



Performance of Slough Children's Services Trust

4 February 2021

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AD Frontline Practice and Improvement

Agenda

1. National Perspective
2. Revised Improvement Plan
3. Immediate overall operational pressures
4. Caseloads
5. Service operational pressures and Caseloads



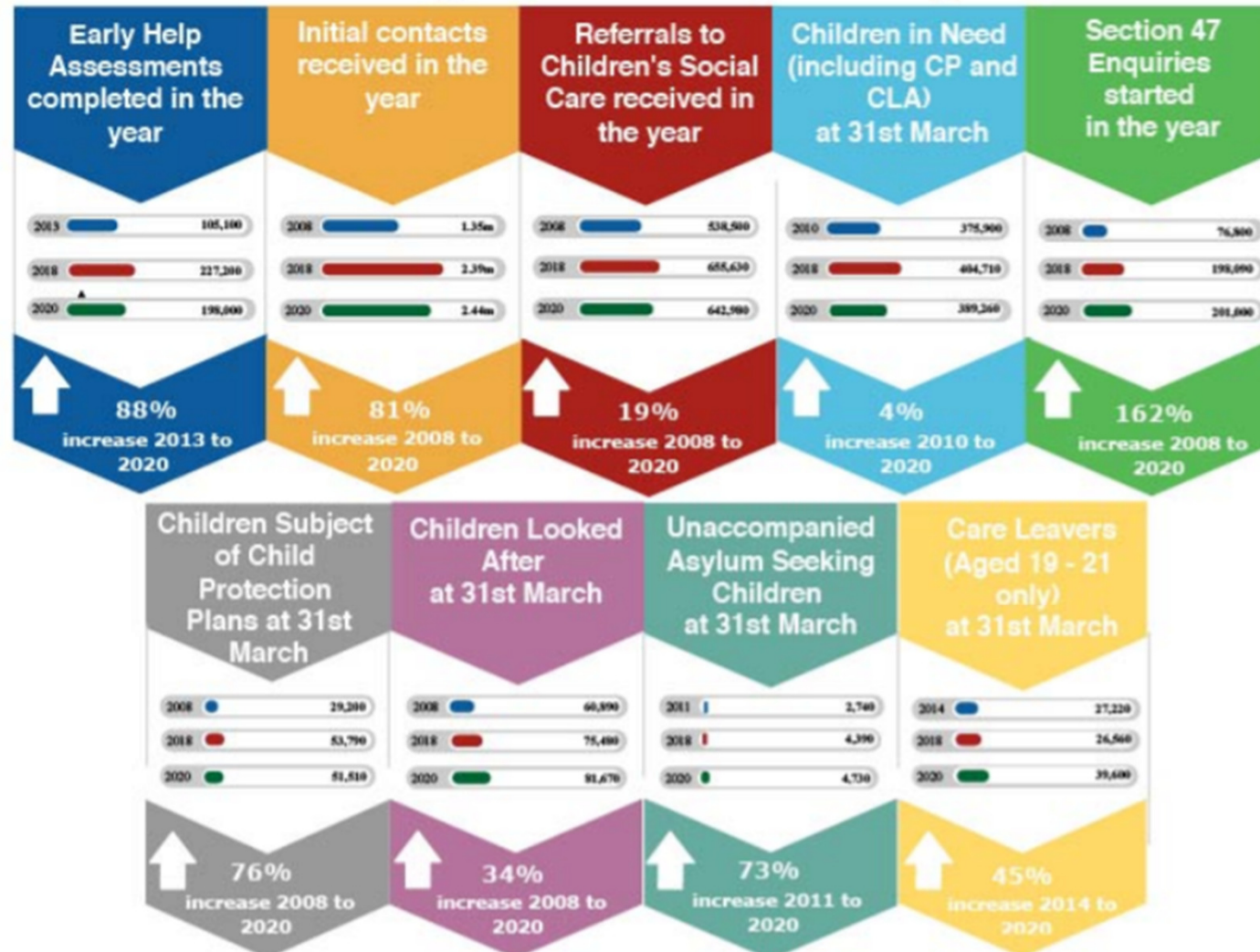
National context of increase in workload



