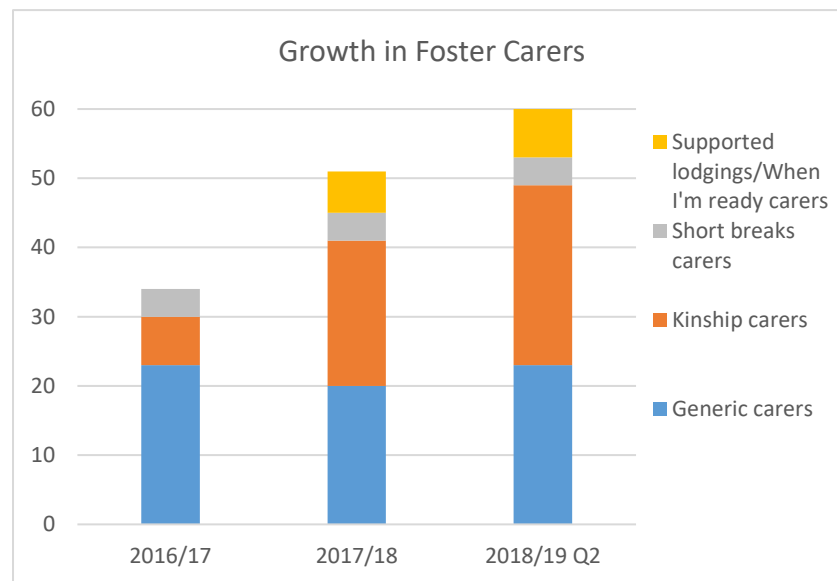


Chart 7: Number of Monmouthshire foster carers by type

## Looked After Children

The number of looked after children has increased from 139 at the end of 2017/18 to 150 at the end of quarter 2 continuing the upward trend (see chart 6) which is broadly consistent with the Welsh picture.

Monmouthshire looked after children are fairly evenly divided between male and female and as seen across the UK, the largest single group is aged between 10 and 15.

Monmouthshire is aiming to attract more foster carers to offer placements to looked after children. During 2017/18, the overall number of foster carer number

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increased from 34 to 51, mostly due to an increase in kinship carers (friends or relatives caring for specific children) and supported lodgings carers (for young people leaving care). The increase in kinship carers is important as generally children benefit from being placed within their extended family. By the end of quarter 2 there was an increase to 60 foster carers, again the highest increase was in kinship carers followed by generic foster carers (see chart 7).

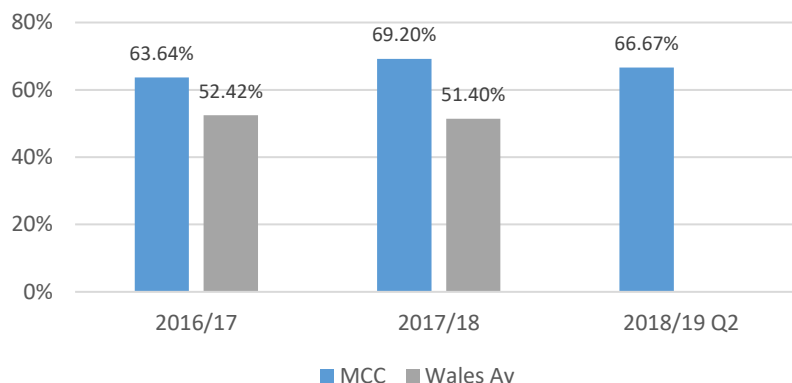
The local authority must promote the health and well-being of looked after children. Two thirds of looked after children were recorded as having a dental check within 3 months of becoming looked after (measure 30). All looked after children were registered with a GP within 10 days of entering a placement (measure 31).

Looked after children benefit from stability and where possible placement and school moves are minimised. During the first half of the year 1% of looked after children have experienced a change of school for non-transitional reasons during the year (measure 32).

The percentage of looked after children who experienced 3 or more placements during the year (measure 33) is currently at 3.3% which is fairly consistent with last year although an increase is often seen towards the end of the year.

