

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES
PERFORMANCE REPORT
QUARTER 3 2023-24



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1. Our Borough Strategy 2021-30 Priorities

Performance Management in St Helens Borough Council is focused around achieving the 6 strategic priorities outlined in Our Borough Strategy 2021-30.



Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life

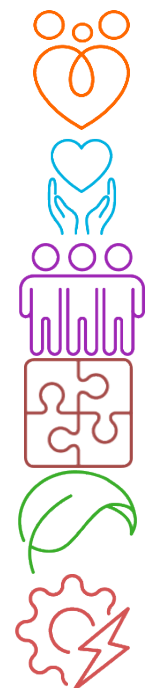
Priority 2 - Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities

Priority 3 - Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all

Priority 4 - Support a strong, thriving, inclusive, and well-connected local economy

Priority 5 - Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture

Priority 6 - Be a responsible council



2. Borough Strategy Priorities and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. Making progress towards the global goals by 2030 depends on local action. SDGs fit with Our Borough Strategy Vision and the Council's approach to Reset and Recovery. All 17 Sustainable Development Goals have been mapped against the 'Our Borough Strategy' priorities and outcomes.

 <p>ENSURE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A POSITIVE START IN LIFE</p>	     	 <p>SUPPORT A STRONG, THRIVING, INCLUSIVE AND WELL-CONNECTED LOCAL ECONOMY</p>	          
 <p>PROMOTE GOOD HEALTH, INDEPENDENCE AND CARE ACROSS OUR COMMUNITIES</p>	   	 <p>CREATE GREEN AND VIBRANT PLACES THAT REFLECT OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE</p>	      
 <p>CREATE SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS FOR ALL</p>	  	 <p>BE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL</p>	       

3. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to inform and update Elected Members on performance against the 6 priorities of the Our Borough Strategy 2021-30 and respective outcomes as set out above. The report covers the period Quarter 3 2023-24 providing the performance position reported over the course of the period. The reporting format splits the report into 2 distinct parts:

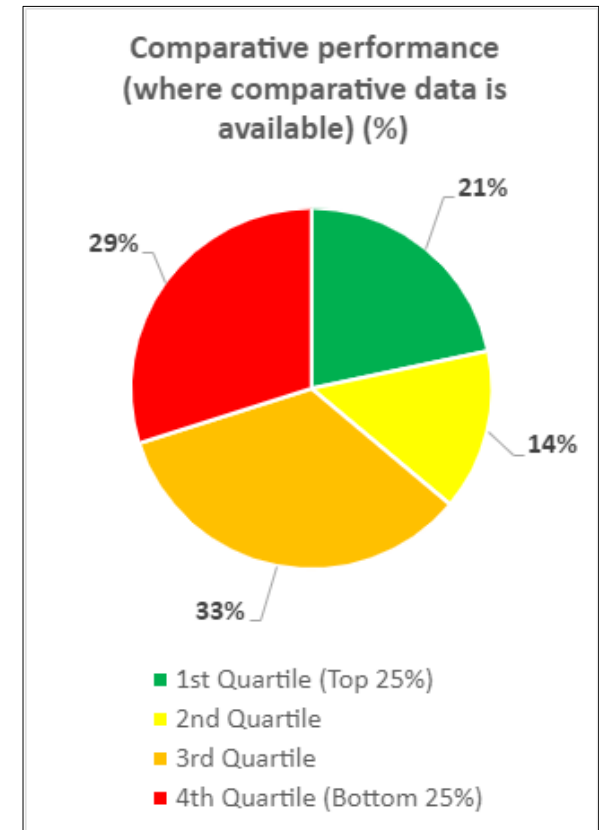
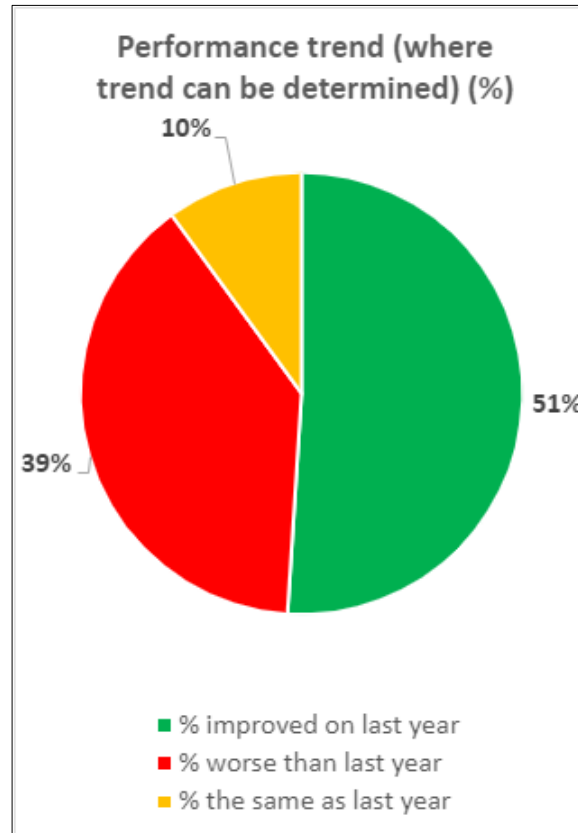
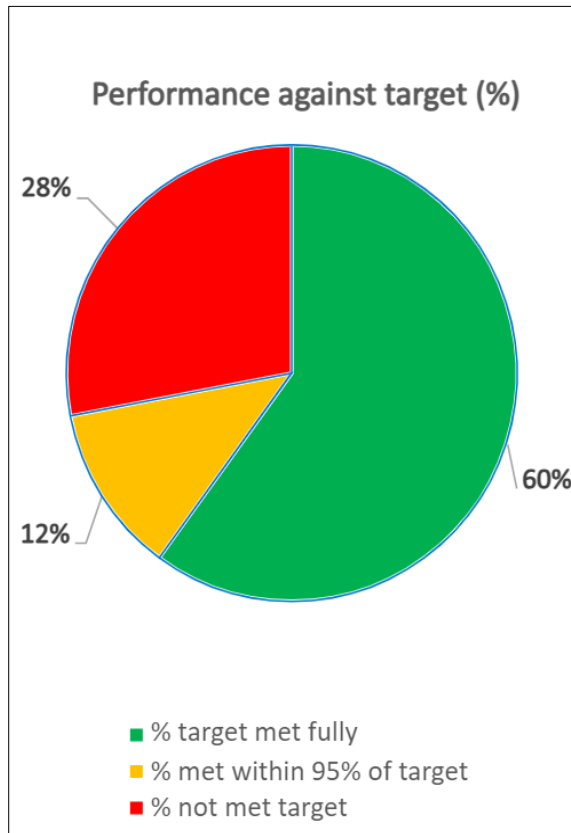
Part 1 of the report is a statistical analysis of the performance position at Quarter 3 2023-24.