- Children and young people are presenting with more complex needs as a result of parental mental ill-health, drug and alcohol misuse, and domestic violence before the Covid-19 pandemic
- Whilst this has been increasing over the past two years, it has been more acute during the pandemic and is forecast to increase further as the full impact of the pandemic is realised
- Local authorities reported an increase in the work associated with safeguarding young people from exploitation, and in particular from exploitation by organised crime networks
- The National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - In January 2020 the Panel reported 137 cases of babies harmed or killed due to NAI since the Panel's inception in June 2018. As social isolation and lack of access to health care services are risk factors for NAI, respondents reporting a further increase. **20% increase.** (*Berks West 3 last year, 11 this year*)
- There was a 38% increase in children who were electively home educated on 1st October 2020

*Source ADCS Safeguarding Pressures Phase 7 December 2020

Safeguarding Pressures: Change in children's services activity



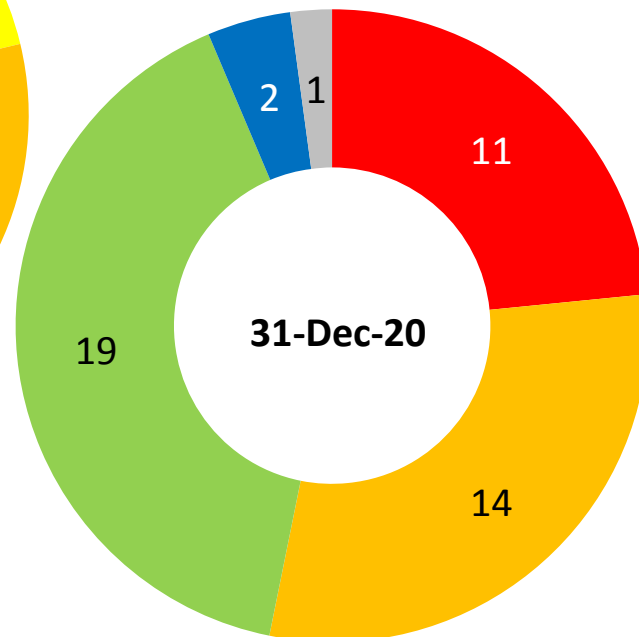
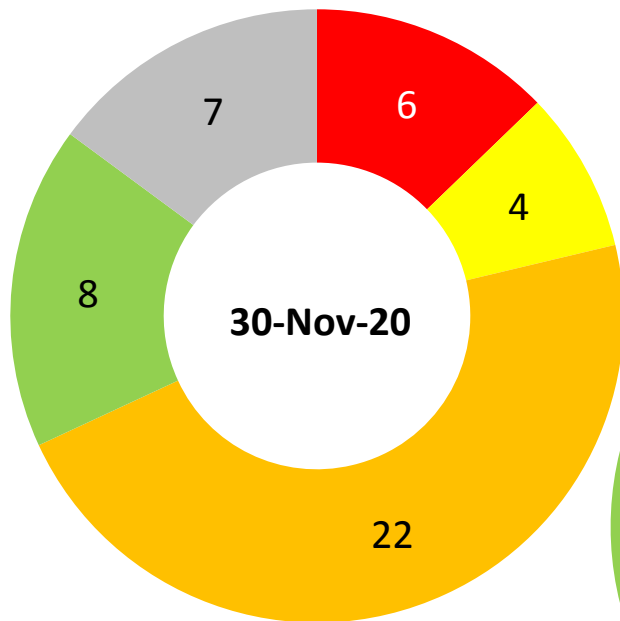
Revised Improvement Plan



The revised Improvement Plan (appended separately) focuses on key areas to drive further changes across the whole system and gives assurance that performance is embedding

- **Getting the Basics Right** – to ensure children receive the right service at the right time to meet needs
- **Listen to the voice of the child and their family** – to drive plans and interventions
- **Embedding Public Law Outline** – and achieving Early Permanency
- **Implementation of Contextual Safeguarding**
- **Ensuring stability of workforce** – to recruit and retain the right workforce do the job well
- **Improving Supervision and Management Oversight** – to drive Children's Journey's
- **Quality Assurance** – continuous learning and improvement to get to Good

