

# Executive Performance Report

## Quarter 3 2025-26

Report produced by Strategy and Performance

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# Executive summary

## Introduction

Welcome to the **quarter three** performance report for the period 1 October to 30 December 2025.

The main report includes an executive summary highlighting a combination of areas doing well and areas to be addressed. The report has been organised by our five revised Council Plan ambitions for 2025/29: **Thriving Places and Empowered Communities, Sustainable and Connected Places, Safe, Healthy and Living Well, Maximise the Potential and One Council**, this is to aid in the monitoring of the Council plan over time.

The report also includes the following appendices:

- Appendix A: Appendix of KPI's taken from the Council Plan

## Safe, Healthy and Living Well

### Going Well

#### Referrals to Children's Social Care (CSC)

This quarter, 1,235 referrals into CSC between October and December 2025, marking the third consecutive quarterly decline. One contributing factor is the improved screening processes implemented by the Multi-Agency Screening Team (MAST). Across the first three quarters of 2025/26, referrals have fallen by 12% (n=499) compared with the same period in 2024/25. This downward trend is expected to continue into Q4.

#### Children and Young People Who Experience High Placement Instability

This quarter, the proportion of looked-after children who experienced three or more placements within the last 12 months decreased to 13.2% at the end of December, down from 14.7% at the end of September.

#### Children and Young People Discharged from Care

During this quarter, 41 children and young people were discharged from care. This is five more than Q2 and 16 more than in Q3 2024/25. This year to date, 134 children and young people have been discharged from care, an increase of 28% (n=29) in comparison to Q3 2024/25.

### To be Addressed

#### Overall Number of Children in Care

The overall number of children in care increased for the tenth consecutive quarter, reaching 601 at the end of December 2025. This represents an increase of nine children since the end of October and marks the first time the number has exceeded 600 in North Yorkshire. This figure is also 7% higher (n=41) than the position at the end of December 2024. It is important to highlight that despite this increase, North Yorkshire continues to have a relatively low rate of children in care compared with both the national picture and our statistical neighbour group. At the end of December, the rate stood at 52 per 10,000 population, compared with 74 per 10,000 nationally and a statistical neighbour average of 71 per 10,000.

#### Number of Children Admitted to Care

There were 61 children and young people admitted to care this quarter, which is one of the key contributors to the overall increase in the number of children in care. For the year to date there have been 184 admissions to care, which is similar to numbers over the previous two years.

#### Timeliness of Early Help Initial Visits

As part of North Yorkshire's good practice standards, we set a target for 70% of Early Help initial visits to be completed within five working days. Performance in Q3 2025/26 improved to 66.7%, up from 62.4% in Q2, although it remains just below the target level. The continued focus on timely engagement reflects our commitment to maintaining high standards of practice and ensuring children and families are seen promptly.

## Maximise the potential

### Going Well

#### **Timeliness of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans issued**

High performance for the timeliness of new EHC plans issued by North Yorkshire Council has continued into this quarter. 72.8% of the 280 new EHC plans issued in Q3 2025/26 have been issued on time, up from the 7.7% recorded in Q3 last year.

### To be Addressed

#### **Permanent Exclusions**

There has been an indication that children being excluded for a temporary period has been reducing. Schools choosing to permanently exclude children has been continuing at a similarly high level to previous years and continues to require addressing.

There have been 44 permanent exclusions (appeals pending) from mainstream North Yorkshire schools in the Autumn term of the 2025/26 academic year, slightly higher than the 37 in 2024/25.



## Safe, Healthy and Living Well

Ensure the people of North Yorkshire are safe, healthy and living well

### Children and Families

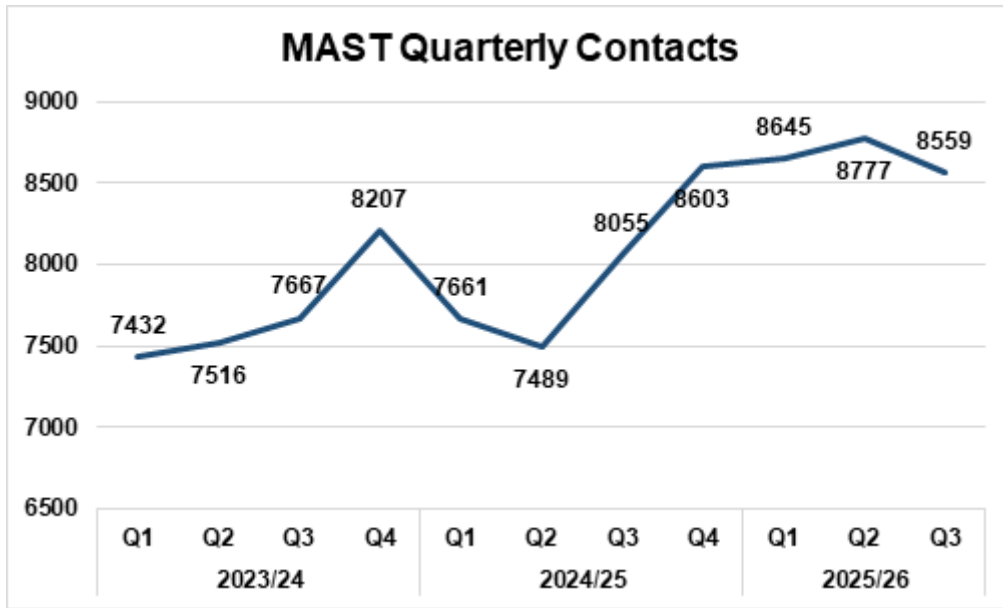
#### Safeguarding & Child Protection

##### Summary

The Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST) has improved their screening process. This is a leading cause in the reduction of referrals into Children's Social Care (12% fewer (n=499) compared with the previous year to date). This reduction is despite the number of contacts (8,559) being 6% (n=504) higher than the previous year. This process improvement has seen team members given more time to undertake a robust analysis, including speaking with families, before a final decision on a contact is made.