Part 2 of the report is a commentary on performance against delivery of the 6 strategic priorities and their respective outcomes summarising current performance within the quarter and action being taken to improve performance where required.

3. Executive Summary

The charts below provide an overview position of all performance measures across all 6 Borough Strategy priorities as at Quarter 3 2023-24, examining:

- Performance against target.
- Trend - whether performance has improved / worsened since the position 12 months ago.
- Inter Authority performance - how St Helens' performance compares to that of a family group of authorities similar to St Helens.



4. Part 1 - Statistical analysis

To measure performance at Quarter 3 2023-24, the Council is reporting against a total of 86 performance indicators, where targets were set. The indicators reported are split between Tier 1 and Tier 2:

Tier 1 – A set of high-level strategic indicators and targets that constitute the Outcomes Framework of the Borough Strategy 2021-2030.

Tier 2 – A further set of performance indicators and targets to address key priority areas of performance within Directorates / Departments.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority area, this distinction is maintained and both tiers are shown as they are all relevant to an understanding of overall performance.

The Quarter 3 report statistical analysis looks at performance under 3 areas:

1. Performance against targets
2. Trend over 12-months
3. Inter-authority comparison

4.1 Performance Against Target

This measure sets out:

- The percentage of indicators by priority where targets have been fully met or exceeded.
- The percentage of indicators by priority that have not fully met target but are within 95% of target.
- The percentage of indicators by priority that have failed to meet the target by more than 5%.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority area, green, amber, and red colours are used to depict indicators in each of the above three bullet point situations.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% target fully met	% target met within 95%	% target not met
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	21	52% (11)	24% (5)	24% (5)
2. Health, independence, and care	21	57% (12)	14% (3)	29% (6)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	14	64% (9)	0% (0)	36% (5)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	8	63% (5)	0% (0)	37% (3)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	9	67% (6)	0% (0)	33% (3)
6. Responsible Council	13	70% (9)	15% (2)	15% (2)
Total	86**	60% (52)	12% (10)	28% (24)

** Some new indicators do not have targets set for the year as baseline data is being collected in 2023-24. See individual priorities for details.

A listing of indicators, which have met or exceeded target, have met within 95% of target, or have failed to meet target by more than 5% are shown within each of the 6 priority scorecards.

4.2 The Performance Trend

This measure compares performance at Quarter 3 2023-24 with performance at Quarter 3 2022-23 by setting out:

- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year has improved.
- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year has declined.
- The percentage of indicators where performance compared to last year is the same.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority a black arrow pointing up, downwards or sideways is used to depict indicators in each of the above 3 scenarios.

NB. There are a small number of indicators for 2023-24, where performance data in 2022-23 is not available and therefore it is not possible to show a performance trend. Where this is the case N/A appears.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% improved on last year	% worse than last year	% the same as last year
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	22	45% (10)	41% (9)	14% (3)
2. Health, independence, and care	19	42% (8)	42% (8)	16% (3)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	11	45% (5)	55% (6)	0% (0)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	5	60% (3)	40% (2)	0% (0)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	8	63% (5)	37% (3)	0% (0)
6. Responsible Council	13	70% (9)	15% (2)	15% (2)
Total	78	51% (40)	39% (30)	10% (8)

4.3 Inter Authority Comparison

This measure shows how performance in St Helens compares to the performance of a family group of authorities similar to St Helens. It does this by ranking each authority's performance by quartile. The top performing 25 % are in the first quartile and the bottom 25% in the fourth quartile. Authorities in between are placed in either the 2nd or 3rd quartiles. Comparative national data is only available to be used for **43** indicators.

In the supporting scorecards for each priority, where this measure is used, green indicates that St Helens is in the top best performing quartile, red that it is in the bottom quartile or yellow/amber that St Helens is in either the 2nd or 3rd quartile). The England average figure (Eng, Av) is also now presented, as is the statistical neighbour group average (LA Av.) to provide additional context to comparative performance.

