

Vulnerable Groups

Referrals to Children's Social Care

Revised: 30/08/2017

Introduction

Information on the number of Referrals received by children's social care

What do we know?

The number (and rate per 10,000) of referrals to West Berkshire Children's Social Care is low compared to our Comparator Authorities. However, there are currently discussions underway across the South East about the recording of contacts/referrals – so that it is highly likely that this area of data is not comparable.

In line with the national trend – there was a significant increase in referrals between 2013 and 2014 and this is continuing to rise.

In contrast to our comparators, our percentage of repeat referrals went up from 18% to 22% in 2014.

Just under a quarter of our referrals in 2013/4 came from the Police, a figure that is in line with the national profile. However, West Berkshire receives a higher percentage from schools than is the case nationally.

What is the data telling us?

The increase in the number of Referrals is likely to place significant pressure both on Children's Services and other services/agencies who have a role in providing services to children in need. The reason for the increase is the subject of some debate nationally. The heightened awareness/responsibility of agencies/professionals following a couple of high profile child deaths (e.g. Baby Peter) is likely to be a significant factor.

The highest percentage of referrals is from the Police – a figure that is largely attributable to the high number of referrals in relation to domestic abuse.

Recommendations for consideration

The rising number of referrals to children's social care requires agencies to work together to reduce risk and promote wellbeing. Staffing levels will need to increase to match the rise in demand.

Initiatives that aim to intervene early and (longer term) reduce the number of referrals to children's social care are likely to be critical both financially and in terms of achieving good outcomes for children and young people.

There needs to be strong service provision for families experiencing domestic abuse. Evidence based initiatives that seek to prevent domestic abuse should also be explored.

Other services and partner organisations

Police
Children's Social Care

Other chapters you might be interested in

Adult Safeguarding
Adults with Autism
Adults with Disabilities in Employment
Carer
Child Protection
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing and Absent Young People
Children in Need
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller People
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)
Looked After Children
Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment

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