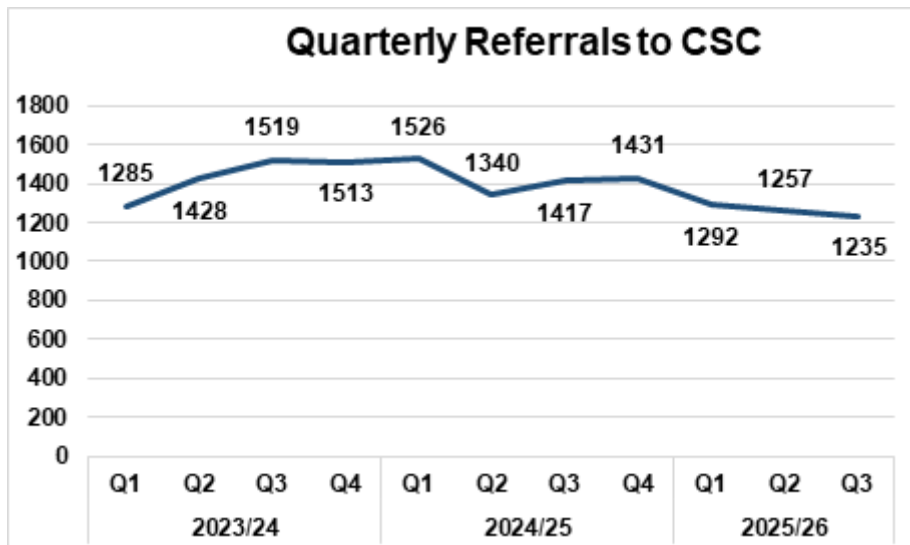
Timeliness of assessment improved this quarter to 93.6%, the highest level recorded since Q3 last year. Performance remains significantly above both the national average (84.4%) and the statistical neighbour average (86.2%).

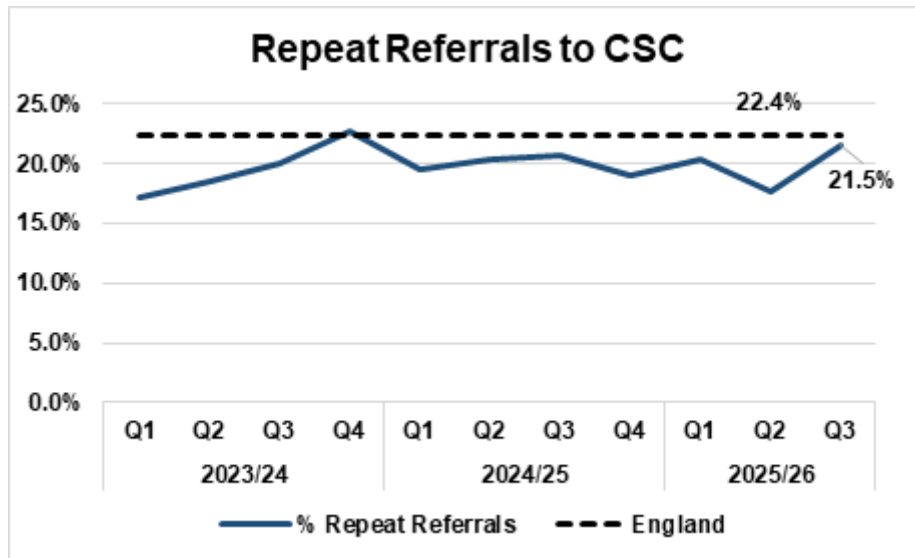
**Contacts at the Front Door**



This quarter has seen another period of very high number of safeguarding concerns received by the front door, with 8,559 recorded. Whilst the number of contacts received this quarter is 2.5% lower (n=218) than the 8,777 contacts received in Q2, it is 6% higher (n=504) than in Q3 last year. An increase in the number of contacts from health services (+19%, +318 contacts) accounts for much of the increase we have seen in contacts this quarter compared with Q3 2024/25.

**Referrals to CSC**



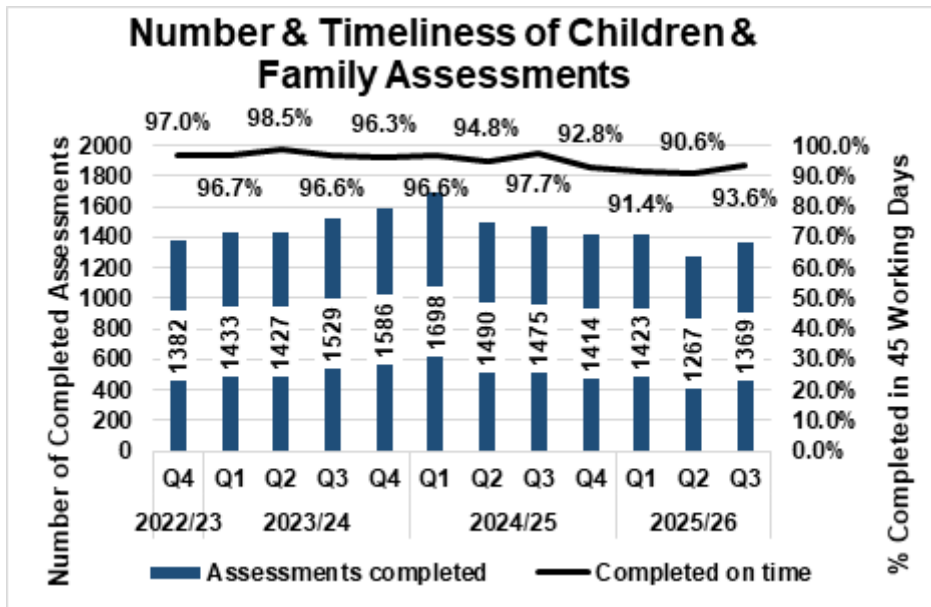


Despite the number of safeguarding concerns received about children at the front door remaining high this quarter, referrals to CSC have remained relatively flat at 1,235. Although almost identical to Q2 (1,257 referrals), it is a 13% reduction (n=182) compared with Q3 last year and for the year to date we have received 12% fewer referrals (n=499) than in 2024/25. Forecast data suggests that Q4 will see a further fall in referrals, with around 1,100 referrals forecast. Improved screening in MAST, where social workers are spending more time to robustly analyse contacts and contact families is thought to be driving the reduction in referrals to CSC.

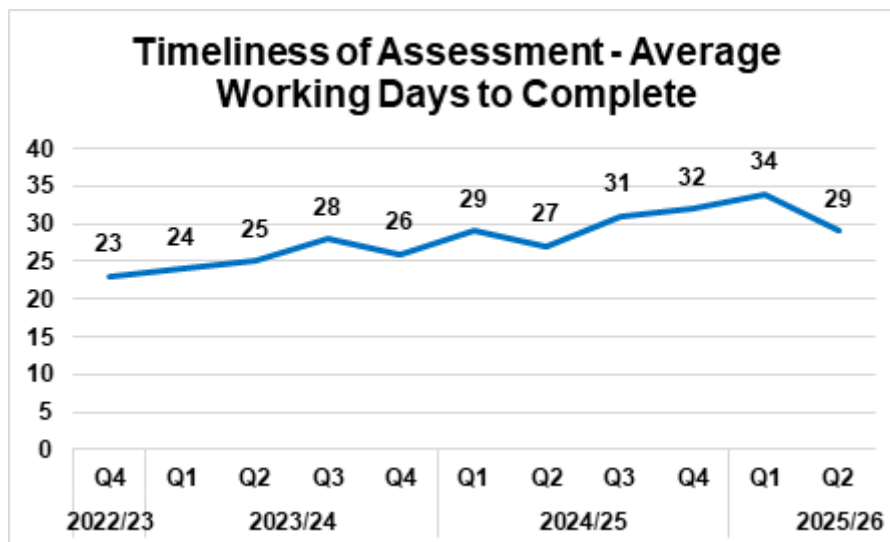
However, despite fewer referrals to CSC in Q3 2025/26 compared with Q3 2024/25, we continue to see a high number of children referred where there is initial evidence of risk of significant harm, demonstrated by the 649 strategy meetings held this month and 460 S47 child protection investigations undertaken this quarter. However, for the year to date, strategy meetings have decreased by 3% (n=69) and S47 enquiries have decreased by 5% (n=73) compared with the first 9 months of last year.

