



**Changing Lives.  
Changing Futures.**



**Nottingham  
City Council**

# Ofsted Update

March 2024

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# ILACS July 2022 - Areas for improvement



Effectiveness and timeliness of responses to children's needs when first presented to the multi-agency safeguarding hub



The service response to care leavers age 21 and over



Management Oversight and direction of front-line work and the local authority designated officer



The service response to young people who are aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless



Social Work Capacity



The quality and timeliness of return home interviews



Placement sufficiency for children in care and those with complex needs



Oversight of children missing from education and those who are electively home educated





- Submitted Ofsted Action Plan – December 2022
  - Oversight through Children’s Improvement Board
- Entered into period of monitoring visits:
  - February 2023 - The Front Door (MASH, Duty and EDT)
  - July 2023 - Children in Need and Children with a Child Protection Plan
  - November 2023 - Care Leavers aged 18+
- No grading given but narrative report published for second and subsequent visit

# Common areas of progress



Clear interlink between the transformation and improvement activity, which is improving the quality of practice and staff morale.



Investment in posts to increase front line and management capacity, which has helped manage workload and demand, increase management oversight, reduce caseloads and improve staff morale.



The workforce feels supported by managers and can feel the positive impact that reduced caseloads are having, enabling them to deliver best practice



Staff develop strong and meaningful relationships with their children and young people, know them well and act as good parents. This enables them to assess children and young people's needs to offer good support, particularly to our more vulnerable children and care leavers

# Common areas of progress



There is a committed senior leadership team who have clear oversight and knowledge of performance within service areas



The quality assurance framework has been strengthened and is being embedded. This is correctly identifying areas for improvement and development to help further strengthen practice and learning



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# Common areas for development



Inconsistency in quality of assessments or plans.



Inconsistency in the frequency and quality of supervision to help progress outcomes for children in a timely way.



Some children and young people experience too many changes of social worker



Further work with partners needed to reduce delays in assessment and intervention which some children and families continue to experience

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## Our improvement journey

### Service development and practice improvement

**Goal 1:** Right support, right response, right time

**Goal 2:** Workforce stability where staff are supported to progress as they develop

**Goal 3:** Effective managerial oversight

**Goal 4:** Effective learning and development offer

**Goal 5:** Understanding and responding to individual need and diversity

### Transformation projects

**Goal 1:** Supporting children to remain with their families

**Goal 2:** Supporting children to leave care through reunification or SGO

**Goal 3:** Ensuring ideal outcomes and strong management around plans

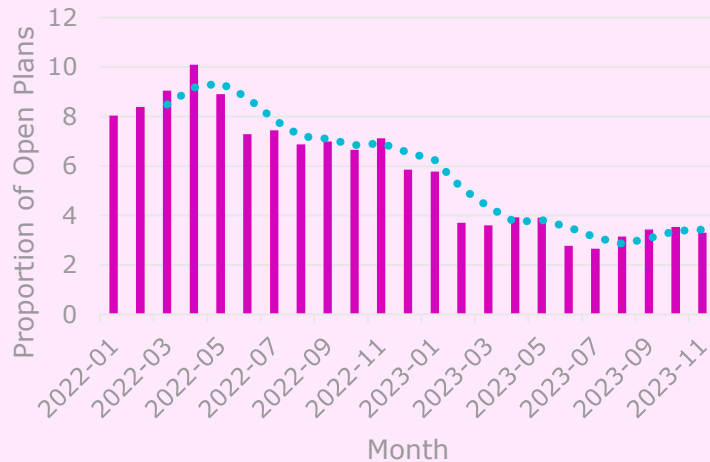
**Goal 4:** Ensuring we have the right care settings available when requested

**Goal 5:** Early help strategy, partnerships and service design

## Sustainably improved services

# Impact of Improvement and Transformation – Child Protection and Child in Need

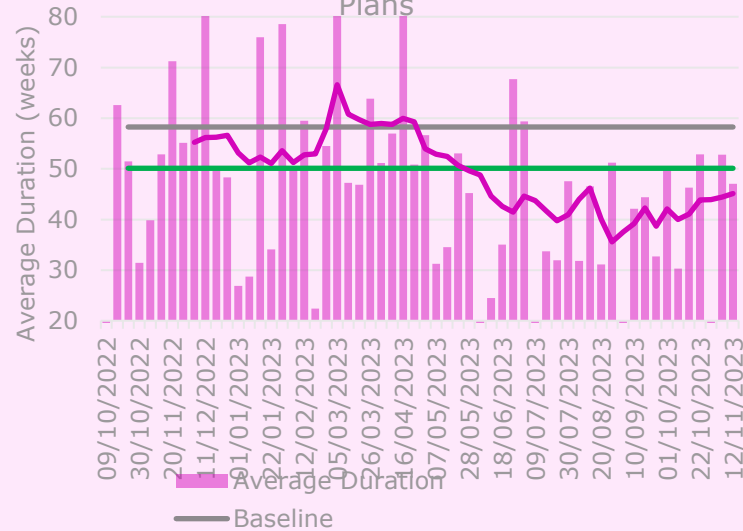
Percentage of CP Plans Open 2+ Years



The number of CP plans open for over 2 years has reduced from over 7% in November 2022 to 3.3% in November 2023..

