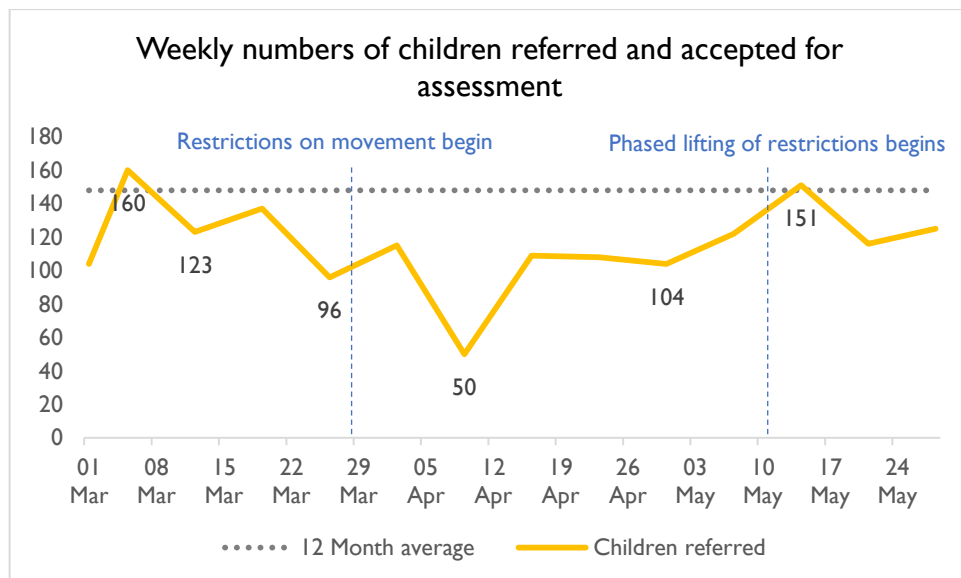
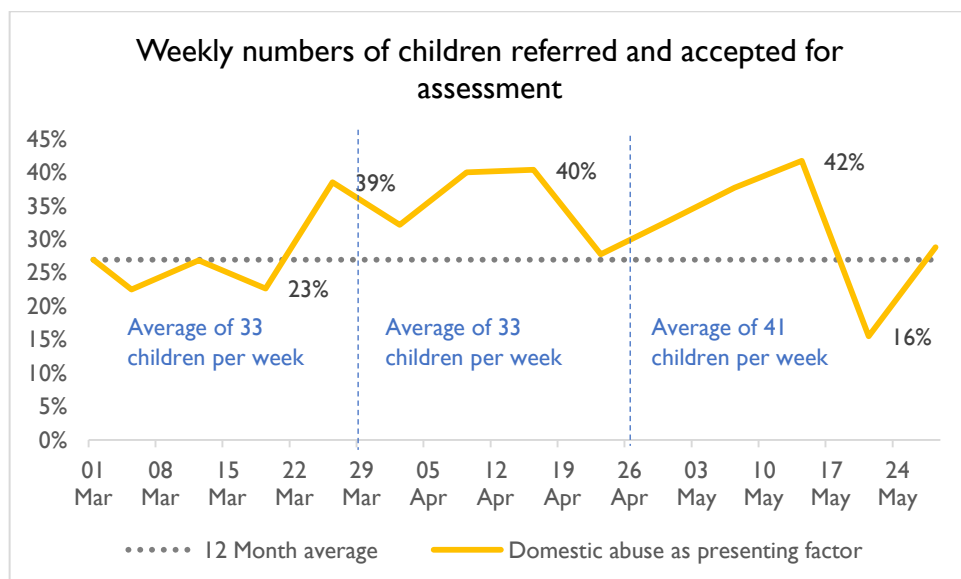


## Children referred to social care and accepted for assessment

The numbers of children accepted for assessment reduced week on week from early March. The main referrers during this period changed from schools to the Police and Health. The numbers of children referred weekly reached its lowest level during the Easter Bank Holiday weekend. Since that point, the number of children referred has been increasing week on week and is now stabilising at a similar level to pre restrictions being impose in March.



