

Q2 2025/26 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

**CONTENTS**

1. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SERVICES	2
1.1. REFERRALS & RE-REFERRALS	2
1.2. CHILDREN IN NEED	3
1.3. CHILDREN SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN	4
1.4. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CHILDREN IN CARE)	6
1.5. CARE EXPERIENCED (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CARE LEAVERS)	8
2. EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS	9
2.1. OFSTED OUTCOMES	9
2.2. ABSENCE MONITORING	10
2.3. PRIORITY AREAS OF FOCUS	12
2.4. EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING	14
2.5. KEY STAGE OUTCOMES	15
3. ANNEX 1: INDICATOR DEFINITIONS	17
4. ANNEX 2: OTHER SOURCES OF PUBLISHED INFORMATION	19
5. ANNEX 3: CURRENT STATISTICAL NEIGHBOURS	19

I. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SERVICES

I.1. REFERRALS & RE-REFERRALS

I.1. REFERRALS & RE-REFERRALS				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Provisional	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q2 2025/26
1	Number of referrals received within the last 12 months	2,415	3,879	2,848	518.3 (2023/24)	536.7 (2023/24)	2,577
	Referrals received within the last 12 months - Rate per 10,000 children	467.7	748.2	548.2			496.0
2	Number of re-referrals within 12 months (last 12 months)	483	780	765	22.4% (2023/24)	24.4% (2023/24)	575
	% of re-referrals within 12 months (last 12 months)	20.0%	20.1%	26.9%			22.3%

Plymouth processed 2,577 referrals in the 12 months ending quarter two. This represents a decrease of 271 referrals compared to March 2025, returning to levels on par with the volumes seen in 2022/23.

The referral rate per 10,000 children was 496.0 at quarter two's end. This rate has decreased from Plymouth's 2024/25 provisional position of 548.2 and is currently at a lower level than our statistical neighbour average (536.7) and the England average (518.3).

Re-referral rates have decreased when compared to the provisional figure for 2024/25, but they remain a key area of focus, especially with the move to the Families First Front Door model. At quarter two's end, 22.3% of referrals were re-referrals (cases where the same child had been referred within the previous 12 months). This represents:

- A 1.7 percentage point decrease on the last quarter,
- A 4.6 percentage point increase from Plymouth's 2024/25 provisional figure, and
- A rate that is just under our statistical neighbours and the England average for 2023/24

July 2025, saw the full introduction of our Front Door Service in response to the Government's reform agenda for Children's Social Care. This supports the principles outlined in Stable Homes, Built on Love. This new approach brings together a diverse range of practitioners from across the city into a single, co-located hub. The aim is to provide timely, coordinated responses and ensure a shared understanding and agreement on which service is best placed to meet the needs of each child and young person without unnecessary delay.

All Front Door practitioners, including those co-located from the partnership have received training in the 'Rethink' formulation model. This strength-based model enhances accessibility and promotes relational practice, family-led decision-making, and timely, proportionate responses. Further training for the wider partnership is in progress.

In terms of performance, the total number of referrals received during this period was 608, reflecting a second stable quarter. The re-referral rate stands at 21.2%, which is a positive indicator of effective initial response and support. However, we continue to monitor this closely through monthly desktop audits to identify trends, improve practice, and maintain a strong rolling 12-month position.

Families First Front Door Practice Week will take place from 3rd to 7th November 2025, led by the Quality Assurance Team. Our Dorset Sector Lead Improvement Partnership (SLIP) will join for a two-day on-site visit. The focus will be on evaluating the effectiveness of the new working model,

particularly how well multi-agency decisions are made to support and protect children using the right support, right time approach.

A tentative launch date for raising the awareness of the Families First Front Door has been agreed for 3rd December 2025. Formal invitations are yet to be issued for confirmation.

1.2. CHILDREN IN NEED

1.2. CHILDREN IN NEED				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Provisional	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q2 2025/26
3	Number of children subject to a Child In Need Plan (snapshot)	944	1,379	857	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	771
	Children subject to a Child In Need Plan - Rate per 10,000 children	177.1	265.4	164.9	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	148.4

Plymouth's Child in Need caseload decreased by 101 children in quarter two compared to quarter one. This caseload excludes children subject to Child Protection Plans or Looked After Children. The current figure remains lower than 2022/23 and 2023/24 but at a similar level to our provisional figure for 2024/25.

However, we note that children subject to Child Protection Plans or Child in Care Plans (covered in the next two sections) are currently at higher levels than the previous two published year-end positions (2022/23 and 2023/24).

In June 2025, our new Integrated Front Door was launched. At the same time, we also implemented the first phase of the Families First Reforms which saw our Targeted Support Teams now taking most of the Children in Need work alongside the Early Help and Prevention work. The teams have increased to seven teams of eight Family Help Lead Practitioners providing a significant increase in resource to ensure that children and their families receive timely and responsive support at the earliest opportunity.

The teams have worked closely with our social work teams to support with reducing the number of transitions for families which will support in building relationships, enabling practitioners to provide a more intensive package of support. We believe this will reduce escalation and subsequently support children to remain within their family.

Training is being closely developed with our Academy for staff to ensure that our workers have the right skills and confidence to work proactively with families. This will ensure that Children Social Care staff and partners have a shared understanding of need and how to respond.