The rate of re-referral increased (worsened) by almost 4% to 21.5% this quarter but remains statistically significantly lower than the national rate of 22.4%. For the year to date the rate was 19.8% at the end of Q3, compared to 21.1% in the same period in 2024/25.

### Timeliness of Assessment

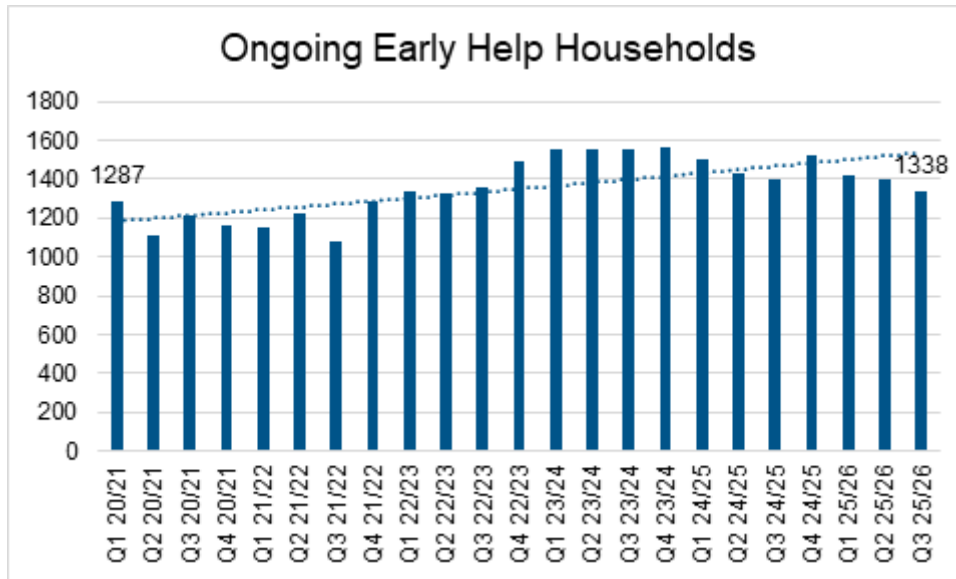


Historically, timeliness of assessment has been a key strength in North Yorkshire, and the local authority consistently ranked among the top five performing local authorities nationally in recent years. Performance has deteriorated in recent months from 97.7% in Q3 2024/25 to 90.6% in Q2 this year. However, performance is showing signs of improvement, with 93.6% of assessments completed in 45 working days this quarter. It's worth noting that timeliness of assessment remains significantly better than the most recent national data (84.4% completed in 45 working days) or statistical neighbour average (86.2%).



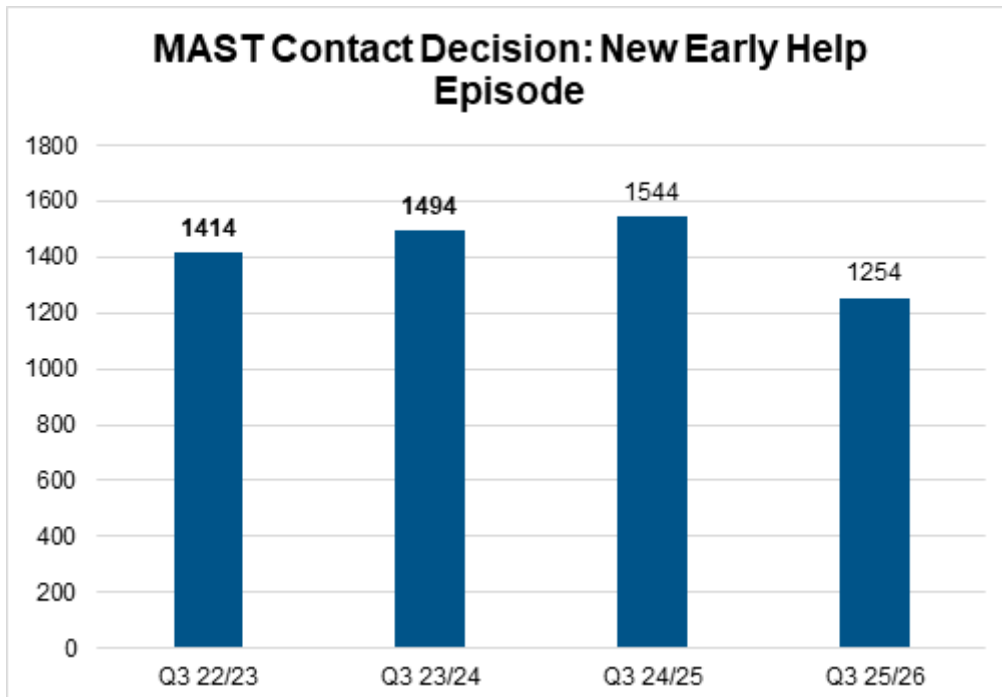
Following an increase in the median time taken to complete an assessment to 34 working days in Q1, it's positive to be able to report that this has decreased this quarter to 29 working days. This means families are receiving the help and support they need quicker, and this should mean the needs of fewer families escalate further.