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
1. Ensure children and young people have a positive start	22	23% (5)	14% (3)	23% (5)	40% (9)

Priority	Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
2. Health, independence, and care	11	18% (2)	9% (1)	46% (5)	27% (3)
3. Safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods	0	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
4. Strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy	6	33% (2)	17% (1)	50% (3)	0% (0)
5. Green and vibrant places reflecting our heritage and culture	2	0% (0)	50% (1)	0% (0)	50% (1)
6. Responsible Council	2	0% (0)	0% (0)	50% (1)	50% (1)
Total	43	21%* (9)	14% (6)	33%* (14)	33%* (14)

NB – Percentages rounded to nearest whole number

The latest available picture of inter authority performance largely relates to the 2021-22 financial year. Therefore, St Helens position vis-a-vis its quartile position is based on St Helens performance in that particular year relative to its statistical neighbours. Future reports will be updated to reflect the 2022-23 comparative performance position as and when verified data is published.

4.4 Summary and conclusion of statistical analysis

- **72%** of indicator targets have been either exceeded, met fully, or met within 95% of target. This compares to 73% of indicators in Quarter 3 2022-23.
- **28%** of indicator targets were not met, compared to 27% in Quarter 3 2022-23.
- The trend measure indicates over the course of the last 12 months **51%** of indicators showed improvement, **10%** of indicators maintained the same performance and **39%** of indicators showed a downward trajectory. The position in Quarter 3 2022-23 was that **52%** of indicators showed improvement, **7%** of indicators maintained the same performance and **41%** of indicators showed a downward trajectory.
- **21%** of all indicators where comparison is possible are in the top quartile, compared to 24% at Quarter 3 2021-22, whilst **33%** are in the bottom quartile, compared to 27% at Quarter 3 2022-23. 14% and 33% of indicators are in the 2nd and 3rd quartile respectively, compared to 20% and 29% in Quarter 3 2022-23 (NB percentages rounded to nearest whole number).
- Annual targets were set where possible within the context of national, Northwest, and local authority comparator group data. Equally targets aspire to be challenging but achievable within the context of the available resources. The targets also take account of performance during the last 3 years which has been an unprecedented period due to the onset and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis, increasing demand for services and severe financial constraints.
- Performance should therefore be viewed within the context of what has continued to be a challenging operational period for the Council. The legacy impact of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, rising demand for services and the requirement to deliver significant budget savings has impacted the Council's ability to meet targets and demonstrate improvements in performance trends. Equally in many areas the impact of the pandemic on performance is yet to be fully realised and understood. However, given the effect of the pandemic on St Helens to date there is the strong likelihood that

existing inequalities may be widened. This presents risks for future performance, but particularly in areas such as public health, education and schools and children's services where comparative performance is already challenging.

5. Part 2 - Commentary on performance against priority and outcome

Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life



Outcomes

- Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve
- Children and young people's aspirations, attainment and opportunities are raised
- Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential

Overview of Priority Performance

The tables below provide an overview of performance at Quarter 2 2023-24 for the indicators reported

Performance Against Target

Number of Indicators with data	% target fully met	% target met within 95%	% target not met
23	52% (12)	22% (5)	26% (6)

The Performance Trend

Number of Indicators with data	% improved on last year	% worse than last year	% the same as last year
22	45% (10)	41% (9)	14% (3)

NB - figures rounded to nearest whole number

Inter Authority Comparison

Number of Indicators with data	% in 1st quartile	% in 2nd quartile	% in 3rd quartile	% in 4th quartile
22	23% (5)	14% (3)	23% (5)	40% (9)

NB - figures rounded to nearest whole number

Priority 1 - Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life

Tier 1

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target (Dec)	Trend	Comparative Performance
Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve	CYP-001	The number of open Early Help episodes starting	Quarterly	Higher	N/A	1500	421	741	1183	5.16%	↑	N/A
	CYP-002	The number of early help episodes that have been closed and have subsequently not gone on to have a social care intervention in the following 12 months as a percentage of total closures	Quarterly	Higher	87	87	73	73.4	74.9	-13.91%	↓	N/A
	CYP-003	Number of children in need at 31 March, per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years	Quarterly	Lower	447.9	440	451	474	466	-5.91%	↓	3rd Quartile Eng Av. 343.0 LA Av. 439 (2022/23)
	CYP-004	Rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 under 18 year olds	Quarterly	Lower	76.4%	67	66.9	58.8	56.4	18.26%	↑	4th Quartile Eng Av. 43 LA Av. 60.5 (2022/23)

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target (Dec)	Trend	Comparative Performance
	CYP-005	Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.	Quarterly	Lower	23.1%	24%	25	21	21	12.5%	↑	3rd Quartile Eng Av. 23.6 LA Av. 21.8 (2022/23)
	CYP-006	Number of looked after children per 10,000 children within the Borough	Quarterly	Lower	129.3	127	127	134	129	-1.57%	↑	4th Quartile Eng Av. 71 LA Av. 114 (2022/23)
	CYP-008A	Percentage of Children Looked After ceased due to adoption	Quarterly	Higher	9%	10	10	11	11	10%	↑	4th Quartile Eng Av. 10 LA Av. 9.6 (2022/23)
	CYP-008B	Percentage of Children Looked After ceased due to Special Guardianship Order (SGO)	Quarterly	Higher	26.8%	22	15	21	22	0%	↔	3rd Quartile Eng Av. 13 LA Av. 20 (2021/22)
	CYP-009	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 years with whom the LA is in touch	Quarterly	Higher	96%	97%	93	94	93	-3.12%	↓	1st Quartile Eng Av. 92 LA Av. 91 (2022/23)
	CYP-010	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	Quarterly	Higher	96%	99%	98	98	95	-4.04%	↔	1st Quartile Eng Av. 88 LA Av. 86 (2022/23)