On a weekly basis, the service monitored the proportion of children referred where domestic abuse was identified as a factor. This may include low level cases, or where domestic abuse was expected but not confirmed. Overall, since the start of the restrictions, the proportion of children with domestic abuse identified as a factor of their referral increased above the 12 month average. However, the proportions are affected by the reduction in the overall number of children being referred as the actual number of children remained unchanged until the start of May when restrictions started to ease.

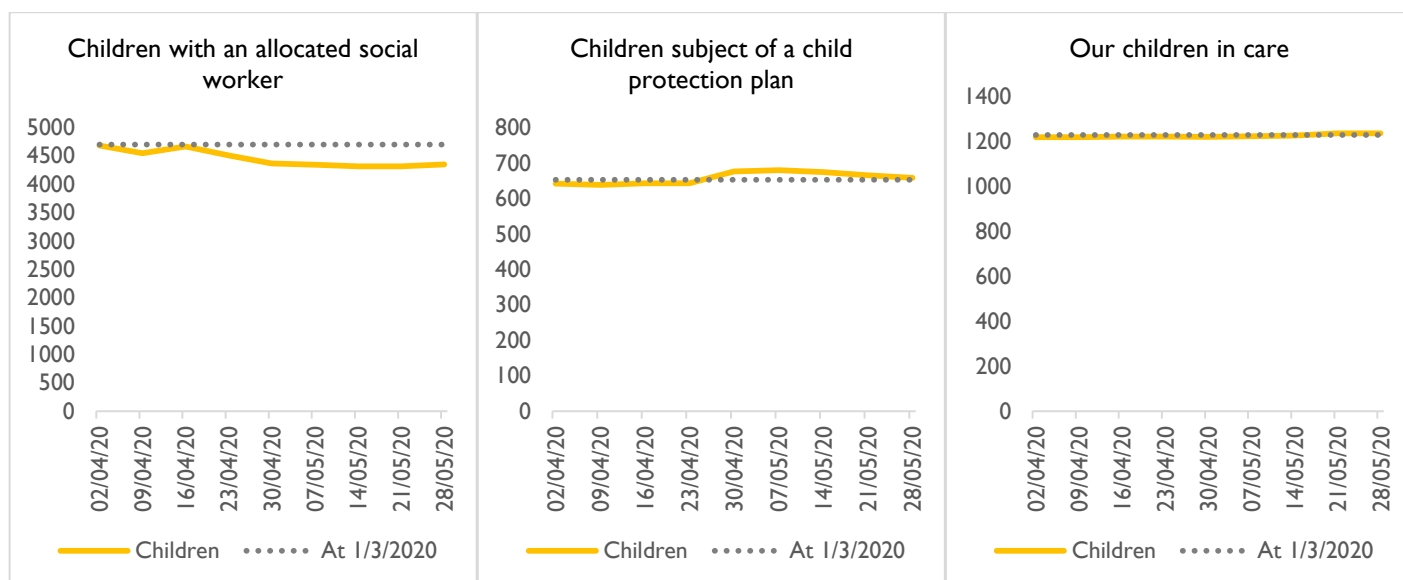


Information is being shared with the regional strategic performance network and the first analysis is expected in the next couple of weeks. Early indications is that demand will return to similar levels as

pre March 2020. We are investigating a model proposed by Kent County Council to assess if this will help with recovery planning.