Improvement Plan Progress



Overall there has been an improvement in progressing actions this month

5 additional reds:

- 1 green to red
- 4 amber to red
- 1 grey to red

6 less greys (actions not reportable):

- 3 grey to green
- 2 grey to amber
- 1 grey to red

11 additional greens:

- 9 amber to green
- 1 yellow to green
- 3 grey to green

4 less yellows (actions outside tolerance but better than last time):

- 1 yellow to green
- 3 yellow to amber

2 new blues (actions completed): both amber to blue

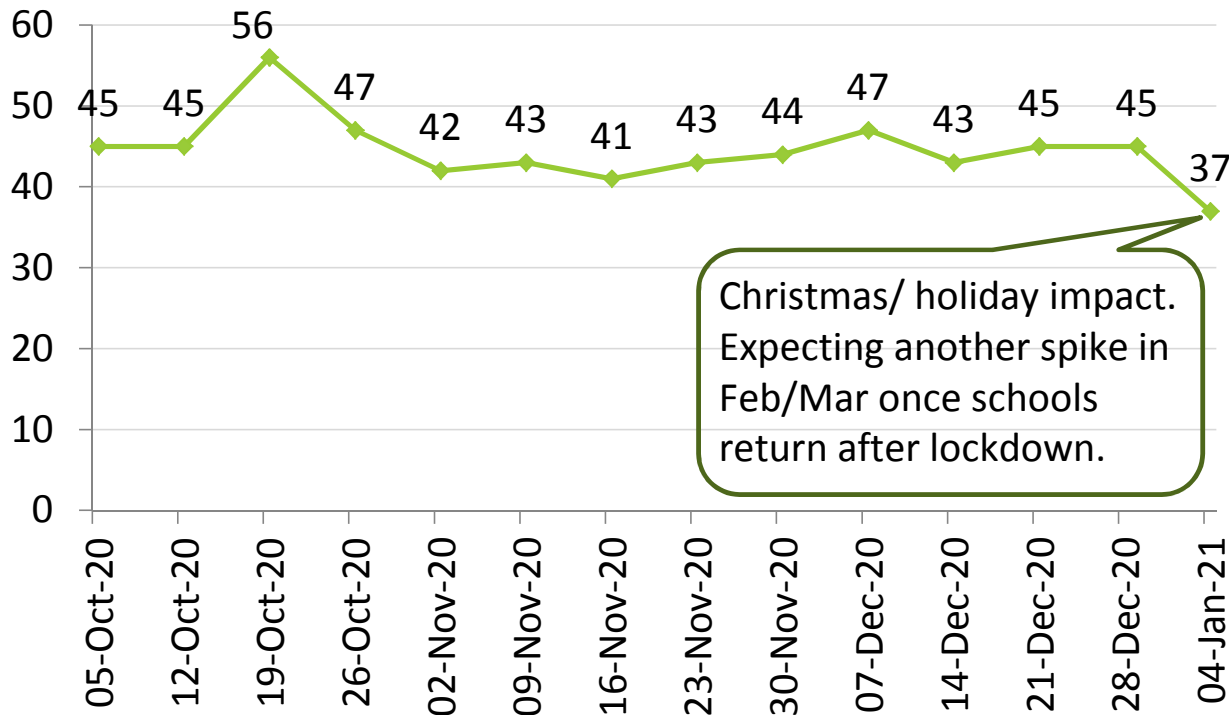
Overall Operational Pressures



- **Staffing pressures** with increase in agency staff
- **Lack of quality social workers** available to recruit
- **Whole system outage** from 5 – 9 November 2020 impact of this is not yet known.
- **Lack of placements** available across all cohorts of children and young people adding pressure to services, and staffing pressures in the placements team
- **Business support** a number of agency staff have started in post, however they are still being inducted into their roles
- **Blue Jeans security assurance in place but awaiting sign-off from partners** - adding to pressures in WT18 compliant strategy meetings/ Core Groups/Conferences

Highest Caseload Each Week

Highest Case Load Each Week



- As taken from the 4 January 2021 Compliance report.
- The highest caseload at the end of November was 43 children. At the end of December this rose to 45 children but has since reduced to 37 children at the beginning of January 2021.
- All but two of the highest caseloads this week were in the Front Door Assessment teams.
- Since the spike in October 2020, caseloads have started to reduce but remain high for some and in particular in the Front Door Assessment Teams.