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target (Dec)	Trend	Comparative Performance
	CYP-011	Percentage of former care leavers aged 19-21 years in employment, education, or training	Quarterly	Higher	61%	63%	58	59	56	-8.2%	↓	1st Quartile Eng Av. 56 LA Av. 53 (2022/23)
Children and young people's aspirations, attainment and opportunities are raised	CYP-012	Percentage of Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans completed within a 20 week period	Quarterly	Higher	19.5%	30%	6.25	13.4	15.7	-47.67%	↓	4th Quartile Eng Av. 49.1 LA Av. 74.9 (2022)
	E&S-005	Percentage of young people academic age 16-17 not in education, employment or training and not known combined	Quarterly	Lower	5.1%	5.3%	6.6	33.5	5.8	-9.43%	↓	1st Quartile Eng Av. 4.7 LA Av. 5.0 (2022)
	E&S-006	Percentage of state funded schools judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted	Quarterly	Higher	89%	90%	90	90	90	0%	↔	2nd Quartile Eng Av. 88 LA Av. 84 (Dec 2022)
Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential	PH-004	Under-18 conception rate per 1,000 females, 15-17 years (single year rate)	Quarterly	Lower	25.9%	28%	25.9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4th Quartile Eng Av. 12.8 LA Av. 19.1 (June 2021)
	PH-005	Percentage of infants being breastfed at 6-8 weeks	Quarterly	Higher	32.6%	31.6%	37.1	29	32	1.27%	↑	4th Quartile Eng Av. 49.3 LA Av. 34.5 (2021/22)

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Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target (Dec)	Trend	Comparative Performance
	PH-008	Percentage of children aged 5 with MMR vaccination (2 doses)	Quarterly	Higher	88.1%	90%	85.8	85.7	87.3	-3%	N/A	4th Quartile Eng Av. 85.7 LA Av. 90.1 (2021/22)
	CYP-013	Number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system who receive their first substantive outcome or court disposal per 100,000 population aged 10-17	Quarterly (lagged)	Lower	186	159	6	72	-	-%	↓	1st Quartile Eng Av. 169.2 LA Av. 157.5 (2021)
	CYP-014	The percentage of children re-offending	Quarterly (lagged)	Lower	31.9%	36%	28.6	44.4	-	-%	↓	4th Quartile Eng Av. 35.6 LA Av. 31.3 (2019)

Tier 2

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target (Dec)	Trend	Comparative Performance
Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve	CYP-007	Percentage of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year	Quarterly	Lower	8%	9%	7.7	7.3	6.3	30%	↑	2nd Quartile Eng Av. 10.0 LA Av. 10 (2021/22)
Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential	PH-006	Smoking status at the time of delivery	Quarterly	Lower	13.7%	12%	15.3	13.1	12.8	-6.67%	↓	3rd Quartile Eng Av. 9.1 LA Av. 12.2 (2021/22)
	PH-007	Under 18 admissions to hospital for alcohol specific reasons per 100,000 population	Quarterly	Lower	66.1% (Q3 - 2022-23)	68	62.5	58.9	53.3	21.62%	↑	4th Quartile Eng Av. 29.3 LA Av. 40.1 (18/19- 20/21)
	PH-009	Percentage of children who received a 2-2.5 year Healthy Child Programme review by the time they were 2.5	Quarterly	Higher	82.7%	84%	90.5	88	89.3	6.31%	↑	3rd Quartile Eng Av. 74.0 LA Av. 86.4 (2021/22)

Outcome	Ref	Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Higher / Lower is better?	22/23 Outturn	23/24 Target	Q1 June	Q2 Sept	Q3 Dec	% Variance from Target (Dec)	Trend	Comparative Performance
	PH-010	Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at 2-2 1/2 years	Quarterly	Higher	86.2%	85%	85.1	85.9	87	2.35%	▲	2nd Quartile Eng Av. 80.9 LA Av. 80.3 (2021/22)

Summary of performance against outcome and action for improvement

Outcome – Children and young people are safe from harm and the lives of children in care improve

Current Performance

- Performance against the outcome showed a mixed picture at Quarter 3 with some improvements shown but also some ongoing challenges in the area of Children’s Social Care.
- **CYP-001** – Over the first 3 Quarters 2023-24 a total of 1,183 early help episodes were initiated across the St Helens partnership. The most common reasons for an early help episode starting in the period were related to Parenting Capacity (23% of episodes started), Domestic Abuse (15%), SEN related issues (13%) Emotional Wellbeing support (8%) and support related to School Absence or Lateness (8%). The majority of episodes initiated in the period were led by the Council’s dedicated Early Help Team (46%) with education providers and schools being the next largest (30%) contributor of episodes initiated in the period. The number of episodes started in the period (1,183) is above that reported in the April-Dec period of the previous year (1,068), an +11% increase in early help episodes initiated compared to the previous year.
- **CYP-002** - 75% of all Early Help Episodes that ended in Q2 last year did not subsequently go on and have a Social Care referral in the subsequent 12 months. This is the highest percentage of any quarter this year but currently behind the ambitious target of 87%.
- **CYP-003** -, Over the first 3 quarters 2023-24 a total of 1,720 children and young people were open to St Helens Children's Social Services, a rate of 466 per 10,000 under 18-year-olds. The number of children open to St Helens Children's Social Cars has increased from 1,638 on the 31st of March 2023 to 1,720 on the 31st of December 2023, an increase of 4.6% over the period. In the same period last year there was a total of 1,683 open to St

Helens Children's Social Care. The rate of Children In Need per 10,000 0-17 population reported for St Helens continues to above comparable regional and national averages.