1.3. CHILDREN SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN

I.3. CHILDREN SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Provisional	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q2 2025/26
4	Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan (Snapshot)	230	299	361	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	338
	Children subject to a Child Protection Plan - Rate per 10,000 children	44.5	57.7	69.5	41.6 (2023/24)	49.2 (2023/24)	65.1
5	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Neglect	45.9% (107)	50.2% (150)	52.4% (189)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	50.9% (172)
	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Physical Abuse	6.4% (15)	8.4% (25)	8.6% (31)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	8.3% (28)
	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Sexual Abuse	4.3% (10)	8.4% (25)	5.8% (21)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	4.4% (15)
	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Emotional Abuse	43.3% (101)	33.0% (99)	33.2% (120)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	36.4% (123)
6	% of children subject to multiple child protection plans - Within lifetime of the child (new plans starting in last 12 months)	25.8% (65)	30.1% (112)	19.7% (81)	24.7% (2023/24)	24.6% (2023/24)	27.1% (119)

As of 30 September 2025, 338 children were subject to Child Protection Plans, representing a rate of 65.1 children per 10,000. This is higher than Plymouth's published 2023/24 rate of 57.7 (299 children) but less than the provisional figure of 361 for 2024/25. The current rate exceeds both the England average by 23.5 per 10,000 and our Statistical Neighbour average by 15.9 per 10,000.

The proportion of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan between April 2024 and March 2025, and who had previously been on a Child Protection Plan, was 27.1%. This represents an improvement 3.0 percentage points from 31 March 2024, but is a significant increase on our provisional figure for 2024/25. The increase seen in 2025/26 sees Plymouth return to a level that is higher than both the statistical neighbours average of 24.6% and the England average of 24.7% (both of which increased from their previous year positions). Over the 12 months ending 30 September 2025, 119 children and young people have started repeat Child Protection Plans.

The Families First Partnership reforms that will be embedded fully by April 2026, should bring about change in ensuring earlier help and intervention take place, with better partnership working and sharing of information to identify the help and protection family's needs without there being a need to escalate. There are working groups and engagement sessions across the partnership, and this is

highlighting several practice areas to strengthen and better ways of working together to support families, this will be embedded into the new model ready for April 2026.

We maintain strong focus on requests for repeat Child Protection Plans, with greater oversight by Service Managers. This provides more consistency and creates opportunities for reflective discussions to ensure care plans are appropriate for these children and to explore whether we can work differently with families.

We also focus strongly on Child Protection Plans lasting over 12 months. Monthly meetings are chaired jointly by the Service Manager for Safeguarding and the Service Manager for Children's Social Work Service to ensure effective oversight and timely decisions for children.

1.4. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CHILDREN IN CARE)

I.4. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CHILDREN IN CARE)				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Provisional	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q2 2025/26
7	Number of children subject to a Care Plan - Looked After Children (Snapshot)	500	513	530	70.0 (2023/24)	92.3 (2023/24)	534
	Children subject to a Care Plan - Looked After Children - Rate per 10,000 children	96.9	99.0	102.0			102.8
8	Number of Looked After Children in an unregistered placement (snapshot)	6	9	7	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	9
9	% of Looked After Children placed outside of the city of Plymouth (i.e., the placement is not within PL1 to PL7 or PL9)	39.9% <small>(25% DfE: +20 miles of LA boundary)</small>	42.7% <small>(23% DfE: 20+ miles of LA boundary)</small>	44.2% (234)	Within boundary not benchmarked 17.0% DfE: 20+ miles of LA boundary)	Within boundary not benchmarked 17.0% DfE: 20+ miles of LA boundary)	43.3% (231)
10	Placement Type: Family Placement (fostering or connected carers)	339	368	343	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	343
	Placement Type: Children's Homes, Residential Care Homes & Residential Schools	57	57	64	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	70
	Placement Type: Hostels & other Supportive accommodation	48	47	54	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	60
	Placement Type: Lodgings or Independent living (16+)	x	x	x	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	x
	Placement Type: Other Placement	5	8	6	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	7
	Placement Type: Placed for Adoption	18	5	13	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	9
	Placement Type: Placed with Parents	32	26	42	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	41
	Placement Type: Other accommodation - NHS, Family Centres, Parent & Child	x	x	6	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	x
	Placement Type: Secure Units & Youth Offender Institutions	x	x	x	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	x

Please note: where the number of children is below five, the actual figure is suppressed and shows 'x'.

As of 30 September 2025, there were 534 children and young people in care. This represents a net increase of 21 from the published 2023/24 figure and four more than the provisional 2024/25 figure of 530. The average month-end position over the past 12 months was 530 children and young people.

Of the 534 children in care, 303 (56.7%) were placed within the city, while 231 (43.3%) were placed outside the city. This is higher than our internal 2023/24 figure of 42.7% but lower than our provisional position at the end of 2024/25.

This measure is based on the postcode of the child's placement address. Postcodes outside PL1 to PL7 or PL9 are considered outside the city. For example, PL12 refers to Saltash in Cornwall and is considered outside Plymouth, even though it may be less than a mile from a child's home address.

