

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service Annual Report for Corporate Parenting Panel

Carmel Murray
Service Manager



IRO Annual Report for children in our care

Overview

- As of 31st March 2024, there were 1213 children in the care of DCC
- Equates to 122 per 10,000 children - above the National Average of 70 and slightly below our regional comparators of 113.4
- Timeliness of our CIC reviews has remained high at 96% (2800/2916)
- Children's participation in their reviews continues to be a strength with only 2% of children not contributing to their meeting
- Timeliness of Foster Care Reviews is excellent with 95% of Foster Carers having a review within a year.

IRO Annual Report for children in our care

IRO Scrutiny/Impact

- Ensure children have a plan of permanence and a stable, permanent home without delay
- Ensure care planning is robust and is meeting children's needs
- Ensure IRO oversight of our most vulnerable young people in care
- Resolution Process is used to have challenging but effective conversations with the Local Authority that make a difference for children and shape practice
- IRO statements to court at Final Hearing is very much embedded

IRO Annual Report for children in our care

Practice development

- Continue to promote and champion the child's voice and participation in their care journey
- Continually improving IRO visits to children in care
- IRO service contribute to the Quality Assurance Framework through audits that provide further scrutiny/challenge and oversight
- IRO service will work collaboratively with Children's Services to improve outcomes for children
- Contribute to the IRO Regional North East Partnership to support learning and development across the region.