Referral and Assessment (Front Door)

Better/ Maintaining

- Number of contacts where a decision was made in 1 day: **96.4%** (95.6% last month)
- Referrals that were repeat referrals (within 12m): **12.9%** (19.7% last month, SN 22.0% & SE 25.1%)
- Initial assessments completed within timescale (45d): **84.6%** (79.5% last month, SN 84.8% & SE 82.4%)

Area of Focus for Further Improvement

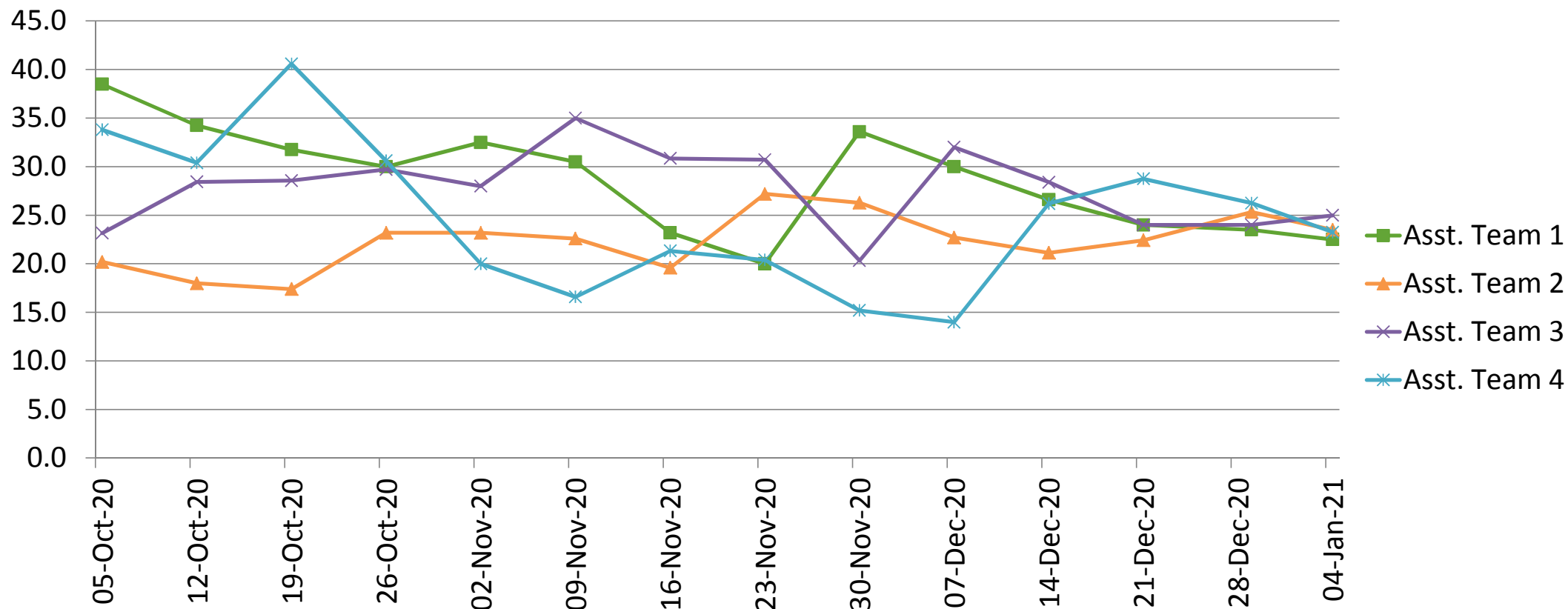
- % of contacts leading to referral: **34.0%** (34.9% last month)
- % of Section 47s which led to Initial CP Conference in month (children not already CP or CLA): **26.0%** (20.5% last month, SN 35.9%, SE 35.3%)

Referral and Assessment (Front Door)