Using provisional information, approximately 24.0% of children in care (128 out of 534) are placed more than 20 miles from their home address. A more detailed breakdown is provided:

- 76% (406) placed within 0 to 20 miles,
- 14% (75) placed between 20.1 and 100 miles,
- 6% (32) placed between 100.1 and 200 miles, and
- 4% (21) placed more than 200 miles.

The number of children in unregistered arrangements remained at nine at the end of quarter two, of which a small number are registered by Care Quality Commission due to the complexity of the children's health needs.

The Family Homes for Plymouth's Children programme continues to address placement sufficiency issues through fostering recruitment and retention, developing our own residential provision, progressing plans to reunify children with their families and stepping children from residential to family-based care. The sufficiency of fostering households continues to be a challenge locally and nationally; however, we have seen several new fostering applications in quarter two, including through the Reconnect campaign, with two new carers approved in September and a further six fostering households booked to attend fostering panel by the end of quarter three.

There have been young people who have been supported to move from their residential Children's Homes to supported accommodation and back into their parents' care with a robust package of support from Reconnect.

During quarter two the number of approved households and placements has reduced, however the percentage of placements used to provide homes for children has increased. This reflects a thorough review of each fostering household and maximising approval for those who are actively fostering, supporting the conditions for them to increase the number of placements available in their home and reducing approvals for those who are no longer accepting the placements that they are approved to care for.

The number of children living with in-house foster carers continues to remain above the number living with Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) foster carers and we have continued to see IFA foster carers transferring in house.

The Financial Offer to Special Guardians was presented and agreed at the Family Homes Board in June 2025 and was due to be further reviewed in quarter two. This has been delayed as the outcome of a bid for a Department for Education pilot in relation to Special Guardianship has not yet been received.

A Registered Manager has been appointed and is progressing the development of our own Residential Children's Homes. The first property purchase is progressing, and searches continue for suitable properties in Plymouth.

1.5. CARE EXPERIENCED (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CARE LEAVERS)

1.5. CARE EXPERIENCED (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CARE LEAVERS)				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Provisional	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q2 2025/26
11	% of Care Experienced young people in Unsuitable Accommodation (Statutory Service (aged 18 to 20))	4.1% (8/192) (12% DfE)	9.5% (19/201) (15% DfE)	7.0% (14/201)	12.0% (2023/24 DfE)	9.0% (2023/24 DfE)	9.1% (18/198)
12	% of Care Experienced young people in Education, Employment and Training (Statutory Service (EET aged 18 to 20))	50.0% (96/192) (47.0% DfE)	43.3% (87/201) (45.0% DfE)	46.8% (94/201)	54.0% (2023/24 DfE)	52.4% (2023/24 DfE)	47.5% (94/198)

Plymouth's quarter two data shows that 9.1% of care-experienced young people are in unsuitable accommodation. This is lower than the England average and on par with the statistical neighbours' average (2023/24 published figures). The number of young people in unsuitable accommodation has improved compared to our published 2023/24 figure but declined on the provisionally reported figure for 2024/25.

An Ofsted focused visit to review the Local Authority arrangements for Care Leavers took place in quarter two. An additional weekly meeting was implemented in quarter two to focus on care experienced young people in unsuitable accommodation (Bed and Breakfast) due to the concern about the length of time that young people were living in unsuitable accommodation. Progress has been made in moving young people on into more suitable temporary accommodation while long term homes are identified.

The proportion of care leavers in Education, Employment, and Training (EET) was 47.5%, which is 0.7 percentage points higher than our internal 2024/25 figure. Our DfE published figure of 45.0% for 2023/24 (which uses slightly different criteria than our internal reporting) was approximately 8.9 to 10.7 percentage points lower than the published figures for our comparators.

While our NEET rates remain below England and statistical neighbours' averages, we have continued to see steady improvement in reducing the number of young people recorded as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) through the introduction of EET Advocates for our 16/17-year-old children in care and the targeted EET action plan. In quarter two an additional EET advocate for care leavers has been appointed and the connect to work scheme has been launched, with a dedicated practitioner to support care experienced young people.

Please note: The DfE calculation differs from our local figures. We include all care leavers (Qualifying, Relevant & Former Relevant) and use the latest information available for those aged under 21. The DfE only include Former Relevant care leavers and use information held around the young person's 19th, 20th or 21st birthday.

2. EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS

2.1. OFSTED OUTCOMES

2.1. OFSTED OUTCOMES				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2023/24 England	2023/24 South West	Q2 2025/26
1	% of all schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding	76.0%	77.6%	90.8%	90.4%	86.7%	Please see note
2	% of pupils attending Plymouth schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding	77.1%	81.0%	90.4% (based on NOR May School Census and OFSTED outcomes at 31/08/2024)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	Please see note

PLEASE NOTE: From September 2024, OFSTED no longer provides a one-word judgement on the overall effectiveness of a school. Therefore, the figures will remain static for future reporting until it can be established how OFSTED will be using inspection data for monitoring purposes.

- At the end of 2024/25 – 16 schools have been inspected over the course of the academic year.
- Of these 16 schools, six have received good or outstanding in all of the four main areas of 'Quality of Education', 'Behaviour and attitudes', 'Personal Development' and Effectiveness of leadership and management' (37.5%)
- All 16 schools were judged as having effective Safeguarding.