- **CYP-004** - On the 31st of December 2023, a total of 208 children and young people were the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan and supported by St Helens Children's Social Services, equating to a rate of 56 children per 10,000 under 18 year olds. The number of children the subject of a CP Plan has decreased from 280 children reported at 31st March 2023 to 208 on the 31st of December 2023, a decrease in the CP population of 26% over the period. However, whilst the rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan continues to be higher than the most recently published (2022-23) comparable regional (49) and national (43) rates, the rate is now lower than the comparable Ofsted statistical neighbour rate (60). The majority of children supported with a CP Plan on the 30th of September 2023 are supported due to concerns related to Neglect (56%), Emotional abuse (23%) or Physical abuse (13%).
- **CYP-005** – Over the course of the first 3 quarters 2023-24, a total of 175 children became the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan, with 36 of the children (or 21%) becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time. The percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time, is now better than the local target (24%) and the position reported at the end of the previous financial year (23%). St Helens performance is now lower than the most recently (2022-23) published national average (24%).
- **CYP-006** - At the end of Quarter 3 2023-24, a total of 478 children and young people were cared for by St Helens Council, equating to a rate of 129 children per 10,000 under 18-year-olds. The number of Children Looked After (CLA) reported for St Helens on the 31st of December 2023 is higher than the 469 reported at the end of March 2023 but below the 476 at the end of Quarter 3 2022-23. The latest CLA population rate reported for St Helens (127) continues to be higher than the most recently published (2022-23) comparable regional (96), national (71) and statistical neighbour (114) CLA population rates.
- **CYP-008A** - Over the course of the first 3 quarters 2023-24, a total of 123 children and young people have been discharged from care with 13 of the children discharged due to adoption, equating to 11% of total care discharges in the period. The percentage of discharges due to adoption in the period (11%) is above the position reported in the previous full 2022-23 financial year (9%) and above the most recent (2022-23) comparable regional (9%) and national (10%) averages.
- **CYP-008B** - Over the course of the first 3 quarters 2023-24, a total of 123 children and young people have been discharged from care with 27 of the children discharged due to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO), equating to 22% of total discharges in the period. The percentage of discharges via SGO in the period (22%) is the same as that reported over the course of the first 3 quarters in 2022-23, and above the last published comparable regional (15%) and national (13%) positions.
- **CYP-009-010-011** - Performance against the 3 key outcome indicators for care leavers, that being care leavers in suitable accommodation, care leavers the local authority is still in touch with, and care leavers in employment education and training remains comparatively strong, being above last published England and statistical neighbour averages. All 3 indicators are marginally below target at the end of Quarter 3 2023-24. The indicator for

care leavers in employment education and training has decreased by 3% over the course of Quarter 3 2023-24, whilst the indicators for care leavers in suitable accommodation, and care leavers the local authority is still in touch have also dipped slightly.

- **CYP-007** - In the 12-month period up to and including December 2023, a total of 30 children and young people experienced three or more placement moves in the previous 12-month period, equating to 6.3% of the total CLA population supported by St Helens' Children's Social Care. Current performance is better than the target of 9%, as well as the full 2022-23 performance reported for St Helens (8.3%) and the most recently published national (10%) and regional average for 2022-23 (9%).

Action for Improvement

- **CYP-001** The number of children receiving Early Help services has slightly improved. However, we recognise that there is much work to do to improve our Early Help offer to reduce the demand for specialist services. New governance and oversight arrangements via an Early Help Board are in progress to strengthen the Early Help partnership offer across St Helens. This work along with the Supporting Families Programme and the transformation to Family Hubs (with additional funding) will assist in earlier identification of needs and support within communities avoiding more intrusive statutory services. Although recognising improving the volume of early help activity increased, levels of activity need to coincide with improvements in the quality of assessment planning across the council's Early Help team and partner agencies to support a sustained reduction in demand for all statutory services. To support the delivery of this the council through its partnership coordinators have engaged with partners to understand the barriers to delivering effective early help to children and families. In response to these findings a multi-agency review of the Early Help Assessment document (EHAT) has taken place and a revised document has been coproduced with partners and circulated for approval by members of the Early Help Board.
- **CYP-002** Although the council have a dedicated early help team a significant proportion of early help activity is delivered by partner agencies. It is recognised that in addition to the council's Early Help team, data is required that will enable us to understand partner activity by agency in respect of both volume and the quality of activity. To help us to improve performance in relation to this indicator work has been carried out to provide a greater depth of data that is now beginning to enable the council to analyse and assess the volume and quality of early help activity delivered by partner agencies therefore enabling us to apply support and challenge to partners in respect of the volume and quality of activity. Therefore, it is anticipated that this will help us to reduce the number of early help episodes closing not converting to a social care intervention within 12 months of closure.
- **CYP-003** - We have seen an increase in the numbers of children defined as Children in Need (CIN) compared to the last quarter and same time last year. This reflects the high prevalence of neglect and relates to the need to continue to strengthen early help provision and prevent concerns escalating. We are continuing to strengthen our response to CIN, especially recognising and intervening in neglectful parenting. We have completed thematic audits of this area to understand actions that are required. Monitoring systems are in place to ensure CIN work is being improved to prevent escalation to Child Protection plans. It is notable that CP plans have significantly reduced. Neglect remains the primary focus of the CSP. A key priority is to reduce the demand for statutory services, and we are awaiting the outcome of our application for the Families First Pathfinder programme that would secure additional funding to help redesign our services to strengthen family help.