CP plans are not a long-term solution and so we shouldn't be keeping these plans open if they can be supported elsewhere.

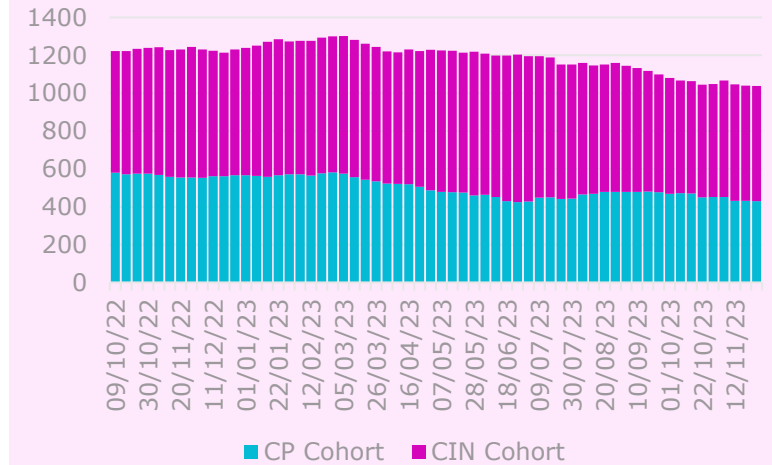
Whole service Average Duration of CP Plans



The duration of our CP plans has reduced from 58 weeks to 44 weeks, or by 24%.

That means by focusing on plan progression, managerial oversight, & collaborative working, children are being safeguarded, and are out of risk of significant harm, quicker.

Total Open CiN and CP Plans

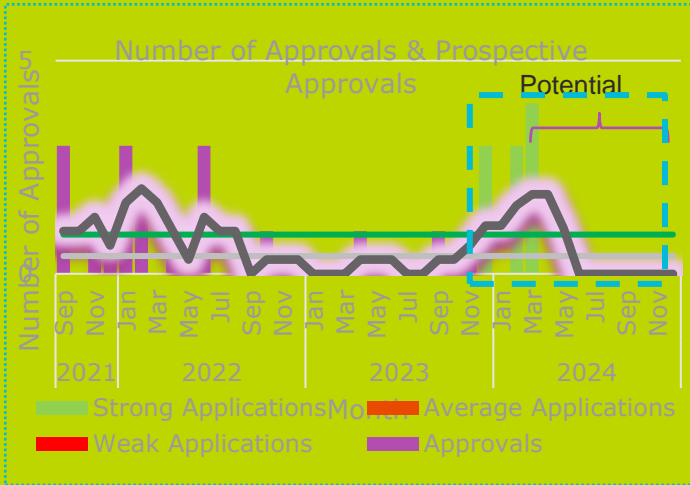


The number of CP plans has dropped by **26%** since all the CiN/CP trials began. Most of these closed to CiN, putting us more line with our stat neighbours.

The number of CiN plans has dropped by **7%**.



## Recruitment



KPI	Baseline	Target	PROSPECTIVE (12 Wk MA)
Prospective approvals per month	0.42	0.92	2

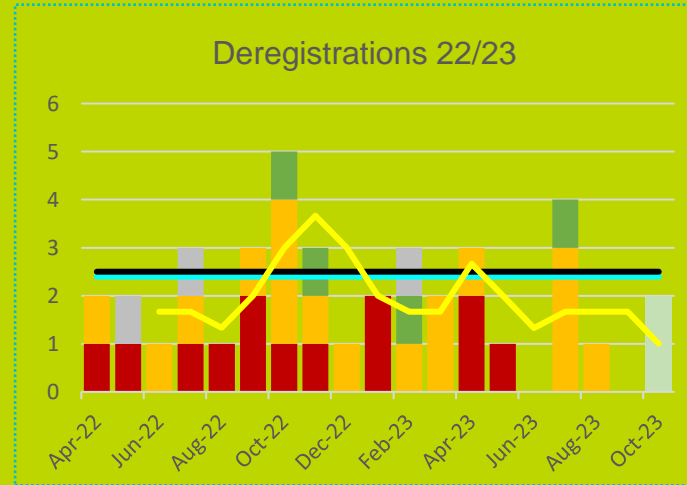
### What does this mean?

- We are set to recruit 10 carers from now until March
- This means that we are likely to be able to provide safe and stable homes for 10+ children and ensure that they don't have to go to an IFA or residential.

### Where is it now?

- As we are set to surpass target, the focus is now on ensuring provisions are in place to allow it to sustain.
- One highlight has been the fact that the approval rate from enquiries is sitting at 7% (1% above the national average).