2.2. ABSENCE MONITORING

				Latest published data & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Annual	2023/24 Annual	2024/25 Term 1&2	England Term 1&2	South West Term 1&2	Jul to Sep 2025/26
3	% of overall absence in all schools	8.2%	8.3% (Academic Year 2023/24)	7.5% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25)	6.6% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25)	6.9% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25)	6.4% (View Your Education Data, End of Sept 25)
4	% of persistent absence (less than 90% attendance) in all schools	24.1%	23.6% (Academic Year 23/24) (Of which 3.2% were severely absent)	20.2% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25) (Of which 3.1% were severely absent)	17.6% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25) (Of which 2.3% were severely absent)	18.0% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25) (Of which 2.7% were severely absent)	18.2% (Of which 2.4% were severely absent) (View Your Education Data End of Sept 25)
5	% of persistent absence (less than 90% attendance) of pupils with Education, Health, and Care plans (EHCPs)	40.5%	40.5% (Academic Year 23/24) (Of which 8.5% were severely absent)	36.4% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25) (Of which 8.9% were severely absent)	33.8% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25) (Of which 7.3% were severely absent)	36.3% (Autumn & Spring Terms 24/25) (Of which 8.7% were severely absent)	35.1% (Of which 10.7% (207) were severely absent) (View Your Education Data, End of Sept 25)

The benchmark information provided above is provided from the Department for Education; compiled from the statutory school census return completed on a termly basis. The best available report for the three indicators above is the 2024/25 Autumn & Spring Term data.

The data source for local absence statistics continues to be taken from 'View Your Education Data' (VYED) website, the DfE site for collating school absence. VYED presents absence data cumulatively from the beginning of each term and therefore the following data represents the new Autumn term 2025/26 - period from 01/09/2025 to 31/09/2025.

- The Overall absence rate was 6.4% (1.1pp lower than the published Autumn & Spring Term for Plymouth; 0.2pp lower than the published national figure and 0.5pp lower than the published South West figure)
- The percentage of those persistently absent was 18.2% (2.0pp lower than the published Autumn & Spring Term for Plymouth; but 0.6pp higher than the published national figure and 0.2pp higher than the published South West figure)
- The percentage of those with an EHCP who were persistently absent was 35.1% (1.3pp lower than the Autumn & Spring Term for Plymouth; but 1.3pp higher than the published national figure and 1.2pp lower than the published South West figure)

Work continues by the Inclusion and Welfare Service to reduce school absence.

The citywide Place-Based Plan is working to understand and address the complex causes of pupil absence from school, recognising that school attendance is not just a number, but a reflection of inclusion, connection, trust, and opportunity. This Place-Based Plan brings six interlinked priorities together under one citywide commitment: to act early, work collaboratively, and deliver ambitious, evidence-informed interventions. Each strand targets a known driver of absence, supported by the central implementation of our Predictive Risk Model (PRM) and Resilience Enablement Framework (REF), which shift our response from reactive to proactive.

The Single Citizen View predictive analytics tool for attendance has been introduced. The tool will provide schools with a user interface to access a single view of a child in their school, surfacing appropriate information from a wide range of council and partner data. The tool will use this data to

highlight children who are at risk of non-attendance in school to provide targeted support, and avoid a potential statutory intervention. Progress in developing this includes:

- An initiation workshop with school stakeholders has been delivered, capturing the requirements of schools.
- Investment for development of the tool has been agreed by the City Help & Support board.
- Awaiting investment to be released in line with wider transformation funding.
- Development prerequisites nearly completed.

We are collaborating closely with all schools and early years settings in the city to design and deliver an ambitious plan for the Team Plymouth Education (pre-16) workstream. Significant consultation and engagement have taken place with Head Teachers and MAT CEO's.

We are working closely with the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the national attendance campaign, contributing local intelligence and innovation to shape national messaging and strategy. We have partnered with Plymouth Marjon University to undertake a comprehensive attendance survey, completed by 2,200 parents and 1,500 children. This rich dataset has informed the national campaign with the DfE and is being used to inform Plymouth's local approach to supporting families and schools.

The Belonging Framework was formally launched with schools on 23rd October 2025, providing a shared foundation for strengthening emotional safety, connection, and engagement across all phases.

We have launched Targeted Funding for children requiring SEN Support, this means that more children are getting the right support at the right time in school and school leaders are being empowered to innovate. Early evaluation is demonstrating the impact of this approach on attendance.

Targeted Funding 3 provides funding for a cohort of 10 pupils within a school to provide bespoke package delivered with a Service Level Agreement outline the expectations of the funding, alongside the quality assurance and monitoring processes. 38 schools are now in receipt of this level of funding.

Plymouth has launched a MAT CEO and LA Strategic group; the group convened in September 2025 and will meet three times per year. Educational excellence is a shared priority and area of focus across the city's education leadership. The Place Based Lead and Head of Education and Virtual School are working together to develop the five-year Education Strategy bringing together the Education (pre-16) Plan for Team Plymouth, the Place Based Plan, and the Education Effectiveness Plan.

Every school has an allocated Plymouth City Council Attendance Officer who collaborates with them to support children who are severely absent from school.