- **CYP-004** - Whilst the rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan continues to be higher than the most recently published (2022-23) comparable regional (49) and national (43) rates, the rate is now lower than the comparable Ofsted statistical neighbour rate (60). We are undertaking themed audit activity to ensure decision making continues to be appropriate given the significant down trend and will continue to monitor the effectiveness of multi-agency working in relation to CP.
- **CYP-006** - Our CLA (Children Looked After) population continues to be high, although this figure has decreased from just below 500 to 476, our numbers remain above our comparators. We have put in place robust monitoring to scrutinise decision making when children enter care. We have adapted our Edge of Care offer to provide intensive time limited support to those most in need and will continue to develop our Edge of Care offer over the next 12-months. We have seen an increase in UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children) 19 have entered our CLA population this financial year and this is impacting on the number of Care Leavers. This is recognised as an area of risk as we have limited ability to refuse this cohort when there are age disputes. Our tracking systems to ensure permanency is achieved and that exits from care are timely were endorsed by Ofsted as effective. Some protracted adoption court cases have impacted on the CLA figure during the last quarter. We are predicting to see a further increase in the number of children exiting care to adoption and Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) within the next few months and this will lead to reduced numbers of care proceedings. Our pre-proceedings numbers have dropped to 37, dedicated staffing resource, development of the PLO toolkit and training has supported this reduction.
- **CYP-011** -Whilst there has been a slight dip in Quarter 2 and 3 on the number of care leavers who are in employment, education, and training (EET) we are confident that we have effective systems in place to support these young people and will continue to address this with enthusiasm and rigour. Inspectors were complimentary about our approach to EET, and we remain confident that the annual target is achievable for this indicator.

Outcome - Children and young people's aspirations, attainment and opportunities are raised

Current Performance

- The majority of indicators under this outcome relate to the attainment of children and young people and are only published annually.
- **CYP-012** - Performance for the completion of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) to timescale showed slight improvement from 13.4% at the end of Quarter 2 to 15.7% in Quarter 3, with 51 EHCPs completed, 8 of which were within 20 weeks. Performance now stands at 15.7% which is still well below target. St Helens comparative performance from 2022 is now bottom quartile. This is due to the current backlog of overdue cases carried forward from the previous year.
- **E&S-005** – The 16-17-year-old combined NEET and Not Known performance at the end of December (Quarter 3) was 5.8%. This is an increase of 0.7% on the reported figure for December 2022 of 5.1%. NEET for 16-17-year-olds was 4.9%, represents 205 young people, which is an increase of 0.7% from last year of 4.2% (175 young people) and Not Known for 16-17-year-olds was 0.91%, representing 38 young people, which is the same

position as 2022. There is a significant number of young people in the not known cohort who have left their last address which makes tracking problematic. There is a similar picture in the numbers of young people aged 16/18 in education, employment or learning with those NEET at 6.07% and increase of 0.7% (against 5.3% for the same period last year).

- **E&S-006** - At the end of December 2023, a total of 63 state funded schools (Nursery Schools, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Special Schools, and Pupils Referral Units) in St Helens are judged by Ofsted to be good or better for overall effectiveness, equating to 90% of all state funded schools in St Helens. There are 15 schools that are currently judged by Ofsted to be outstanding and a further 48 schools that are judged to be good. The position reported for St Helens at the end of June 2023 is marginally above both the comparable regional (89%) and in line with the national (90%) average

Action for Improvement

- **CYP-012** - To address the performance challenges in the timeliness of EHCP's, the risk has been added to the corporate risk register and a recovery plan has been produced. The department continues to attempt to recruit to permanent roles with 4.5 vacancies within the assessment team and continued vacancies in the Educational Psychology Service. The Local Authority has experienced a sharp increase in requests for assessment for EHCPs with 543 requests received in 2023, against 389 in 2022. This represents an increase of 40% and maintaining an improvement in performance in this context will remain an ongoing challenge, particularly in the context of the Council's budget position. Quarter 4 will see a focus on the completion of transition annual reviews, and this may impact further on performance of new EHCPs. The Local Authority has engaged with the DfE Delivering Better Value programme which is examining the reasons behind the volume of requests and an investment plan has been submitted to the DfE for approval.
- **E&S-005** - Whilst Q3 is a more positive position than Q2, NEET performance continues to present as a challenge nationally, regionally, and locally. To address this St Helens has been working with LA partners to assess gaps in provision and growing numbers of NEET, working collaboratively to influence national policy via Combined Authority. A position statement has been discussed by the CA Employment and Skills portfolio leads and LCR colleagues have presented a case for greater flexibility and enhanced devolved responsibilities for 16-18 provision. To address the gaps in the 16-18 provision funded through ESF discussions consideration is being given to developing engagement provision through UK:SPF to support young people furthest away from engaging in EET and opportunities to provide support through Family Hubs is in place. Schools have been asked to identify young people in year 11 at risk of NEET by the end of January so that partners are able to support young people to understand aspirations and barriers to engagement ahead of September.
- **E&S-006** - As described in the School Effectiveness Strategy, schools will be supported to attain at least 'Good' status when inspected by the Ofsted as the external regulator. The School Effectiveness team continues to analyse all data (GLD, Phonics, KS1, KS2, KS4, attendance, suspensions, and exclusions) and tailor support to all maintained schools accordingly. Where there are issues with an academy school's performance, this will be raised with the school's headteacher and relevant executive officer within the trust. Good and Outstanding schools will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own improvement as well as receiving a core of support from the Local Authority. The core offer for all schools includes access to headteacher