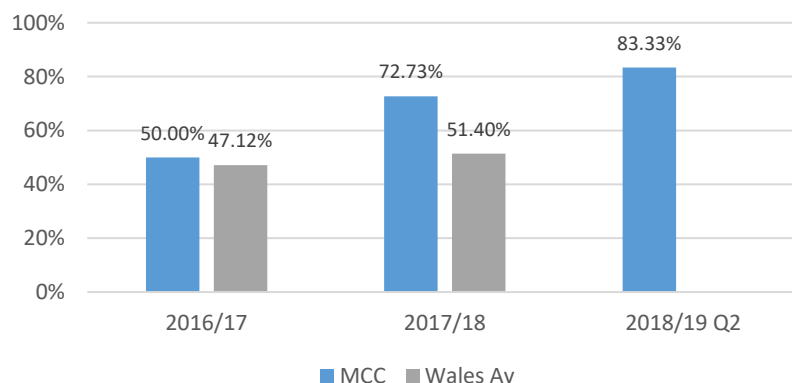
So far this year 7 children and young people have left care, the majority through virtue of their age.

34a: The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 12 months after leaving care



**Chart 8: The percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment at 12 months after leaving care, Monmouthshire compared with Wales**

34b: The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 24 months after leaving care



**Chart 9: The percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment at 24 months after leaving care, Monmouthshire compared with Wales**

## Care Leavers

Local authorities have a responsibility to assist children to prepare for, and transition to, leaving care. At the end of quarter 2 there were a total of 60 care leavers ranging from 16 year olds preparing to leave care to care leavers aged over 21 and still in education.

Of the care leavers who left care 12 months ago, two thirds are engaged in education, training or employment (measure 34a). Of those who left care 24 months ago, 83% are engaged in education, training or employment (measure 34b). Charts 8 and 9 shows Monmouthshire's current and previous year's performance is consistently higher than Welsh averages.

Of all care leavers, 1.7% have experienced homelessness at some point during the year (measure 35). As to be expected, the reasons for care leavers becoming homeless are varied and can be complex.

Of the 16 and 17 year old children who replied to the questionnaire, 58% agreed they had 'had advice, help and support that will prepare me for adulthood'.



<p>Service Comments</p>	<p>Over the last period the service has continued to develop services to support families at an earlier stage. This gives families a good opportunity to get the support they need at an earlier stage and can also indicate in a timely way where additional services might be required. During the next period we will increase our partnership working to further develop coordinated early intervention pathways at all areas of the windscreen.</p> <p>The Early Help and Assessment Team continues to provide appropriate advice and support at the 'statutory front door' of children's services, and we have ensured that our systems and processes are adequate to manage increased demand. The proportion of children going on to have an allocated social worker has decreased, but for those children who do, their needs are often seen as more complex or deep-rooted. Robust decision making at the front-door along with earlier and more focussed interventions for children are seen currently as contributing to the increase in registration rates. The upward trend in children needing children protection or looked after services continues to put pressure on the service. We are confident, never-the-less that the thresholds for intervening are sound and reflective of real risks and needs within their families. The numbers of children being supported at home has increased and this period has seen the launch of our Edge of Care service to help ensure that wherever possible and safe, children can remain at home. Similarly, there are a significant number of children who are 'looked after' but who we continue to support living with parents, or with family members. The overall increase in both numbers of generic foster carers and kinship carers is a real achievement. Moving forward we will continue to ensure that our permanency planning, service developments and commissioning strategies accurately reflect the needs of children who are on the children protection register and those who are looked after.</p> <p>Turning to our questionnaire feedback the responses continue to show that communication is one of our key areas for further improvement. We recognise that though proportionally a small number, respondents can feel excluded from key decisions which affect them. This can be affected by other issues such as parents' experiences with the court system. We continue to ensure that parents, children and young people are involved through in all aspects of our service through a variety of mechanisms such as LAC reviews, child protection core groups, what matters conversations, and through specific engagement events and activities.</p> <p><b>Jane Rodgers</b></p>
<p>Collaboration/ Partners we are working with</p>	<p>Gwent Police, Education, Youth Offending Service, Action for Children, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and South East Wales Adoption Service.</p>
<p>What we have spent on this objective</p>	<p>The 2018/19 net (direct) budget for Children Services is £11.5m, over half of which relates to looked after children, in particular, placements for looked after children.</p> <p>The reported position at the Month 2 was an overspend of £282,000</p>

How are we performing?