2.3. PRIORITY AREAS OF FOCUS

				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Ac.Year Plymouth	2023/24 Ac.Year Plymouth	2024/25 Ac.Year Plymouth	2024/25 Ac.Year England	2024/25 Ac.Year South West	Q2 2025/26 Jul to Sep
6	Number of pupils in Elective Home Education (EHE)	580 (1.5%) *	640 (1.7%)	930 (2.4%)	152,410 (1.8%)	17,230 (2.5%)	777 (Number in month) (2.2%)
7	Number of pupils considered to be missing education (CME)	230 (0.6%)	310 (0.8%)	370 (1.0%)	149,900 (1.8%)	9,360 (1.3%)	183 (Number in month)
8	Number of pupils on part time timetables	-	409	316	Not published	Not published	283
Ref	Indicator Name	2022 Cal.Year Plymouth	2023 Cal.Year Plymouth	2024 Cal.Year Plymouth	2024 Cal.Year England	2024 Cal.Year Neighbours	Q2 2025/26 Jul to Sep
9	EHCP Timeliness – 6 weeks	-	5.0% (45/895)	9.6% (113/1176)	81.7%	Regional 74.4% Statistical 62.8%	95.2% (236/248)
10	EHCP Timeliness – 20 weeks	44.1% (175/397)	17.8% (63/354)	6.0% (24/403)	45.9%	Regional 31.0% Statistical 38.9%	11.5%

**Percentage figures relate to the percentage of the statutory school age cohort in EHE/CME*

EHE/CME/PTTT

The Local Authority continues to hold a firm monitoring position, an understanding of the children in the cohorts and where needed, intervention to ensure that a suitable education is being provided of those in Elective Home Education, Part-Time Timetables and Children Missing out on Education.

There will be learning from the new approach to the use of predictive and compounding data when identifying those at risk of persistent absenteeism, which we believe will enable a more robust offer of early help and good school attendance, reducing the risk of persistent or severe absence and/or elective home education. We are working with three schools with the highest rates on EHE to use predictive data to prevent EHE for those children most at risk. In the first term of the 2025/26 academic year, 150 children were deregistered from school to be home educated. This represents a reduction of 9% (15 fewer children) compared to the same period last year, a positive step forward. Of these new registrations, 27% (40 children) were primary-aged, which is consistent with previous trends. Elective Home Education (EHE) continues to be more prevalent in the secondary phase, particularly at Key Stage 4. However, there is encouraging news: new registrations in this cohort have fallen by 12.6% (16 fewer children) compared with last year's total of 126. This suggests early signs of stabilisation and reduction. Even more positively, of the 150 newly registered EHE children, 14 returned to school during the same period, nine from primary and five from secondary. We have

launched the accelerated EHE Action Plan which brings together Family Hubs, the voluntary and community sector, health, and other local area partners to work together in a preventative way in respect of vulnerable children being withdrawn to EHE and those at risk of exclusion. The PCC Communication Team has also developed a communication plan in line with the DfE National Attendance Campaign to offer earlier help and prevention.

The Virtual School Extended Schools Co-ordinator continues to lead a CAFE (Children Absent from Education) approach developed in May and June to explore the possible barriers to education for those considered to be disadvantaged; this would include those with SEN, those known to social care; those with high numbers of suspensions and those at risk of permanent exclusion. Focusing on education as a protective factor for children and young people, regular discussions, practice sharing and quality assurance activity is now embedded across Children's Services Teams, conducted jointly between Education, Participation and Skills and Children's Social Care. The learning from this is shared through team meetings and with Senior Managers. Collaboration with schools to include their involvement in this practice is now being implemented.

The Local Authority maintains a sharp focus for any child on a protection plan being in home education. Any child in home education and on a Child Protection Plan is registered as missing education and is supported to return to school.

All children with an EHCP who are home educated have a joint approach to casework which includes the Home Education Team and 0-25 SEND Service.

Every child who is deregistered to home education has a home visit within two weeks. Any child who is considered vulnerable and who is home educated is allocated a key worker who undertakes home visits; the support remains in place until the child is receiving a suitable education at school. A child who is registered as home educated but whose parents have reached a formal notice stage (where there has not been evidence provided of a suitable education) are recorded as a child missing education and assigned a key worker who will undertake home visits and casework.

EHCP TIMELINESS

In September 2025, 71 requests for an EHC assessment were received. For the academic year to date (2025/26), there have been 176 requests, equating to a monthly average of 88. It is anticipated that the introduction of targeted funding in September will begin to reduce the number of requests, as schools will have the ability to access funding to deliver provision without requiring an EHCP. However, there has been an increase in parental requests following the delay of the national reforms. During September, 38 decisions were due; however, the service completed 42 decisions, demonstrating proactive progress ahead of schedule. In September, 63.2% of requests were agreed for assessment, while 36.8% were declined, with needs deemed manageable within mainstream provision through the graduated approach.

In September 55 EHCP Educational Psychology assessments were completed and submitted, of which 44 exceeded the 12-week deadline and 11 met KPI. Current capacity allows for approximately 39 assessments per term from the core Educational Psychology team, with an additional 12 from associates. As of the end of September, 275 young people remain on the waiting list for allocation. A business case has been submitted to request support to seek agency EPs, and to plan for the long-term solution with the introduction of the Assistant EP role.