briefing sessions, Learning Partnership, Governors' Forum, comprehensive CPD / training package for all schools, access to TESSA (Triage for education support and specialist advice), support / challenge linked to monitoring and moderation duties (completed and quality assured during Summer 23 and will be repeated in the new academic year) and support from statutory services such as Virtual School and SEND. Where schools are vulnerable for not maintaining / achieving at least a 'Good' outcome, a banded package of specialist advice and support is offered through the School Effectiveness Team. This can involve Achievement and Improvement Boards, bespoke school reviews and use of specialist consultants. Schools are sent a weekly bulletin from across all services within Education and Learning. This bulletin allows information from the LA, DfE, Ofsted and other key partners to be disseminated to schools, thus strengthening information sharing and aiding compliance.

Outcome - Children and young people are healthy, resilient, confident, involved and achieve their potential

Current Performance

- Performance within the outcome of improving children's health and resilience continued to remain challenging in areas, but also shows areas of improvement.
- **PH-004** – Further data on the under-18 conception rate has yet to be published following the data reported within the Performance Outturn Report 2022-23. Therefore, the latest figure still relates to Quarter 4 December 2021 where the rolling 12-month rate for St. Helens was 25.9 conceptions per 1,000 females aged 15-17. This was higher than the England and North West rates of 13.1 and 16.4 per 1,000 respectively. In Quarter 4 (Dec 2021) St. Helens had the 7th highest rate in England, which was a reduction from 4th highest in Quarter 2 and 5th highest in Quarter 3.
- **PH-005** – Historically, St Helens has had low rates of breastfeeding. Data for Quarter 2 2023-24 shows that 32% of infants being breastfed at 6-8 weeks in St. Helens, which is above the target of 31.6%. This is an increase on the previous quarter's figure of 29%, and up on the 30% recorded in Quarter 3 2022-23. St Helens breastfeeding rate is significantly lower than the England and North West figures of 49.3% and 43% respectively.
- **PH-006** – St Helens has continued to have a comparatively high percentage of expectant mothers smoking at the time of delivery. The most recently published quarterly data on smoking status at the time of delivery relates to Quarter 2 2023-24 where 13.1% of mothers in St. Helens were known to be smoking. Comparable data for Quarter 2 2023-24 show that St. Helens remains above the North West and England averages of 8.5% and 7.5% respectively.
- **PH-007** - The rate of under 18 alcohol specific hospital admissions continues to decrease, albeit comparatively rates remain high. The most recent provisional quarterly data for Quarter 2 2023-24 (3 year rolling average) gives a rate of 53.3 admissions per 100,000 aged under 18, which is below the new target of 68. The rate of 53.3 relates to 59 admissions (this is a reduction from the previous 3 year rolling number of 64 admissions). Comparator data is only available for the 2019-21 where St. Helens' rate of 81.4 was significantly higher than the England and North West rates of 29.3 and 40.1 per 100,000 respectively.
- **PH-008** - The most recently published data for the percentage of children aged 5 have had 2 doses of the MMR vaccination relates to Quarter 2 2023-24 which showed that 87.3% of children in St Helens had 2 doses of the vaccine. This is an increase from the previous quarter (86%). MMR Vaccine

uptake rates in St Helens have remained below the critical threshold of 90% for a number of years (including pre-pandemic). However, St Helen's MMR2 vaccine uptake rate at 5 years is currently slightly higher than the national average.

- **PH-009** - The percentage of children in St. Helens who received their 2 - 2.5-year review by the time they were 2.5 during Quarter 3 2023-24 was 89.3%, a slight increase on the Quarter 2 figure of 88%. Performance has improved on the Quarter 3 2022-23 figure of 83.4% and performance is better than the target of 84% and compares favourably to the last published national and regional data.
- **PH-010** - The percentage of children achieving a good level of development at 2 - 2.5 years in St. Helens during Quarter 2 2023-24 was 87% and an increase on the previous quarter's figure of 86%. Performance is better than target and higher than the England and North West averages of 80% and 79.4% respectively.
- **CYP-013** – Quarter 3 data is not yet available as reporting is time lagged and the latest data is to the end of Quarter 2 2023-24. Over the course of the first 2 quarters St Helens had a total of 12 first time entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System. First Time Entrants are children who receive a youth caution or court conviction for the first time within the period. This equates to a rate of 72 per 100,000 population. Last year at this point St Helens had 11 FTEs, 66 per 100,000 so data is very similar to previous years. It should be noted that the Youth Justice Board (YJB) have now changed the way they Count FTE data and as such, comparisons from Quarter 1 2023-24 against earlier periods should be made with caution. The current YJB 12 month rolling data, using the new methodology has St Helens at a rate of 203 per 100,000 population, with the YJS Family group at 211, the Regional NW average at 193, and the England & Wales average at 171 per 100,000 population.
- **CYP-014** – Published data is from Police PNC/ Ministry of Justice and is time-lagged by 2 years. Levels of youth reoffending have historically been St Helens' Youth Justice Service's biggest challenge. The latest recorded reoffending figure for St Helens, published by the Youth Justice Board for a 12-month rolling cohort from January 2021 - December 2021 was 44.4%. This is a significant increase on the last reported figure which showed reoffending levels of 28.6%. In comparison for the same period the YJS Family group had a reoffending rate of 32%, the same as the NW regional average, whilst the England and Wales average stood at 31.4%. It should be noted that the reoffending rate is based on a relatively small cohort and data can fluctuate. St Helens latest data relates to 16 reoffenders with a high level of criminogenic factors out of a cohort of 36 or 44.4%. Given the 2 year time lag on the available data it has been suggested by the Youth Justice Partnership Board that real time data is also reported on as this will likely present a more accurate reflection of the re-offending rates across the entire cohort of young people the service are working with.