**Quantitative Performance Measures:**

Performance Indicators	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Q2	2018/19 Target	Performance Against Target	Performance Trend	2017/18 Wales Av	2017/18 Quartile
Number of Looked After Children	133	139	150	N/A	N/A	↑	N/A	N/A
Number of Children on the Child Protection Register	91	73	138	N/A	N/A	↑	N/A	N/A
24: The percentage of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales	74.69%	87.31%	90.65%	92%	✘	↑	88.00%	Middle
<i>Numerator: Number of assessments for children completed within statutory timescales</i>	611	688	320					
<i>Denominator: Number of assessments for children completed during the year</i>	818	788	353					
25: The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family	61.56%	63.80%	67.11%	70%	✘	↑	68.40%	Bottom
<i>Numerator: The number of children supported to remain living within their family</i>	213	245	306					
<i>Denominator: The number of children supported at 31 March</i>	346	384	456					
26: The percentage of looked after children returned home from care during the year	14.44%	13.81%	0%	15%	✘	↓	10.50%	Top
<i>Numerator: Number of looked after children who return home from care during the year</i>	26	25	0					
<i>Denominator: Number of looked after children during the year</i>	180	181	157					
27: The percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR)	2.38%	5.26%	5.71%	<8%	✓	↓	5.4%	Middle
<i>Numerator: Number of re-registrations of children on the CPR during the year</i>	*	6	6					
<i>Denominator: Total number of registrations on CPR during the year</i>	*	114	105					
28: The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year	230	227	261	<= 270 days	✓	↑	249	Middle

<i>Numerator: The total number of days each child had been on the CPR if they were removed from the CPR during the year</i>	15,660	29,946	<b>10721</b>						
<i>Denominator: Number of children who were removed from the CPR during the year</i>	68	132	<b>41</b>						
29a: Percentage of children achieving the core subject indicator at key stage 2	68.75%	68.75%	<b>N/A</b>	Not Set	N/A	N/A	60.20%	Top	
<i>Numerator: The number of children who achieved the core subject indicator at key stage 2</i>	11	11							
<i>Denominator: The number of children who need care and support and are in the final year of key stage 2</i>	16	16							
29b: Percentage of children achieving the core subject indicator at key stage 4	29.41%	6.67%	<b>N/A</b>	Not Set	N/A	N/A	9.50%	Middle	
<i>Numerator: The number of children who achieved the core subject indicator at key stage 4</i>	5	*							
<i>Denominator: The number of children who need care and support and are in the final year of key stage 4</i>	17	*							
30: The percentage of children seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after	56.52%	75.86%	<b>66.67%</b>	80%	✘	↓	58.40%	Top	
<i>Numerator: The number of children who became looked after during the year who have been seen by a dentist within 3 months</i>	13	22	*						
<i>Denominator: The number of children who became looked after during the year who should have been seen by a dentist within 3 months</i>	23	29	*						
31: The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who were registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement	98.33%	100%	<b>100%</b>	100%	✓	-	90.90%	Top	
<i>Numerator: Number of children looked after at 31 March who were registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement</i>	59	56	<b>36</b>						
<i>Denominator: Number of looked after children at 31 March who had a placement start during the year</i>	60	56	<b>36</b>						
32: The percentage of looked after children who have experienced 1 or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the year to 31 March	8.14%	9.47%	<b>1.03%</b>	12.7%	✓	↑	11.50%	Middle	