73 final EHCPs were issued in September, an increase from the monthly average of 40 in 2024/25. Of these, 8.2% (6 plans) met the 20-week statutory timescale. The year-to-date average remains 7.3%.

Significant progress has been made since June 2024, with the team increasing EHCP issuance by 200%, clearing a backlog of 641 cases. However, demand remains high, and a new backlog is forming due to capacity of Educational Psychologists, posing a risk to sustainability. Current projections indicate the team must issue 90 plans per month to maintain compliance, which is challenging given EP capacity constraints.

2.4. EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022	2023	2024	2024 England	2024 Regional	Q2 2025/26
11	% of 16- and 17-year-olds in Education, Employment and Training	91.1%	90.4%	93.3%	94.6%	94.6%	92.6% (End of July 2025)
12	% of 16- and 17-year-olds with SEND in Education, Employment and Training	83.2%	81.4%	89.2%	90.2%	90.0%	91.4% (End of July 2025)

By the end of Q2 (reported position at end of July 2025), 92.6% of 16-and 17-year-olds are in Education Employment and Training. By the end of the Summer Term of 2024/25, this figure is 0.3% higher than the figure seen at the end of the Spring Term 2024/25 (92.3 %).

The percentage of 16- and 17-year-olds with SEND in Education, Employment and Training at the end of July 2025 is 91.4%. This is 0.4% higher than the figure seen at the end of the Spring Term 2024/25 (91.0%).

Continuing the positive engagement of 2023/24, the target for 16- and 17-year-olds with SEND, being in Education, Employment and Training was raised to 92% for 2024/25. Data is evidencing that the Post 16 team has achieved this ambitious target. Moving young people from not being in education, employment, and training (NEET) to seeking (SEET), education, employment, and training remains the focus of the team, with over 50% of the NEET young people now engaged and working towards moving into EET status. The team continue to widen their offer of extensive support to transition into employment, education or training to groups who may experience disadvantage, which now together with the SEN cohort includes (but not exclusive to) those in care, care leavers, young carers, and young parents. With interventions for children in care now commencing from year 7. The team have extended an offer to all secondary schools in the city to provide support to their top 5 students (who are most likely to be NEET) and this work has commenced from the new academic year, providing focused careers advice sessions.

- NEET numbers across all cohorts of 16 and 17 years old, remain low at 4.5% (July 2025), despite a slight increase on the figure at end of the previous term (4.4%)
- The joined-up work across the skills and post-16 team, virtual school and the creation of a small team which supports children in care EET status has made excellent progress. 2024/25 started with 63% employment, education, and training status for children in care, this academic year we are starting with 77% EET status (a 14% improvement). The target for July 2026 is for 90% of year 12 and 85% of year 13 to be in EET, this would move the EET status overall to 86% (a further 9%)
- 45.4% of care leavers are EET and we are on target to achieve 50% by March 2026. 14 Care Experienced young people signed up to Connect to Work programme in week 1 and they are being supported into positive next steps.
- 108 EHCP young people are on a supported internship, this exceeds are ambitious city target of 100 placements. The number of providers offering supported internships has increased from one to seven, with one more provider delivering from January 2026. The Supported Internship programme secured two national awards LGC award for best diversity programme and the NASEN award for best co-production programme of the year.

2.5. KEY STAGE OUTCOMES

				Current published data & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2022/23 Plymouth	2023/24 Plymouth	2024/25 England	2024/25 Regional	2024/25 Statistical Neighbours	2024/25 Plymouth
13	EYFS - % of pupils achieving a 'good level of development' (GLD)	64.1%	66.7%	24/25 not yet published. 23/24 – 67.7%	24/25 not yet published. 23/24 - 69.2%	24/25 not yet published. 23/24 - 66.7%	67.5% (Early LA data)
14	Key Stage 2 - % of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined	59.8%	62.5%	61.2% (Provisional)	58.9% (Provisional)	60.6% (Provisional)	62.8% (Provisional)
15	Key Stage 4 - % of pupils achieving 5+ in English and Maths	41.7% (1,214/ 2,912)	46.3% (1,328/ 2,869)	45.2% (Provisional)	46.0% (Provisional)	43.5% (Provisional)	45.9% (Provisional)
16	Key Stage 4 - Average Attainment 8 score	44.9 Points (Average score for 2,912 pupils)	46.2 Points (Average score for 2,869 pupils)	45.9 Points (Provisional)	46.1 Points (Provisional)	44.9 Points (Provisional)	45.6 Points (Provisional) (Average score for 2,873 pupils)

The statistical neighbours for Plymouth have changed from February 2025 (please see Annex 3).

Assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage examines pupils' abilities regarding 17 Early Learning Goals. Reaching the expected standard across 12 early learning goals within the five areas of learning of communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; physical development; literacy; and mathematics, is determined as having a 'Good Level of Development'. At end of 2024/25, Plymouth's GLD is 1.2% **higher** than that seen in 2023/24. National, Regional and Statistical Neighbour benchmarking data for 2024/25 is due to be published in November 2025.