Operational Pressures

- Head of Service contracted Covid (in the community) and now isolating at home.
- Staff in Referral and MASH wanting to work on a rota from home but we do not have sufficient/ appropriate technology to support this.
- Early Help and police colleagues not in-situ
- Impact of the system going down not yet known
- Caseloads remain too high (averaging 23.7) but slowly starting to reduce (of the top 10 caseloads, in the service 37 is the highest and 19 the lowest)
- Biggest impact of Blue Jeans compliance felt in the front door where majority of strategy discussions take place
- Stability of workforce

Average Caseloads: Referral and Assessment (Front Door)



Average Caseloads: Referral and Assessment (Front Door) & Vacancies



Caseloads

- The average caseload for the Referral and Assessment service remains high at 23.7 children per worker, with a peak in individual teams when they are on duty
- 2 teams have reduced to an average of 15 children per worker, when not on duty
- During December the volume of cases has not been as high when compared to October where the impact of schools returning was felt.

Vacancies

- Currently there are:
 - 1 Social Worker vacancy in the MASH
 - 3 Social Worker vacancies in the Assessment teams
 - 1 Team Admin vacancy in Assessment

Safeguarding and Family Support (CIN, CP and Court)

Better/ Maintaining

- CIN visits within timescales: **89.1%** (93.4% last month)
- CP plans ended after 2+ years: **0.00%** (6.3% last month, SN 4.4% & SE 5.0%)
- Children subject to a CP plan for 2 or more years: **1.7%** (1.7% last month, SN 2.8% & SE 2.4%)
- Children on a CP plan visited in the last 2 weeks: **95.8%** (86.4% last month)

Area of Focus for Further Improvement

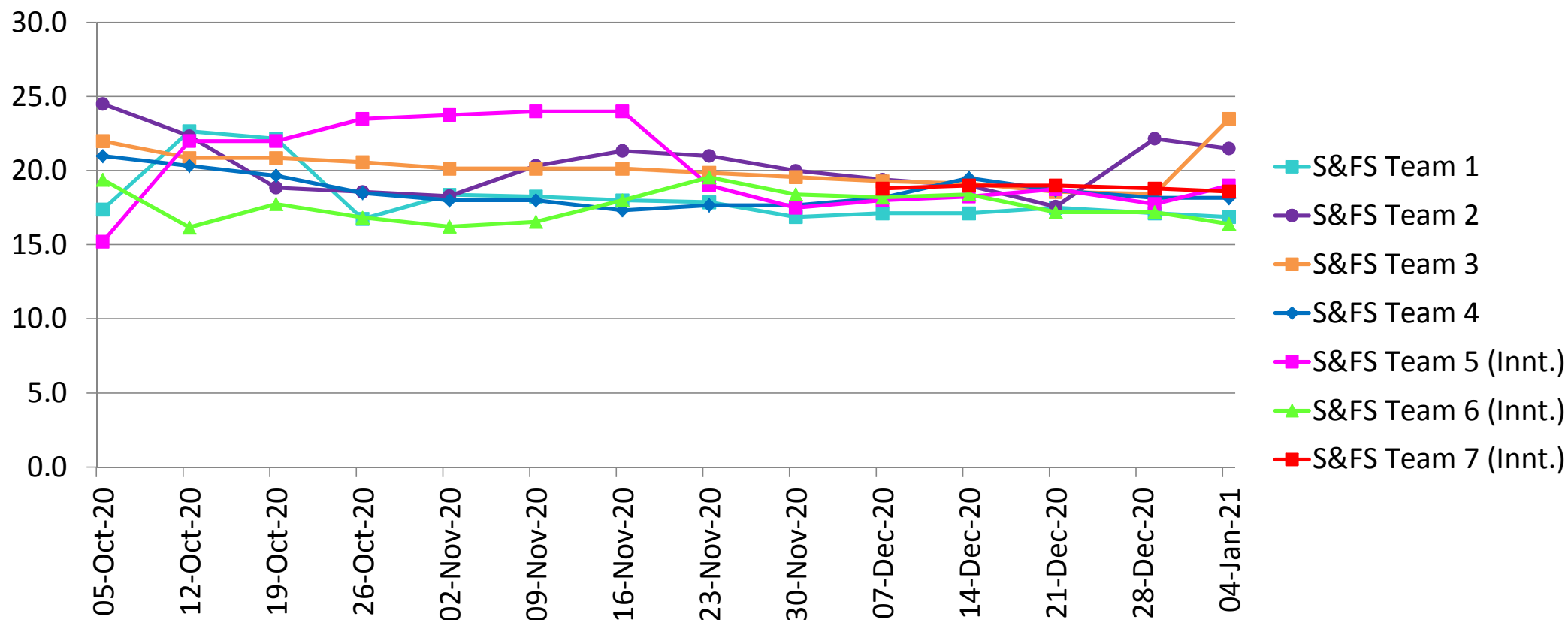
- Children subject to CIN (S17) plans for over 12 months: **20.1%** (19.1% last month)
- CP plans that were repeat plans (ever): **25.0%** (9.5% last month, SN 20.9% & SE 23.4%)
- CP Plans that were repeat plans within 2 years: **14.3%** (2.9% last month)
- ICPCs held within statutory timescales: **70.0%** (70.5% last month, SN 80.6% & SE 75.9%)
- RCPCs held within timescale: **64.7%** (68.7% last month, SN 92.2% & SE 89.5%)