## Retention



KPI	Baseline	Target	Current (3 MONTH MA)
Resignations per month	2.5	2.4	1.67

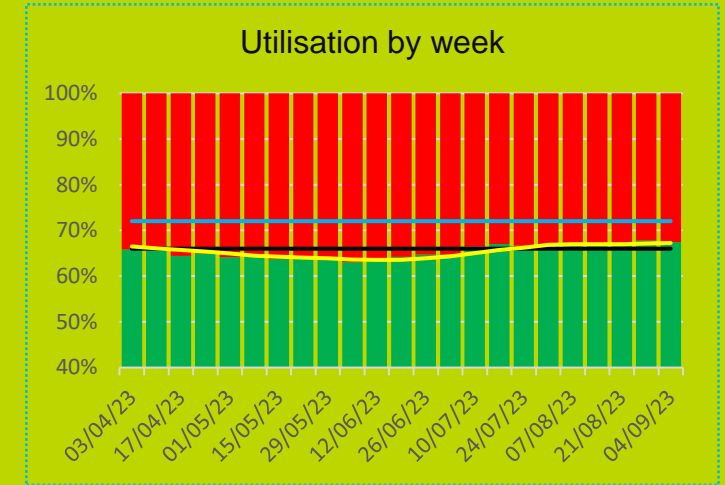
### What does this mean?

- At our current rate, we are set to lose 10 fewer carers over the course of the year!
- This means that we could provide around 15 more spaces for children over the next year.

### Where is it now?

- Like recruitment, we are set to surpass target, so the focus should be on doing what we can to sustain the work long term.
- A particular highlight has been that we haven't had a preventable leaver since May!

## Utilisation



KPI	Baseline	Target	Current (4 Wk MA)
Utilisation per week	65%	71%	72%

### What does this mean?

- We have increased the utilisation of our carers by 7%.
- This means that, by utilising our carers better, we are able to provide more children with safer and more permanent outcomes.

### Where is it now?

- We are working to make sure we review all children who could be placed in available beds, including residential step-downs.



## Other activity: Recruitment and retention

### Activity

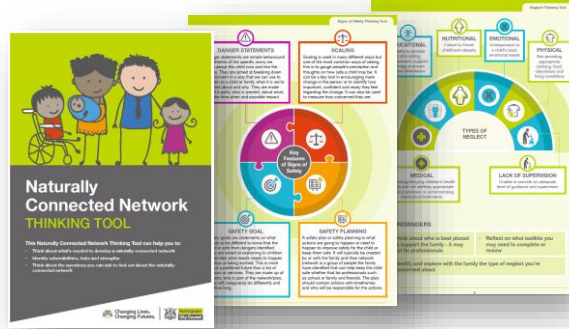
- Improved advertising and social media presence
- Improved advertising resources, including recruitment video:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_CcGaWrNr0&feature=youtu.be#xd\\_co\\_f=YTBkNmM1N2ItZjMwOC00ZmVmLTgxMTAtYjJhZjdjYzIzMjE2~](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_CcGaWrNr0&feature=youtu.be#xd_co_f=YTBkNmM1N2ItZjMwOC00ZmVmLTgxMTAtYjJhZjdjYzIzMjE2~)
- Rolling recruitment and streamlined recruitment processes

### Impact

- Recruitment of experienced social workers
- Conversion of agency staff to permanent establishment
- Reduction in reliance on agency staffing in some teams
- Reduction in caseloads in most of the service

## Valuing staff and celebrating success

- Supporting staff with resources and skills to undertake direct work with children and families



- Monthly Shout Out nominations and awards

- Annual celebration event 'Looking Back, Moving Forward'

[LBMF event recap video 5.mp4 \(sharepoint.com\)](#)



There has also been a noticeable culture change within the service

## A greater focus on data

"The dashboard is so **useful**, I managed to do every midpoint check that was due this week, and some for the beginning of next week. **I've not been able to do that before**"

*CPC*

## A new service identity

### Growth in confidence

"As a practitioner, the tools developed will give me **greater confidence**"

*CIC SW*



## Celebration of staff

"I absolutely found the FTG helpful because I was stuck on ideas on how to **work collaboratively** with the family because a lot had not worked in the past.

I am raving about it to people - no preparation is needed. It was super helpful and feeling refreshed. It also **felt like the roadblock had been removed** because FTG helped."

*Fieldwork SW on the FTG*



## Increased morale

"The whole project has brought us up... What we have now compared to what we have before is **so much more productive and effective!**"

*Fostering Recruitment Team*

"Last year, it felt like I was doing everything on my own at times, but now we've got a **much more streamlined approach**, so we're so much more on top of it and can **find placements for children a lot easier**. I feel like I've got a lot more back up now"

*Duty Lead*

## More collaboration

## Streamlined processes



- Continue to develop consistency of practice through learning and development resources, team development days, embedding quality assurance activity and learning and improving service user feedback to shape delivery
- Work with partners to embed the Early Help Strategy and Thresholds of Need to ensure timely support to families



## Next steps

- Continually review recruitment and retention strategies
- Use data to profile the future workload distribution of the service and realign staffing and resources to support demand