At the end of primary school and Key Stage 2, assessments determine whether pupils have met the expected standard related to their age in reading, writing and maths combined. At the end of 2024/25, Plymouth's average has increased from 2023/24 to 2024/25 by 0.5%. Provisional data published for 2024/25 indicates that Plymouth's average at 62.8% is **higher** than the national average of 61.2%, regional (58.9%) and statistical neighbour average (60.6%). Revised published data is due to be released in December 2025.

Outcomes for the end of Key Stage 4 (the point at which the majority of 15 & 16-year-olds complete GCSEs at the end of their statutory education) are measured primarily through numerical values assigned per GCSE subject (or an equivalent value for a non-numerical qualification outcome such as a 'pass' at BTEC).

For each pupil, for each GCSE subject completed and assessed, a value will be provided between one and nine (nine being the highest achieved level). A 'level 4' is considered to be a 'standard' pass, a 'level 5' is considered to be a 'strong' pass. Attainment 8 is the sum of the eight highest achieved passes by a student; these figures are then averaged per school, per Local Authority and nationally to create performance measures. Further information can be found in Annex 1 – Indicator Definitions

Provisional data released by the DfE for 2024/25 is showing that 45.9% of all KS4 pupils achieved a strong pass in English and Maths at Key Stage 4. This is a 0.9% **decrease** from 46.3% achieved in 2023/24; 0.4pp lower. However, the national figure also **decreased**; dropping from 45.9% to 45.2% which equates to a 1.5% reduction from 2023/24 to 2024/25.

In 2024/25, Plymouth's average for those achieving a strong pass in English and Maths is 0.7pp **above** the National average (45.2%). Plymouth is **above** the statistical neighbour average of 43.5% but **below** the regional neighbour average of 46.0% (which increased from 23/24)

Provisional data released by the DfE for 2024/25 is showing that the average attainment 8 points score for KS4 pupils in Plymouth is 45.6. This is 0.6 points **lower** than the average in 2023/24 (46.2). The national figure has remained the **same** as in 2023/24 at 45.9 points.

Plymouth is 0.3 points **below** the national (45.9) and 0.5 points **below** the regional neighbour average (46.1, an increase on 2023/24) but 0.7 points **above** the statistical neighbour (44.9) average.

In 2024/25, 25.4% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) achieved 'the basics' (5+ in English and Maths). This is a 6.7% **increase** from the 23.8% achieved in 2023/24; 1.6pp higher. When compared to the national average Plymouth is 0.2pp **lower** (25.6%), which is a smaller gap than that seen in 2023/24. The national average has **reduced** from 25.8% in 2023/24. The gap between Plymouth and National in 2023/24 was 1.9pp, in 2024/25 it is 0.2pp. Plymouth is 2.1pp **higher** than the statistical neighbour average (23.3%) and 1.5pp **higher** than the regional neighbour average (22.3%).

Although Plymouth is **below** the national average of FSM pupils achieving 'the basics', Plymouth's gap in achievement between FSM and non-FSM pupils has narrowed due to the larger **increase** in achievement of FSM pupils in 2024/25. In 2024/25 this is 27.7pp (53.1% - 25.4%) compared to 29.1pp (52.9% - 23.8%) in 2023/24. This is also positive in terms of the national gap which remained at 26.5pp in 2024/25 when compared to 2023/24 (52.3%-25.8% in 2023/24; 52.1%-25.6% in 2024/25). Despite the gap remaining the **same**, the national achievement of both FSM pupils and non-FSM pupils both **reduced** on the previous year.

In 2024/25, 3.8% of pupils with an EHCP (Education, Health, and Care Plan) achieved 'the basics'. This is a reduction of 43.3% compared to 2023/24 (6.7%); 2.9pp lower. This is **below** the national average of 7.5% for EHCP pupils, regional neighbour average of 8% and the statistical neighbour average of 6.6% for EHCP pupils. All benchmark groups have **increased** performance from 2023/24 to 2024/25.

In 2024/25, 24.9% of pupils receiving SEN (Special Educational Needs) Support achieved 'the Basics'. This is an increase of 1.6% compared to 2023/24 (24.5%); 0.4pp higher. This is **above** the national average of 22.3%, the regional neighbour average of 22.6% and the statistical neighbour average of 19.1% for pupils receiving SEN Support. All benchmark groups have **increased** performance from 2023/24 to 2024/25.