Safeguarding and Family Support (CIN, CP and Court)

Operational Pressures

- Overall number of CIN have increased: **563** (549 last month)
- Overall number of CP plans have reduced: **346** (355 last month)
- Numbers in PLO: **12 families (24 children)** (11 families (23 children) last month)
- Pending: **2 family (2 children)** (2 families (3 children) last month)
- Currently in care proceedings: **55 families (90 children)** (51 families (85 children) last month)
- To issue: **1 family (1 child)** (5 families (7 children) last month)
- Capacity in joint legal team to respond, now starting to delay going to court as a result.

Average Caseloads: Safeguarding and Family Support (CIN & CP)



Average Caseloads: Safeguarding and Family Support (CIN & CP) & Vacancies



Caseloads

- The average caseload for Safeguarding and Family Support services has reduced this period to 19.4 (previously 20).
- Caseloads are becoming more equitable across the teams.
- There is a spotlight on the throughput of children in need at present.

Vacancies

- Currently there are 4 Social Worker vacancies.
- Change of social workers is impacting on relationships with children and families, and causing drift and delay

Children Looked After and Support Services

Better/ Maintaining

- Children with 3 or more placements in the last year: **7.0%** (8.6% last month, SN 11.3% & SE 12.0%)
- Children in the same placement for 2 or more years: **87.5%** (86.0% last month, SN 65.5% & SE 68.0%)
- Children seen alone at visit within timescale: **67.7%** (66.5% last month)
- Children with up-to-date health checks: **90.8%** (93.2% last month, SN 90.7% & SE 86.0%)

Areas of Focus for Further Improvement

- Children placed more than 20 miles away: **29.5%** (30.2% last month, SN 15%.0 & SE 26.0%)
- Children with up-to-date dental checks: **52.5%** (54.1% last month, SN 87.9% & SE 86.0%)
- IHAs within timescale (1m): **0.0%** (20.0% last month)

Children Looked After and Support Services

Operational Pressures

- 215 children in care (210 last month)
- More large and complex sibling groups coming into care
- Sufficiency pressures finding suitable and/or emergency placements and keeping siblings together
- Instability of crisis placements, some of which is Covid related
- Number of schools closing is impacting on placement stability for some children

Care Leavers

Better/ Maintaining

- Care leavers in suitable accommodation (19-21y/o): **91.0%** (90.0% last month, SN 83.6% & SE 91.0%)

Areas of Focus for Further Improvement

- Care leavers in education, employment and training: **45.0%** (48.0% last month, SN 52.4% & SE 54%)
- Care leavers with current pathway plan: **64.2%** (68.1% last month)
- Pathways into housing for 18+
- More tailored Pathway Plans

Care Leavers and Children with Disability (CWD)