## Early Help

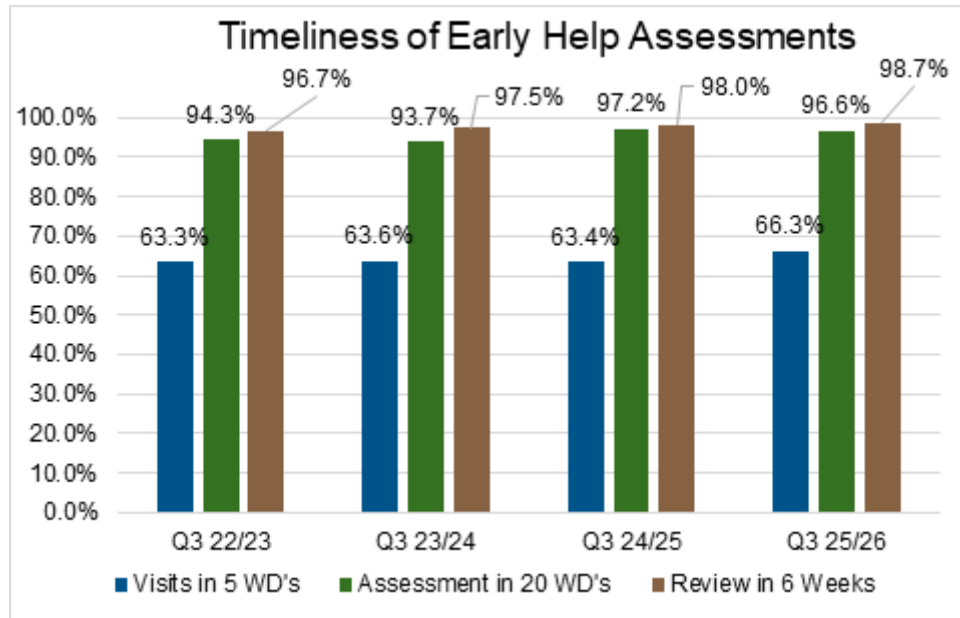


The number of ongoing households receiving support from the Early Help Service decreased by 4.2% this quarter, falling from 1,397 in Q2 to 1,338 in Q3 2025/26; this is also a 4.2% reduction compared with Q3 2024/25.

These households include 2,538 children and young people, a 4.7% decrease from 2,664 last quarter. The number of safeguarding concerns received through the 'front door' has also reduced, resulting in 1,254 new Early Help Episodes in Q3 2025/26, down 18.8% year-on-year from 1,544 in Q3 2024/25. Over the same period, 2a/2b decisions increased by 38.5% (from 423 to 586). Compared with the previous quarter, new Early Help Episodes decreased by 6.7% (from 1,344), while 2a/2b decisions rose from 362 to 586 (+224), reflecting robust decision-making within MAST.

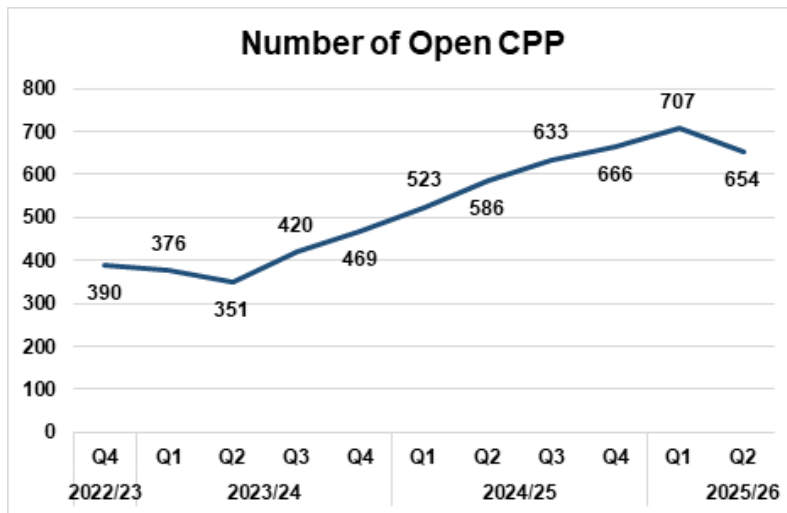


2A / 2B are those contacts that are assessed as not meeting the threshold for a referral into the Early Help Service. The needs can be delivered by an individual from an agency who has an existing relationship with the child or, alternatively, an Early Help Champion can complete an Early Help Assessment and, where necessary, coordinate a Team around the Family Meeting to ensure an appropriate multi-agency response to escalating needs.



North Yorkshire continues to work to its local good-practice standard of completing initial visits within five working days, which is not a statutory requirement. In Q3 2025/26, 66.3% of visits met this standard, up from 63.4% in Q3 2024/25, although remaining slightly below the 70% target. The timeliness of Early Help Initial Assessments within the self-imposed 20 working days decreased slightly to 96.6%, but performance remains above the 95% target and close to levels seen in previous years. The proportion of Assessment Reviews completed increased to 98.7%, up from 98% in Q3 2024/25, and continues to exceed the target of 95%.

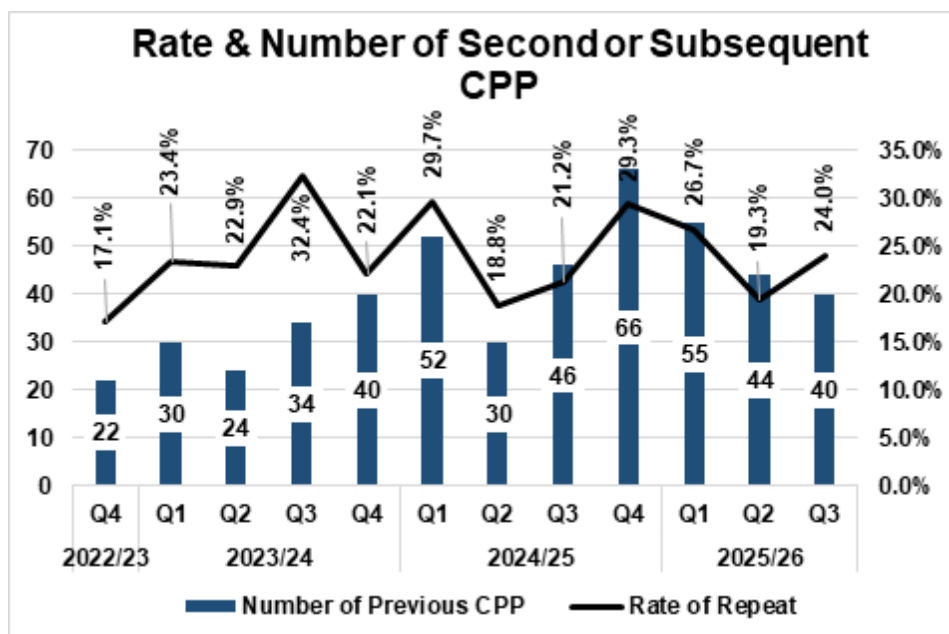
### Child Protection Plans (CPP)



This quarter saw the number of open CPPs decrease for the first quarter in over two years to 654, a decrease of 7.5% (n=53). However, this is still 12% higher (n=68) than at the end of December 2024.