3. ANNEX 1: INDICATOR DEFINITIONS

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SERVICES
Referrals & Re-Referrals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where concerns about a child have been raised to Children, Young People and Family Services, once the initial contact has been screened by our multi-agency hub, if appropriate, referrals will be accepted. The rate of referrals per 10,000 children is based on the number of referrals received in the 12-month period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities. A re-referral is where we receive a new referral for a child within 12 months of a previous referral. The indicator is based on a rolling 12-month period (e.g., 01 December to 30 November).
Children In Need – CIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the purposes of this report, the number of children within the CIN cohort are those that have been assessed as being in need (but not CP or LAC) and the number of children who are in the process of being assessed to understand their level of need. The rate of CIN per 10,000 children is based on the number of CIN at the end of the period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities.
Children subject to a Child Protection Plan - CP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Child Protection Plan should assess the likelihood of the child suffering harm and look at ways that the child can be protected. It should decide upon short and long term aims to reduce the likelihood of harm to the child and to protect the child's welfare, clarify people's responsibilities and actions to be taken; and outline ways of monitoring and evaluating progress. The rate of CP per 10,000 children is based on the number of CP at the end of the period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities. There are four categories for a Child Protection Plan; Neglect, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Emotional Abuse. The table shows the number and proportion under each category. The % of children subject to multiple child protection plans is the proportion of new Child Protection Plan starting within the period, which are for a child who has had a previous Child Protection Plan at any time in the child's lifetime. The indicator is based on a rolling 12-month period (e.g., the proportion of new Child Protection Plans that started in the period 01 December to 30 November).
Looked After Children (also referred to as Children in Care) - LAC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The table shows the number of Looked After Children at the end of the reporting period. The rate of LAC per 10,000 children is based on the number of LAC at the end of the period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities. The proportion of placements outside of the city is simply based on the postcode of the child's placement address. Those not within PL1 to PL7 or PL9 are considered outside of the city. For example, PL12 refers to Saltash in Cornwall, which could potentially be less than a mile from a child's home address, but it is outside of Plymouth. The figures provided for the placement types follow the Department for Education and Ofsted definitions, grouping multiple types into nine groups (for example, Family Placements contains six different placement types).
Care Experienced (also referred to as Care Leavers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is deemed as 'Unsuitable' accommodation has been defined by the Department for Education. The following are examples of unsuitable accommodation: Bed and Breakfast / Emergency Accommodation, Prison, Temporary/No fixed abode/Street Homeless, Unknown/Not in Touch. The proportion of Care Experienced young people in Education, Employment and Training is based on our statutory service and therefore covers those young people ages 18 to 20. Whilst we work with Care Experienced young people aged 21 to 24, support is optional for the young person. Please note: The figures are likely to be different to the published Department for Education figures as they look at the age of the young person during the year at the period around their birthday and not at a specific snapshot.

EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS
Ofsted Outcomes
<p>Ofsted is responsible for inspecting schools and other social care services for children. There are four Ofsted ratings that a school can receive; Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. These Ofsted grades are based on inspectors' judgements across four Ofsted categories – quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development of pupils, leadership and management as set out under the Ofsted framework 2019.</p>
Absence Monitoring
<p>It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance as set out in Working together to improve school attendance.</p>
Education, Employment or Training
<p>The law requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday, although in practice most young people continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. The responsibility and accountability for young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) lies with the local authority and is set out in Participation Statutory Guidance. The Department for Education (DfE) monitors the performance of local authorities in delivering their duties, and specifically in their tracking and supporting of 16- and 17-year-olds.</p>
Key Stage Four Outcomes
<p>Key Stage 4 (KS4) is the legal term for the two years of school education which incorporate GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education). During this time, pupils must follow relevant programmes of study from the National Curriculum. At the end of this stage, pupils are entered for a range of external examinations. Following a phased introduction since 2017, GCSEs taken in 2020 and 2021 are all reformed GCSEs graded on a 9-1 scale. Two measures are commonly reported on at key stage four:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage pupils achieving 5-9s at English and Maths GCSE in the city, and average Attainment 8 scores achieved by schools across the city. <p>Attainment 8 is calculated by adding together pupils' highest scores across eight government approved school subjects. While these numbers are not made publicly available on a pupil-by-pupil basis, scores taken from across a school year group are averaged to produce a school's overall score. The eight subjects are divided into three categories, called "buckets":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bucket 1 - English and maths, which are worth double marks, but English will only count for double marks if both English literature and English (i.e., English language) are taken. The higher grade of the two is used. Bucket 2 – The top three scores from the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects taken, i.e. sciences, computer science, history, geography, and languages. Bucket 3 – The top three scores from remaining EBacc subjects or other government approved qualifications (e.g., other GCSEs or Level 2 Certificates in some technical subjects). <p>The grades are converted into points, put through a formula and finally out comes the school's Attainment 8 score.</p>
Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) Timeliness
<p>The time between the receipt of the request for an EHC needs assessment, and the outcome of that request being communicated to the parent, carer or young person must take no more than 6 weeks. This is a statutory timeframe, set out in legislation (opens in new tab).</p> <p>The whole process of EHC needs assessment and EHC plan development, from the point when an EHC needs assessment is requested (or a child or young person is brought to the local authority's attention) until any final EHC plan is issued, must take no more than 20 weeks. The relevant legislation (opens in new tab) provides for exceptions to the time limits in certain situations.</p>

4. ANNEX 2: OTHER SOURCES OF PUBLISHED INFORMATION

Local authority interactive tool (LAIT) An interactive dashboard for comparing data about children and young people across all local authorities in England.	https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/local-authority-interactive-tool/
LG Inform The local area benchmarking tool from the Local Government Association	https://lginform.local.gov.uk/
GOV.UK - Explore education statistics Find related information and other statistical services provided by the Department for Education (DfE)	https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/
Children's Social Care - Outcomes and Enablers This dashboard displays data indicators to help both local and central government understand progress towards the outcomes and enablers set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework	https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/csc-outcomes-enablers/

5. ANNEX 3: CURRENT STATISTICAL NEIGHBOURS

- Cornwall
- Dudley
- Gateshead
- Kirklees
- Medway
- Plymouth
- Rotherham
- Tameside
- Telford and Wrekin
- Torbay
- Wakefield