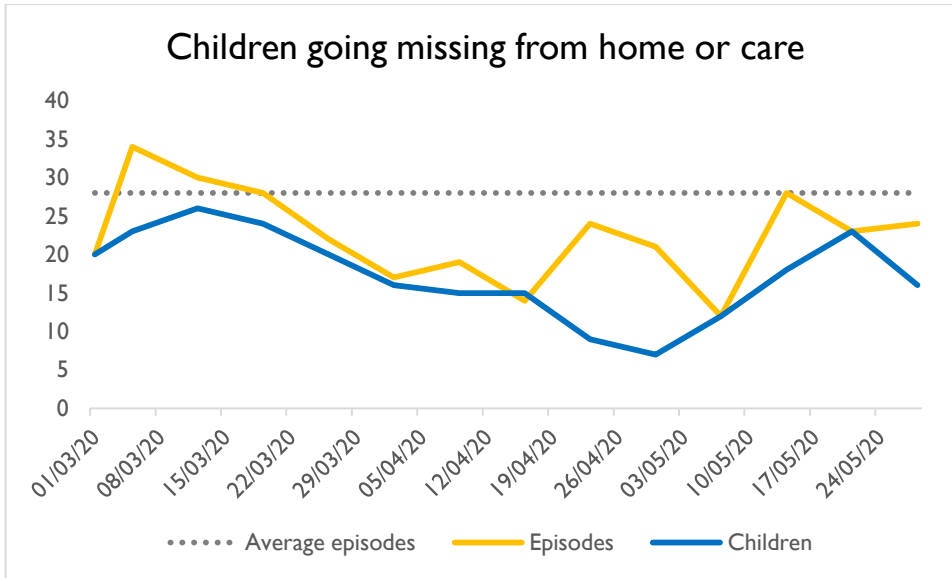
### Children allocated to a social worker

Since the start of April, just over 300 children have had their work with their social work conclude. This is partly due to social worker capacity, the use of virtual communication with families has reduced travel time and enabled teams to catch up with documenting their files. The numbers of children subject of a child protection plan did spike at the start of May, but this related to a small reduction in children not having their plans ended. The number of children in care has remained relatively stable, but has increased by 16 children since the start of April. Part of the increase is due to the court only handling emergency cases, so the local authority has been unable to discharge care orders or seek long term permanency in the form of adoption or special guardianship orders for children.



### Children going missing from home or care

At the start of March, there were concerns that the number of children who go missing may increase. However, the number of episodes of children going missing decreased during March and April, more recently increasing back to the average level. Of note, is that children going missing tended to do so once in a week, rather than multiple times that may have been experienced before.



The missing operational group, a multi agency group including representatives from the local authority, Staffordshire Police and Catch 22 have continued to meet over the past 2 months to share experiences and to keep up to date with any changes or reasons for children going missing. The provider commissioned to undertake return home interviews in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent has maintained good performance in contacting children who have gone missing.

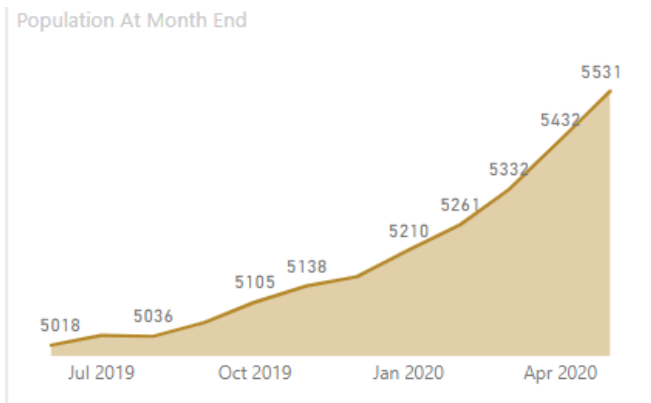
### Children being seen by their social worker

During March, the service introduced two new forms to record social worker statutory visiting. At this very early stage of implementation, reported visiting of children is much improved. Local communication matrices were developed to capture how often children and families were contacted, which reports high proportions of contact in a rolling 2 week period.

Children have engaged well, particularly older children with virtual communication using WhatsApp and Teams meetings. The Independent Reviewing service reports that more children are now engaging in their review since they have been held virtually.

### Children subject of an Education Health & Care Plan

Children continued to have their EHC plan issued during the last 2 months and the number of children subject of a plan is now 5531. The number of children where their plan was issued within 20 weeks continues to improve, reaching 45% at the end of March. Work with the children who have a plan that has yet to be issued as continued to reduce the delay they are experiencing.



### **Availability of staff**

On a weekly basis all teams across the directorate were asked to update records on the availability of their staff teams. For front line teams the availability of staff for visiting was also captured. Staff who are available for work remained stable through March, April and May. On average, over 88% of staff were in work (in line with the overall SCC position) and for those teams who have first line contact with families, over 60% were available for visiting families if required.