<i>Numerator: The number of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March who have had one or more changes of school, which were not due to transitional arrangements</i>	7	9	*					
<i>Denominator: The number of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March</i>	86	95	*					
33: The percentage of looked after children on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year	5.26%	5.76%	<b>3.30%</b>					
<i>Numerator: The number of children looked after at 31 March who had three or more separate placements during the year</i>	7	8	5	6.5%	x	↓	9.60%	Top
<i>Denominator: The total number of children who were looked after at 31 March</i>	133	139	150					
34: The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at: a) 12 months after leaving care	63.64%	69.23%	<b>66.67%</b>					
<i>Numerator: Number of care leavers who were engaged in education, training or employment 12 months after they left care</i>	7	9	*	75%	x	↓	51.40%	Top
<i>Denominator: The number of young people who became care leavers during 2016-17</i>	11	13	*					
34: The percentage of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at: b) 24 months after leaving care	50.00%	72.73%	<b>83.33%</b>					
<i>Number of care leavers who were engaged in education, training or employment 24 months after they left care</i>	*	8	5	75%	✓	↑	51.40%	Top
<i>Denominator: The number of young people who became care leavers during 2015-16</i>	*	11	6					
35: The percentage of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year	5.45%	9.62%	<b>1.70%</b>					
<i>Numerator: The number of care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year</i>	*	5	*	0%	x	↑	9.40%	Middle
<i>Denominator: The number of care leavers aged 16 to 24 on 31 March</i>	*	52	*					

\*Numerator and denominator removed due to low numbers

**Qualitative Performance Measures:**

**Children and parents responses to questionnaires:**

It is now a requirement of the performance framework measuring the effectiveness of the Social Services and Well Being Act that children and parents are asked to complete questionnaires in order to provide feedback on their views of the service they receive.

During September questionnaires are posted to recipients. Further questionnaires are to be made available at visits and reviews to encourage a higher return rate.

2017/18 children’s responses are based on 67/237 questionnaire responses (29% response rate) and parents 41/204 responses (20% response rate).

2018/19 Q2 children's responses are based on 52/288 questionnaire responses (18% response rate) and parents 41/264 responses (16% response rate).

Children’s Questionnaire	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 Q2	2018/19 Q2	2018/19 Q2
	Actual	Actual	Yes	Sometimes	No
I live in a home where I am happy	80.4%	77.3%	<b>82.7%</b>	13.5%	3.8%
I am happy with the people that I live with	80.0%	79.4%	<b>80.8%</b>	17.3%	1.9%
I can do the things I like to do	60%	59.7%	<b>63.5%</b>	28.8%	7.7%
I feel I belong in the area where I live	71.4%	69.4%	<b>74.5%</b>	13.7%	11.8%
I am happy with my family, friends and neighbours	79.6%	83.6%	<b>81.6%</b>	16.3%	2.0%
I feel safe	90.2%	87.7%	<b>90.0%</b>	6.0%	4.0%
I know who to contact about my care and support	89.4%	75%	<b>69.4%</b>	20.4%	10.2%
I have had the right information or advice when I needed it	77.3%	77.6%	<b>70.2%</b>	25.5%	4.3%
My views about my care and support have been listened to	69.6%	62.1%	<b>76.7%</b>	18.6%	4.7%
I have been able to use my everyday language	98%	93.8%	<b>96.1%</b>	2.0%	2.0%
I was treated with respect	87.8%	79.4%	<b>86.3%</b>	11.8%	2.0%
I am happy with the care and support I have had	79.2%	84.1%	<b>87.8%</b>	8.2%	4.1%
If you are aged 16 or 17 years old: I have had advice, help and support that will prepare me for adulthood	57%	62.5%	<b>58.8%</b>	23.5%	17.6%

Parents Questionnaire	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 Q2	2018/19 Q2	2018/19 Q2
	Actual	Actual	Yes	Sometimes	No
I have been actively involved in all decisions about how my child’s/children’s care & support was provided	63.9%	75%	<b>53.7%</b>	24.4%	22.0%

### National Performance Indicators – How we compare:

Limited comparable data for 2017/18 was released at the end of November 2018 and has been used below to show how our current performance compared to Wales in 2017/18. Below are the indicators of Children's Services which are also included in the Public Accountability Measures set by Data Unit Wales:

*How do we compare other areas*