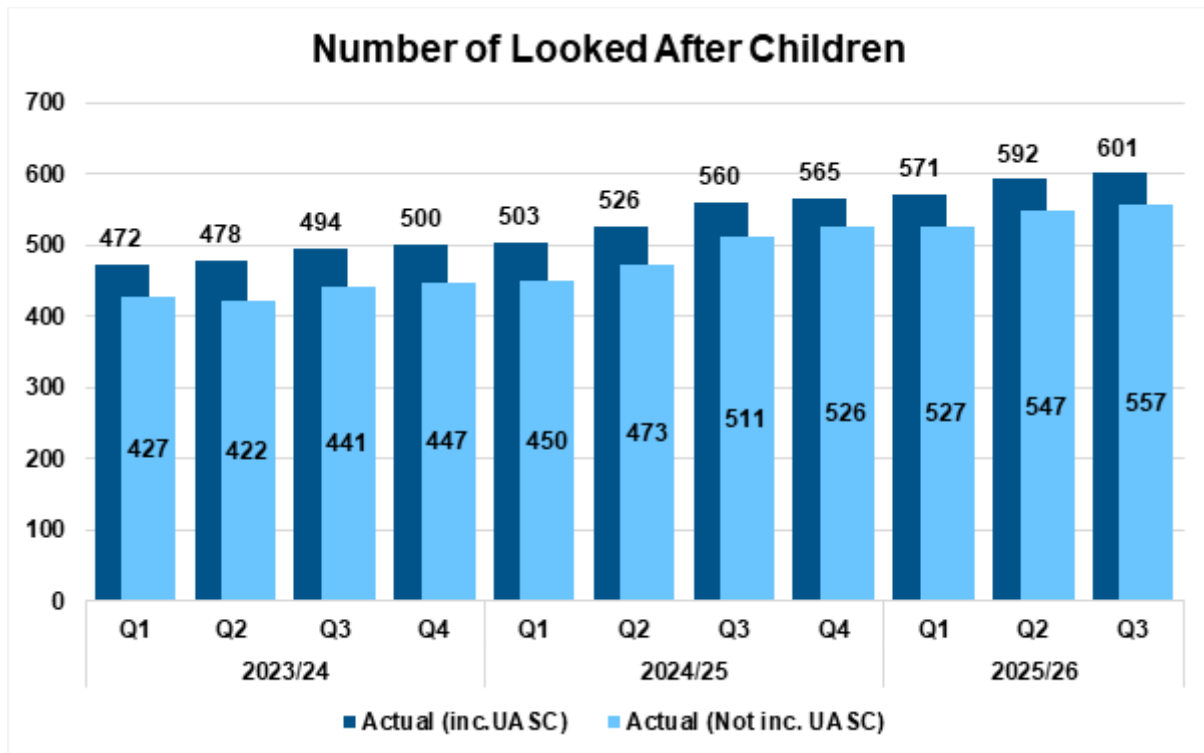
The number of ceased CPP in Q3 2025/26 (167) has fallen by 40% (n=60) in comparison with Q3 2024/25 (212) whilst the number of new CPP issued has also fallen by 32% (n=53) from 220 in Q3 2024/25 to 167 in Q3 2025/26. Of note, the number of new CPPs issued in Q3 this year was also 27% lower than in Q2 (n=62). This abruptly reverses the rising trend in the number of new CPP seen over the last 18 months.

40 of the new CPP issued this quarter were second or subsequent plans, equivalent to a rate of 24.0%. It's worth noting that more than 2 years had elapsed since the previous plan in 24 of the 40 new CPP this quarter. We continue to see some quarterly volatility around this indicator, so it's worth noting that the rate for the current year to date (23.1%) is almost identical to the rate across the same period in 2024/25 (23.0%).



## Looked After Children

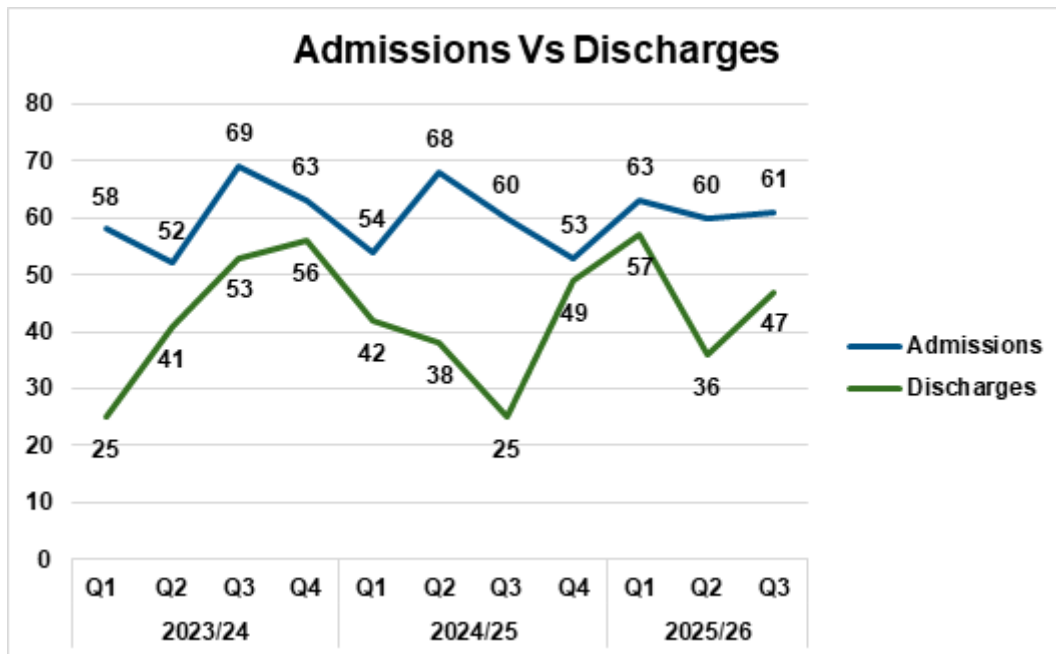
We've seen the number of looked after children rise steadily since 2019, reflecting the “once in a generation” challenges families have faced. More families are now presenting with complex and entrenched issues. This is placing pressure on all aspects of the child protection system, especially the availability and cost of specialist placements for children with highly complex needs.



At the end of December, there were 601 children in the care of the local authority, an increase of nine since the end of October and 41 compared with December 2024. Over the past three years, the number of children in care has risen by 33% (n=150), which broadly aligns with the increased number of children and families being referred via our front door for help and support during the same period.

Performance this quarter has also been affected by the festive period, contributing to additional children entering care but then also children being discharged due to delays such as, court work and case progression often slow due to staff absences. Additionally in terms of additional admissions the festive period can also place added pressure on families, including financial strain, disrupted routines and reduced access to support, increasing the risk of conflict at home. At the end of the quarter there were 44 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in the care of the Local Authority. This is 1 less than at the end of Q2 and 5 less than at the end of Q3 last year.

