



Annual report

Independent Reviewing Service for Children Subject of Child Protection Plans

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Key Statistics & Trends

- 1213 case conferences: 425 ICPCs, 788 RCPCs
- 47% increase in ICPCs from the previous year
- 500 children on child protection plans, highest since 2022/23
- Increase in neglect and physical harm being a reason for child protection.

Achievements

- ICPC timeliness improved during this reporting period to being consistently above 90%.
- Quarterly meetings that are joint with locality services to focus on tracking Child Protection Plans longer than 9 months.
- Reduction in children subject to a child protection plan for longer than 9 months.
- A successful focused visit inspection.
- Regular joint meetings between the Independent Reviewing Service and Social Work Teams to look at any arising practice themes.

Challenges

- Increased children subject to Child Protection Plans which has impacted on caseloads for Child Protection Chairs.
- For children subject to Child Protection Planning and PLO due to Neglect, sufficient change isn't occurring resulting in more ending with issuing proceedings.
- Timeliness of invites and partner attendance at conferences.

Themes & Training Needs

- Neglect and domestic abuse as predominant themes and supporting a focus on early intervention themes.
- Honour Based Abuse became a notable theme during this period.
- To improve the level of health information sharing in conferences.
- Supporting a focus on family network meetings

Ofsted Focused Visit

- Review meetings and core groups are well attended by relevant professionals and help to progress the plan. However, for a small number of children, core group meetings are not always regular or written in their record to help understand how the plan is helping to mitigate the presenting risks.
- Child protection conferences are well attended by relevant and involved professionals.
- Child protection chairs have effective oversight through the formulation of the initial child protection plan and midpoint reviews to consider how the plan is progressing.
- Children's records demonstrate that child protection chairs escalate concerns when necessary. This ensures that children do not experience any delay in the support they are offered, and that the intervention is purposeful.

Future Priorities

- Increase face-to-face RCPCs to 80% by end of 2025
- Embed neglect toolkit in practice
- To see an improvement in the consistency of core groups between reviews.
- Working collectively with partners and peers in wider services to continue to be confident the right number of children are subject to child protection plans.
- Supporting the Social Work reforms and preparing the service for the introduction of Multi Agency Child Protection Teams and Lead Child Protection Practitioners.
- Promoting timely escalations and reducing plan durations
- An area to focus for improvement identified by Ofsted was in terms of ensuring contingency planning is more evident and there has been work to improve this area within conferences and make it more evident.