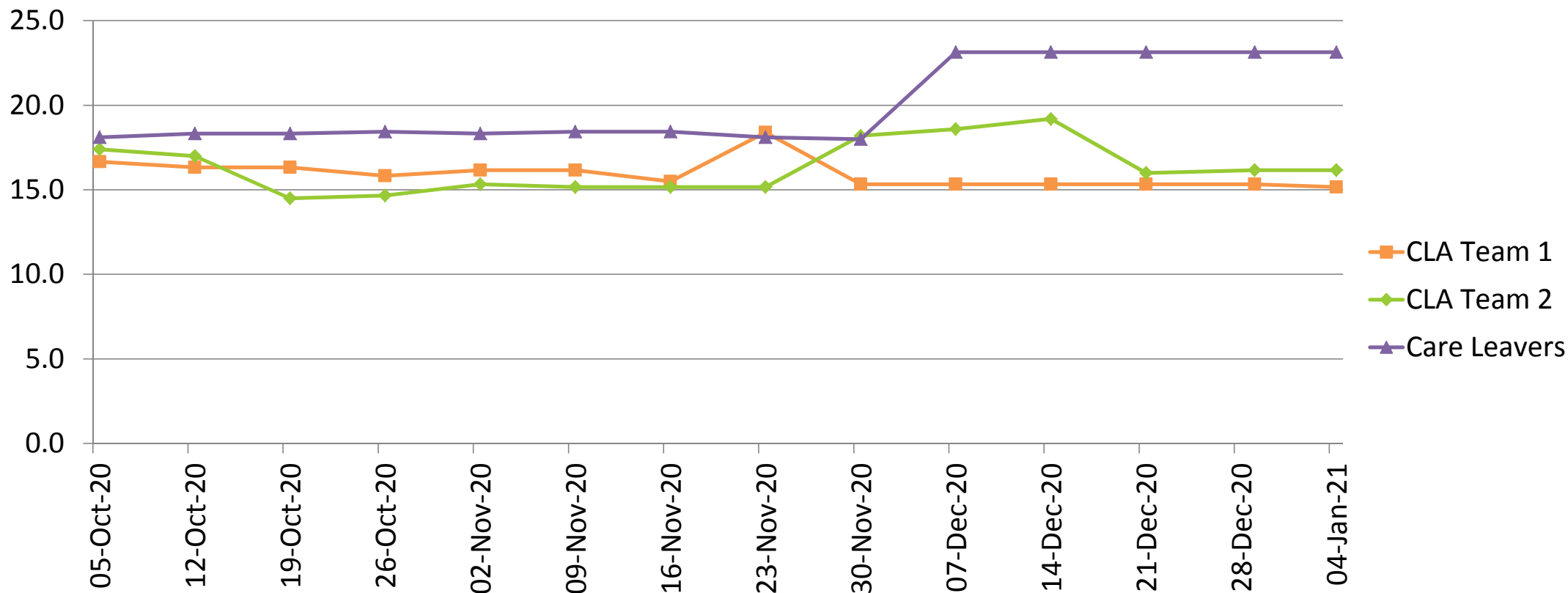
Care Leavers Operational Pressures

- Sudden loss of valued member of team, supporting team members and young people
- NEET
- Housing and supported living accommodation

CWD Operational Pressures

- Breakaway (respite unit) 5 members of staff with Covid or shielding.
- Increase in demand for respite
- Challenges in tri-partite funding
- No crisis pathway for children on the autistic spectrum

Average Caseloads: CLA and Support Services (CLA and LC)



Average Caseloads: (CLA and LC) & Vacancies



Caseloads

- The average caseload for Children Looked After and Support Services is 22.3.
- For the Children looked After teams , the average caseload per worker has remained fairly stable since the beginning of October.
- Pressure on the Care Leavers service due to the sudden sad loss of a good PA with the average number of cases currently at 23.1.

Vacancies

Currently there is:

- 2 Personal Advisor vacancy
- 1 Social Worker vacancy in the Children Looked After team; and
- 1 Team Admin vacancy

Workforce Headlines as at end of December 2020



- In total there are currently **11 vacancies** (9 SWs, 2 Administrators) in frontline* staff, compared to 14 vacancies at the end of November 2020.
- There are **0 upcoming vacancies** in frontline* staff, compared to the 2 upcoming vacancies at the end of November 2020.
- Children with supervisions within timescale: **78.9%** (80.8% last month)
- Children with management oversight: **89.6%** (90.8% last month)

* Front Door/ Children With Disabilities/ Child Protection/ Children Looked After /Care Leavers