

Vulnerable Groups

Child Protection

Revised: 25/08/2017

Introduction

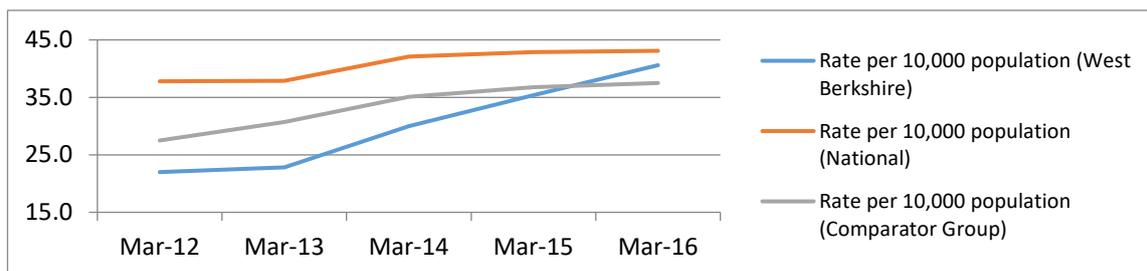
For children found to be suffering actual harm or abuse, or whose circumstances place at them at risk of suffering such harm and abuse, an individual Child Protection Plan is created which sets out the actions needed to be taken, and the timescales in which these must be addressed, to reduce the risks of such harm and abuse to a reasonably safe level. The interventions that must be taken or can be taken to protect children are prescribed and supported in law. Children and young people subject to Child Protection Plans are closely monitored and reviewed. The plans are multi-agency in nature and the local authority and its partners have a duty under legislation and statutory guidance to work together to reduce the level of harm.

Children and young people that become subject to Child Protection Plans do so because they are considered by a multi-agency child protection conference to be, or likely to be, suffering significant harm. Any child or young person under the age of 18 can be subject to a child protection plan in order to safeguard them from significant harm.

What do we know?

The number (and rate per 10,000) of Child Protection Plans in West Berkshire rose sharply between March 2013 and March 2014. A similar pattern is evident both nationally and amongst our comparator authorities. Since 2014, the rise in West Berkshire has been steeper than in our comparator authorities and our rate per 10,000 is therefore now above the comparator average. We remain below the national average.

	Mar-12	Mar-13	Mar-14	Mar-15	Mar-16
Number of Child Protection Plan - West Berkshire	78	82	107	126	145
Rate per 10,000 population (West Berkshire)	22.0	22.8	30.0	35.4	40.6
Rate per 10,000 population (National)	37.8	37.9	42.1	42.9	43.1
Rate per 10,000 population (Comparator Group)	27.5	30.7	35.1	36.75	37.5



West Berkshire Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Of those CP Plans that ended during 2015/16, approximately 30% had been subject to a plan for 3 months or less, 30% for 6-12 months and 32% for 1-2 years. West Berkshire is unusual in having no children subject to a plan for over 2 years but our profile is otherwise broadly similar to the national one.

Children ceasing to be subject to a plan during 2015/16 by duration of plan

Length of time subject to a Plan	WBC (%)	National (%)
<= 3 months	29.5	20
3 <= 6 months	x	10.5
6 <= 12 months	29.5	40.6
1 year < 2 years	32.2	25.2
2 years +	x	3.8

x = a total less than 5

The main reasons for new Child Protection Plans in West Berkshire during 2015/16 were Neglect (33%) followed by Emotional Abuse (19%). The percentage subject to a plan with a reason of Neglect is higher than most of our comparator authorities but in all other respects our profile is broadly similar.

CP Plan Starts during the year ending 31/03/2016					
Local Authority	Neglect	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Multiple
Bracknell Forest	23%	4%	3%	18%	2%
Buckinghamshire	24%	3%	2%	21%	1%
Cambridgeshire	26%	4%	3%	8%	0%
Central Bedfordshire	25%	6%	1%	17%	0%
Cheshire East	22%	4%	4%	14%	0%
Hampshire	36%	8%	4%	12%	0%
Hertfordshire	19%	1%	1%	9%	0%
Oxfordshire	27%	2%	1%	13%	7%
Rutland	21%	0%	0%	29%	10%
Surrey	25%	2%	1%	10%	1%
West Berkshire	33%	2%	4%	19%	0%

What is the data telling us?

The increase in the number of Child Protection Plans is likely to place significant pressure both on Children's Services and other services/agencies that have a role in monitoring safeguarding and/or provision of services to these families.

Neglect and Emotional Abuse are the most common reasons for a plan to be put in place. An awareness of how to work most effectively with families where Neglect/Emotional abuse are issues is therefore important.

Recommendations for consideration

There are significant and rising numbers of children in need of protection being identified in West Berkshire and entering the children's social care 'system'. These

young people require agencies to work together to reduce risk and promote wellbeing. Staffing levels will need to be sufficient to provide appropriate safeguarding.

Initiatives that aim to intervene early and (longer term) reduce the number of those subject to a Child Protection Plan are critical both financially and in terms of achieving good outcomes for children and young people.

Staff training and policy/good practice should place particular emphasis on monitoring and achieving change within families who are experiencing neglect and/or emotional abuse.

Other services and partner organisations

Children's Social Care
Health
Education

National and local strategies

[Berkshire Child Protection Procedures](#)

[Nationally published data on Child Protection data](#)

Other chapters you might be interested in

Children & Young People

If you have any questions about this chapter, please contact Public Health and Wellbeing Team on publichealthandwellbeing@westberks.gov.uk or 01635 503437