### Admissions and Discharges of Children In Care



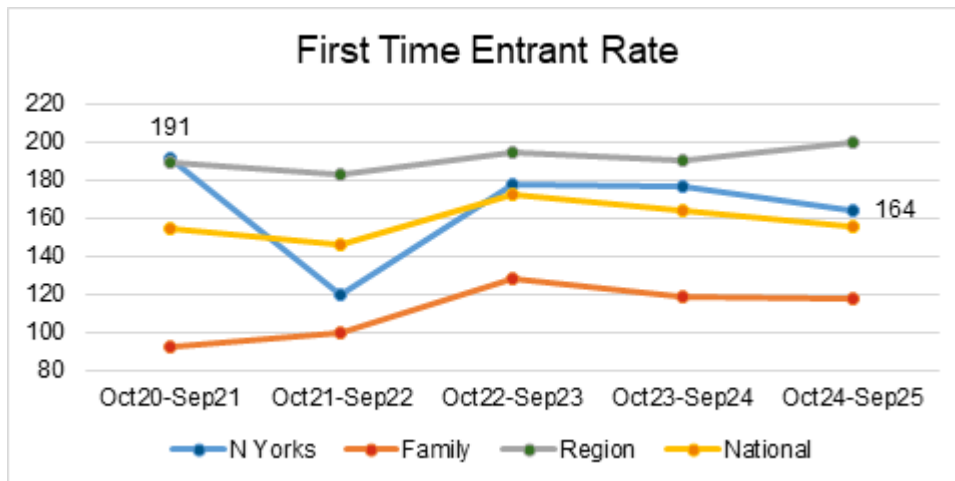
More children continue to be admitted to care than discharged from care. This is driving the rise in the overall number of looked after children. However, the gap has narrowed this quarter to 20 (from 24 in Q2). When considering year-to-date, admissions remain high at 184 (two fewer than last year) due to the number of children meeting the threshold of significant harm. Whereas there have been 134 discharges (29 more) which points to improvements in safe discharge practice.

### Placement Stability

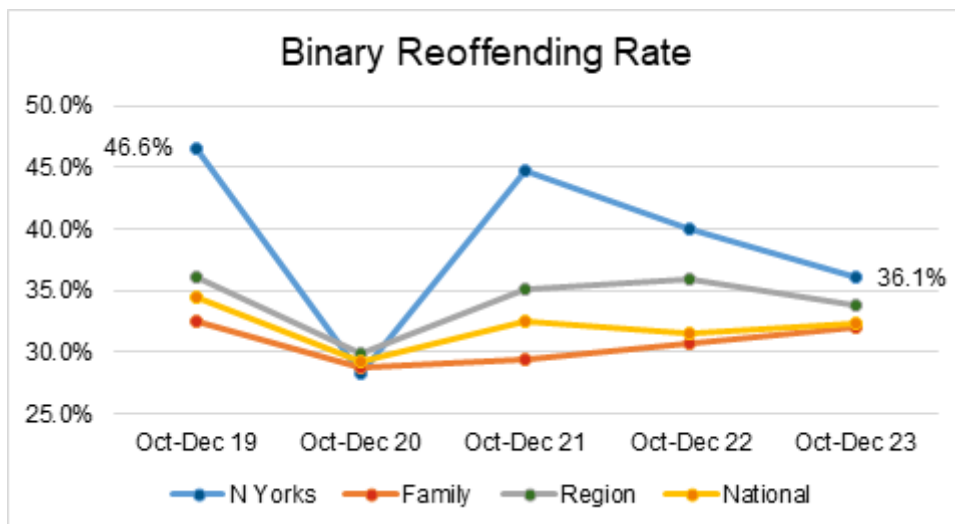
Short-term placement stability has improved this quarter, with 13.2% of children in care (80 children) experiencing three or more placements within 12 months, compared with 14.7% (86 children) at the end of Q2.

Some placement changes are planned and appropriate as part of a child’s permanence pathway. Despite the improvement, performance remains above the national average (12%) and the statistical neighbour average (10%).

### Youth Justice Service



The latest data for the 12 months ending June 2025 shows a decrease in the rate of First Time Entrants (FTEs) into the criminal justice system in North Yorkshire, falling from 176 to 164, relating to 93 young people. This places North Yorkshire in the 3rd quartile nationally. The current rate remains lower than the regional rate (200) but higher than the national rate (155) and the family group average (117). Recent data is sourced directly from the YJS case management system rather than the Police National Computer (PNC), and therefore includes some non-recordable offences—18% (n=17) of the cohort relate to motoring offences not captured on the PNC. For comparison, the Ministry of Justice’s PNC-based 2024 annual data showed 78 FTEs (rate 140), while Youth Justice Board data (from case management system records) recorded 99 FTEs (rate 178) after correcting input errors.



The latest binary reoffending rate for the October–December 2023 cohort is 36.1%, a decrease from 40.0% in the same period the previous year. Although improved, the rate remains higher than the Family Group average (32.0%), the regional rate (33.9%), and the national rate (32.3%). The frequency rate (average number of reoffences per reoffender) increased to 4.46, but still sits below all three comparators. This cohort consisted of 36 young people, of whom 13 reoffended, committing 58 proven reoffences.



## Maximise the Potential

Maximise the potential of North Yorkshire's people and communities.