Action for Improvement

- **PH-004** – Unfortunately, there is no published data update for Quarter 3 from ONS on teenage conceptions. In terms of actions, the TAZ team are offering a free Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) package to schools but so far uptake has been low. The TAZ team are presenting the offer at the School Health and Wellbeing meetings in January where safeguarding and pastoral teams will be present. The 0-19 School Nurses are offering weekly drop ins where they are also offering condom distribution where appropriate. The local Teenage Pregnancy strategy group is scheduled to meet in February to further progress the local action plan.
- **PH-005** - Performance in terms of breastfeeding rates has improved slightly this quarter. The team have been under capacity with delayed recruitment. There has been an increase in referrals for more specialist support and reduced capacity for outreach engagement work. The Co-ordinator is now in post, and 3 Infant Feeding Specialists have been recruited to improve capacity and maternity ward support. The team are currently on the ward 3 days

per week and are aiming to extend support to 7 days per week in April. The team are also working collaboratively to develop the antenatal pathway, which is being led through the Integrated Care Partnership. This will increase breastfeeding rates ensuring that breastfeeding education is reaching more pregnant mums. Work is in progress to improve data sharing and increase postnatal discharges and referrals from other hospitals, including Warrington Maternity, Ormskirk, and Liverpool Women's, as some St Helens residents choose to give birth in these birthing units.

- **PH-006** - The latest data for smoking during pregnancy has shown a positive downward trend for two consecutive quarters which is the lowest ever recorded rate, however rates remain above the local target, and above regional national averages. The hospital continues to develop the Tobacco Dependency Programme, which includes bespoke training and additional roles for maternity services for smoking in pregnancy. The community Stop Smoking Service is developing proposals in readiness to receive the additional national funding announced in autumn. A smoking needs assessment is also under development to help inform where to focus resources. Local Authorities will be required to meet certain criteria to be eligible for the additional funding, with further guidance expected at the end of January. The antenatal education programme is being re-developed collaboratively with partners which will include the risks involved in smoking in pregnancy and signposting/referral for advice and support to quit.
- **PH-007** - Young Peoples alcohol admissions continue on a general downward trend, and we are on target. The councils Young Peoples Drug and Alcohol team (YPDAAT) have reviewed the data in detail with Public Health and NHS partners to understand which young people are at risk so that they can better provide support. At risk groups generally include those who have already attended hospital, Children Looked After or a child in need, those in contact with the criminal justice system, those suspended or excluded from school, and young people affected by domestic abuse, mental ill-health, or the use of alcohol/drugs by a close family member. There are a number of repeat attenders. Local intelligence suggests that those who attend hospital for alcohol specific reasons are largely young people experiencing emotional distress and there is a strong link with self-harm. Pathways from A&E in to the YPDAAT are being reviewed in partnership with health colleagues and more young people are starting to get the support they need in the community. As well as continuing to strengthen the response to those young people attending hospital, the partnership is looking at what can be done to strengthen prevention.
- **PH-008** - As part of the UK routine schedule children should have received 2 doses of MMR vaccine by the age of 5 years. The most recent data for Quarter 2 has shown an improvement in uptake from the previous quarter. In response to a recent increase of measles cases seen nationally increasing uptake of MMR vaccination is a key priority. Proactive local communications/promotional materials have been developed for parents and carers and for 18–25-year-olds to raise awareness of the MMR vaccination. Current catch up campaigns for 0–5-year-olds and 18–25-year-olds are being completed in primary care. Children staying in initial accommodation in St Helens are being offered MMR vaccination as per the UK vaccination schedule as part of a continuing NHSE pilot.
- **PH-009** - The 0-19 Healthy Child Programme service has again improved and continued to perform well, for three consecutive quarters to reach 89.3% of children, which is above the local target for this indicator. This is a child development review and indicator to identify young children with SEND to ensure early identification and additional support can be put in place at the earliest opportunity. As such, this indicator continues to be closely monitored and quality audits are undertaken to understand any exceptions.

- **PH-010** - Data for this quarter has improved since the last quarter and performance is above the local target. The 0-19 Healthy Child Programme service are working closely with Children's Services Early Years to develop the integrated (Health and Education) two-year review and piloting the more sensitive ELIM (Early Language Identification Measure) assessment tool as a key early intervention review to identify and provide additional support for any identified development issues. The Haydock team have started using the ELIM tool alongside the 2 -2.5 Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) in September 23 for 6 months to trial initially. The plan is that by Summer 2024, all North and South Teams will be using the ELIM tool.

For more information about individual performance indicators that support the achievement of these outcomes please see the scorecard.