### Inclusion

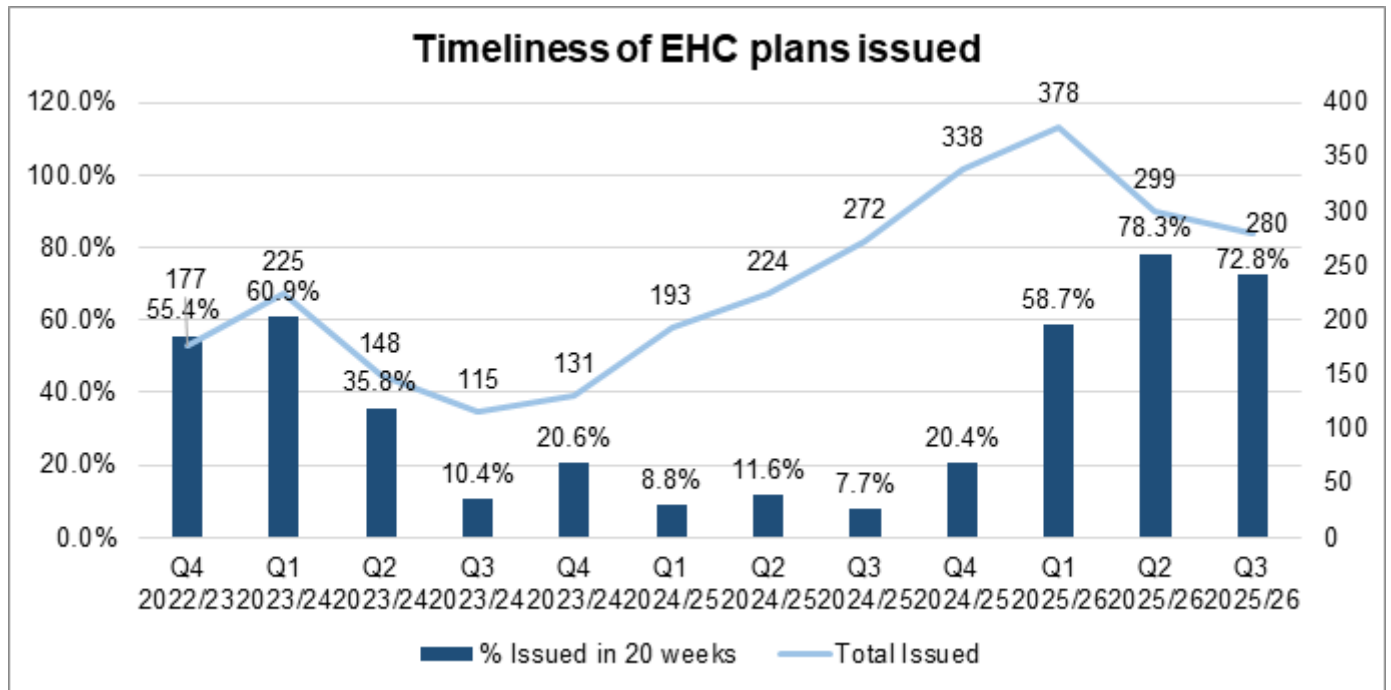
#### Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan Timeliness

Performance in the timeliness of new EHC plans issued by North Yorkshire Council remains strong this quarter. 72.8% of the 280 new EHC plans issued in Q3 2025/26 were completed within 20 weeks, comparable to 78.3% in Q2 and substantially higher than the 7.7% achieved at the same point last year. North Yorkshire has moved from performing below the national average (46%) in 2024 to performing above the national average in 2025.

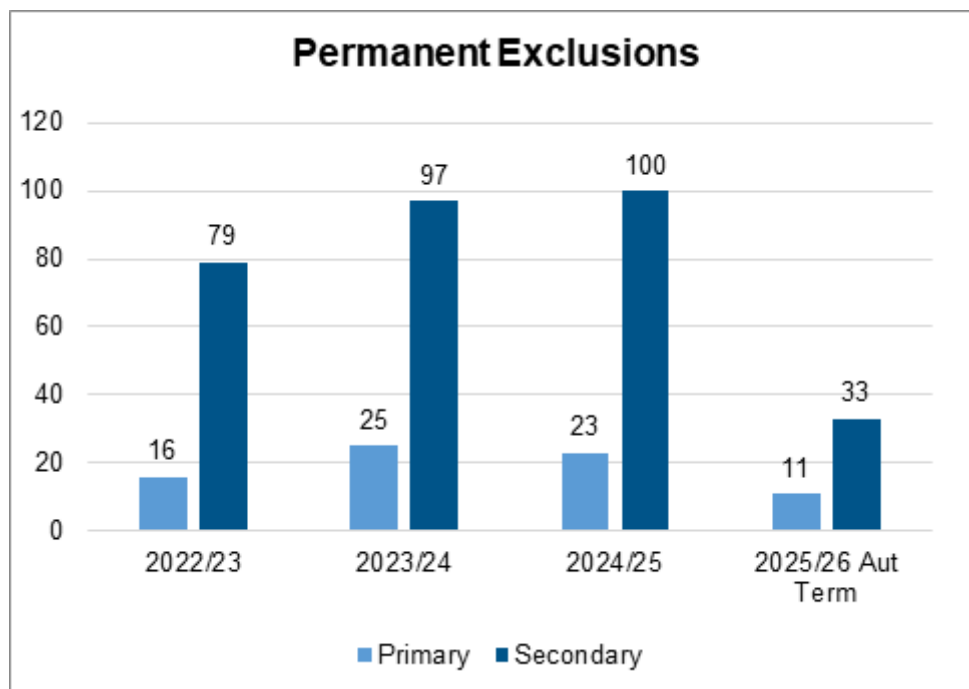
This improvement has been achieved during a period of historically high numbers of children being found to be in need of an EHC plan, with 957 new EHC plans issued so far this financial year—around 40% more than last year and the highest number issued in any year to date.

It should be noted that our performance in respect of timeliness of EHC plans has significantly improved from performing below the national average of 46% in the 2024 calendar year to above the national average in 2025.

This improvement in performance and increase in proportion of EHC produced on time has been achieved alongside historically high numbers of new EHC plans being issued, with 1245 new EHC plans produced this year. This is approximately 40% higher than the number produced last year and more than in any previous year.

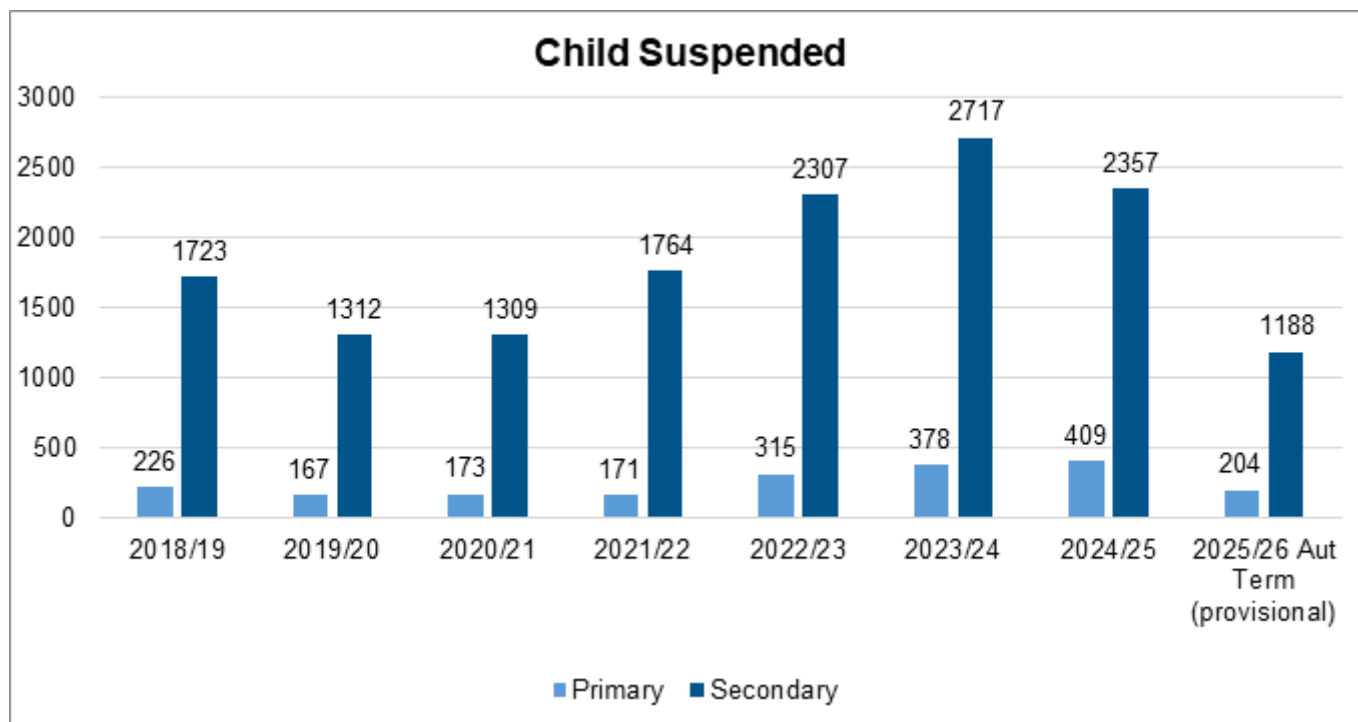


### Exclusions from School



Permanent exclusions from North Yorkshire schools remain at a similarly high level to recent years. There were 44 permanent exclusions in the Autumn term of the 2025/26 academic year, compared with 37 in the same period of 2024/25. Of these, 33 were from secondary schools (similar to last year) and 11 were from primary schools (appeals pending), an increase from seven last year. National data for 2023/24 indicates that North Yorkshire’s secondary permanent exclusion rate (0.25%) was in line with the national average, while the primary rate (0.06%) was above national levels.

It is important to note that schools choosing to exclude is a trend observed nationally and the most recent available national data National comparisons in 2023/24 showed that North Yorkshire rates for secondary schools (0.25%) of the school population excluded were similar to national but primary schools (0.06%) were above.

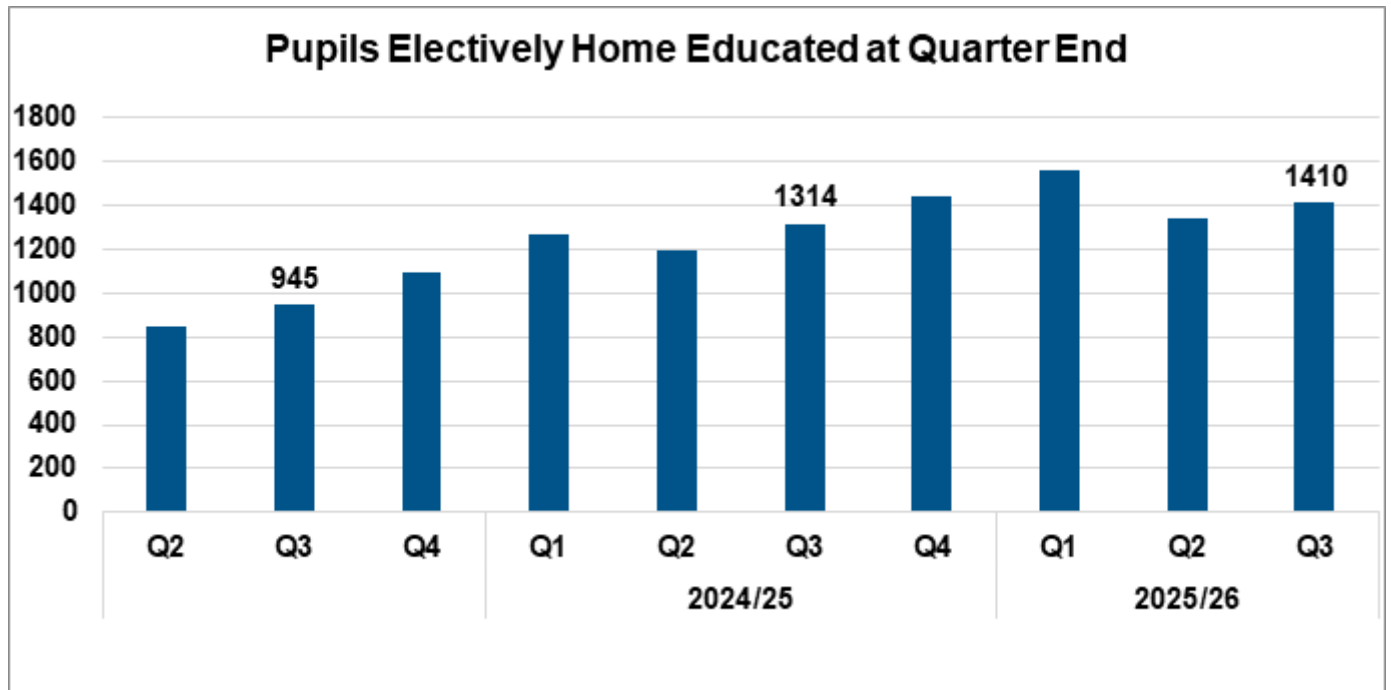


Persistent disruptive behaviour continues to be the most common reason for suspension, accounting for 57% of all suspensions. The next most frequent reason, verbal abuse or threatening behaviour towards an adult, accounts for 16%. These patterns are consistent with both regional and national trends.

Support to schools to reduce exclusions (both permanent and temporary) continues through the SEND Locality Hub teams, who provide direct specialist input, training, and advice for children at risk of exclusion. In addition, the newly launched Inclusive Mainstream Toolkit provides practical guidance for educational professionals to plan support effectively for children with additional needs.

### Elective Home Education

There were 1,410 children recorded as Electively Home Educated in North Yorkshire at the end of December, a 7% increase (+96) compared with the previous quarter. While this represents a seasonal high, there are indications that overall EHE numbers are beginning to plateau.



During the 2024/25 academic year, the number of children in EHE rose from 1,089 at the start of the autumn term to a record 1,559 by the end of the summer term. Although it remains unlikely that the total will fall by the end of the current academic year—given ongoing patterns in parental choice—there has been a clear slowing in the rate of increase over the past year.

Parents are offered a pre-decision meeting to ensure they understand their legal responsibilities when choosing to home educate. Schools also have access to training and guidance to support children who are not engaging in school-based education.

National statistics indicate that an increasing number of parents are choosing to home educate due to mental health concerns, a trend mirrored locally. The recently published national 10-Year Health Plan (Fit for the Future) includes plans to expand mental health support teams in schools and colleges, alongside the introduction of Young Futures Hubs to identify needs early and provide targeted support for children and young people.